Li zistwer Michif:
Aspects of narrative structure in Michif storytelling

by

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Abstract

The linguistic reality of the Michif/Métis people is extremely rich and complex. Michif people have always been multilingual, or polyglots, to network with their kin and neighbors across the prairies. Their own ways of speaking have also emerged and today, there are languages unique only to the Michif/ Métis people in different areas of the homeland. The present socio-political status and the origin stories of some of these language varieties, referred to as *mixed/heritage/southern/Turtle Mountain Michif, Michif French/Fransay* and *Northern Michif/Métis Cree* (labels which exist only for the sake of distinguishing these language varieties from one another), are included in this study. This dissertation focuses on the structure of stories and narratives, and their role in language description and transmission from a few Michif communities across the homeland, as narrative structure in languages of the Michif/Métis has generally been understudied. In the case of mixed language Michif stories originating from the area of Ste. Madeleine (Manitoba), we delve into a componential analysis particularly focusing on the understudied use of complementizers in the conjunct verb inflection. Through a thorough qualitative analysis of complementizers in narratives recorded in fieldwork, we show that they have modal and aspectual values and as such play a crucial role in the cohesion and coherence of a narrative. Michif *Fransay* (Michif-French) has also been the subject of several linguistic studies, especially on its particularities from any other variety of Laurentian French. In this study, we focus more specifically on an interactional analysis of narratives in this language as spoken in St. Laurent and St. Eustache (Manitoba) and the role of the co-construction process in building a local historiography. A comprehensive study of group narratives shows how co-construction provides an internal perspective into each community's history, worldview, people and language. Finally, working on narratives is a particularly personal process and it is crucial to center such work around the principles of Indigenous methodology and epistemology. At the heart of these protocols is building respectful relationships and this project focuses on how principles and protocols of Indigenous research methodologies and participatory action research can, and have, led this graduate-level project.

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Dedication

Por li(i) Michif.

Por mi(i) fiy.

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Abbreviations

Abbreviation	Meaning
1	first person
2	second person
21	inclusive
3	third person
A	agent-like
ADJ	adjective
ADV	adverb(ial)
(V)AI	animate intransitive verb
AN	animate
ANT	anterior
COMP	complementizer
COND	conditional
DEF	definite
DEM	demonstrative
DET	determiner
DIR	direct
DISC	discourse marker
DISJ	disjunct
EXCL	exclusive
F	feminine
FUT	future
(V)II	inanimate intrans.
IMP	imperative
IMPF	imperfect
INAN	inanimate
INCL	inclusive
IND	indicative
INF	infinitive
INV	inverse
IPFV	imperfective
IRR	irrealis
IS	impersonal subj
IVRL	invariable
LOC	locative
MOD	modal
N-	non-(e.g. npst)
NEG	negative
M	masculine
OBJ	object
OBV	obviative
P	patient
PFV	perfective
PL	plural
PLUP	pluperfect
POSS	possessive
PRF	perfect
PRS	present
PROG	progressive
PST	past
PTCP	participle
PTV	partitive
PURP	Purposive
Q	Question particle
REFL	reflexive
REL	relative
RED	reduplication
SBJV	subjunctive
SG	singular
(V)TA	transitive animate
(V)TI	transitive inanimate verb
TAM	tense aspect mood
TOP	topic
UNSP	unspecified
VOL	volitional
/	false start/ incomplete
[xxx]	incomprehensible
//	interruption

Preface

While the ensuing Chapters discuss the research at hand, methodologies, and conclusions, this preface is meant to share my personal stake in this research. This is an opportunity for me to share where I come from through some documented and oral history of my own Michif/Métis ancestors, as well as their roles in various communities in the Red River valley and the Pembina region. In the spirit of reciprocity, this is also a space to share stories about myself and my family similar to those shared with me by storytellers as part of this work. I hope this can begin to show my personal interest in the pursuance of this research.

I have always been proud of my ancestries. My family's ancestors have come to Canada, or Turtle Island, from many different parts of the world, such as France, Italy and Ukraine. Many of them were also native to the land from the Dene, Anishnabe and Michif/Métis nations. This project has been a way for me to celebrate my family's ancestors who are *Métis*[1], and/or as well as those who lived alongside the *Métis* in the Red River valley. It also enables me to honour their legacy that lives on today through myself and my two daughters, both of whom were born during the course of this research program.

My matrilineal line has its origins in the community of Leroy and the parish of Saint-Joseph, in North Dakota. My great-great-great-grand-father, Andrien (Andrew) Martineau, has a fascinating and well-documented story by his nephew, Romain Martineau, as part of the St. Joseph (North Dakota) Parish history (Martineau et al. 1983). Born in 1835, Andrien left his family home in the area of Saint-François and Montmagny in Québec at the age of 11 years old: after breaking his father's two-wheeled chariot, he was sent off to procure a new one. To earn his living, Andrien Martineau joined Napoleon Lamarche's crew as an assistant cook on a trip to Chicago to trade furs, hoping to reach his uncle's home in the city. After a few years, his adventurous nature led him to set out, with his two cousins for the American frontier town of St. Paul, Minnesota as part of a 100-man caravan. When he was only 16, both of his cousins tragically passed away and he joined the Métis trader, Louis Goulet, in the commerce of goods from St. Paul to Calgary. During this period, he prospected in the Rocky Mountains, and traded for gold, as well as buffalo pelts, furs, pemmican, mail, brandy and other merchandise.

1. When the term Métis is italicized, it refers to the French term and (Laurentian French) pronunciation [metsis].

Andrien Martineau met his future father-in-law, a French-Canadian named Félix LaTraille who acquired oak logs and used them in the local construction trade, at the age of 22, while traveling through the Pembina Valley. In 1866, at the age of 30, he joined Latraille's company and settled on a farm near his future father-in-law's property. In 1867, he took part in a major buffalo hunt with the Latraille family in which Buffalo Bill Cody participated as well. In that same year, he married Josephine Latraille: he was 15 years her elder. When Josephine passed away in childbirth, Adrien placed four of his youngest daughters, Marie, Philomène, Rose-Emma and Chlotilda, in convents in St. Norbert and St. Jean-Baptiste, on the Manitoba side of the Medicine Line (the international border between Canada and the U.S.).

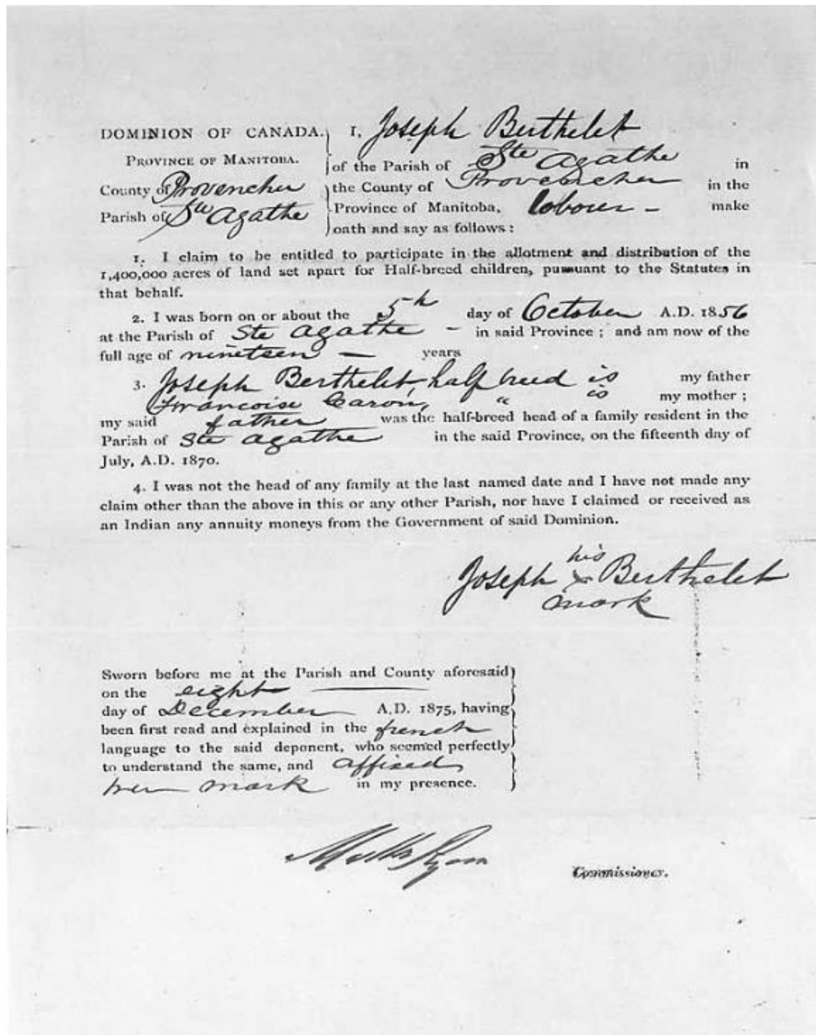
Josephine's mother, Marguerite Jellibois/ Jolibois, was well-known in the region of Walhalla, particularly for her kindness and caring nature (Yeado, n.d.). One particularly touching story documented in community historical records takes place in 1854, when the wife of the Protestant minister of the area, Reverend Spencer, was killed. Marguerite immediately took their children under her wing, including nursing an infant, while her husband, Félix Latraille, helped with funeral arrangements. She then travelled 400 miles by Red River cart to St. Paul, Minnesota, to bring the children to their grandmother's home, caring for them until the following spring. She lived until she was 104 years old, known for her stories of the buffalo hunt with her father and brothers (Yeado, n.d.).

One of Adrien and Josephine's daughters, Rose-Emma, was my grandmother's grandmother, and she remembers her quite fondly as her Indian grandmother. She had a heart of gold, my grandmother has said many times, and retained a striking devotion to the Virgin Mary, so striking, in fact, that she passed away on December 8th, the feast day of the Virgin's Immaculate Conception. Although her husband's death left her impoverished, she loved to have her grand-children over and make them treats such as puff-wheat balls. Up until her grandmother's death, my grandma saw Rose-Emma very frequently: she actually worked at the nursing home where she lived and would spend her lunches with her, bringing her children, including my mother, to see her often.

Rose-Emma Martineau married Paul Berthelette, who was the grandson of Joseph Berthelet Sr., a Métis leader of the community of Pointe-à-Grouette (known today as Sainte-Agathe), Manitoba. St-Onge (1985) identified him as the most affluent member of the community (1985:165) with the highest yield of wheat and bushels of potatoes (1985 :166). He

was also instrumental in facilitating education and religious institutions in the community (St-Onge 1985: 157-8). Joseph Berthelet was named the local tax collector for the community and his son, Joseph Berthelet Jr., was named pound keeper. Following the Manitoba Act, the only patented and delivered claim of land to the original claimant was to Joseph Berthelet Jr., as shown in Figure 1:

Figure 1 : Joseph Berthelet Jr. Scrip



DOMINION OF CANADA.
PROVINCE OF MANITOBA.
County of Provencher
Parish of Ste Agathe

I, Joseph Berthelet of the Parish of Ste Agathe in the County of Provencher in the Province of Manitoba, labourer – make oath and say as follows:

1. I claim to be entitled to participate in the allotment and distribution of the 1,400,000 acres of land set apart for Half-breed children, pursuant to the Statutes in that behalf.

2. I was born on or about the 5th day of October A.D. 1856 at the Parish of Ste Agathe – in said Province; and am now of the full age of nineteen – years

3. Joseph Berthelet, half breed is my father
Françoise Caron, " is my mother;
my said father was the half-breed head of a family resident in the Parish of Ste Agathe in the said Province, on the fifteenth day of July, A.D. 1870.

4. I was not the head of any family at the last named date and I have not made any claim other than the above in this or any other Parish, nor have I claimed or received as an Indian any annuity moneys from the Government of said Dominion.

Joseph his Berthelet
mark

Sworn before me at the Parish and County aforesaid on the eight day of December A.D. 1875, having been first read and explained in the french language to the said deponent, who seemed perfectly to understand the same, and affixed his mark in my presence.

Commissioner.

My ancestors went back and forth across the Medicine Line. My great-great-grandfather, Paul Berthelette, one of Joseph Berthelet Jr.'s youngest children, married my great-great-grandmother Rose-Emma Martineau in Leroy, North Dakota in 1895. They then travelled back to Manitoba and settled in the town of Aubigny, then known as La Grande Pointe de la Saline, or "The Large

Point of Salt Marsh". This town is located in the rural municipality of Morris, 40 kilometers south of Winnipeg along the Red River.

My grandmother grew up in Aubigny in a big family, with five boys and five girls. Her father did not live at home very much: he spent his week trapping in the bush, and later commuted to Winnipeg from Aubigny for work. Essentially, her mother (Rose-Emma and Paul Berthelette's daughter Élénore) raised all her kids alone. They spent many of their days tobogganing, skating and playing hockey in the winter. During the summer, they played baseball, swam in the Red River, played with frogs by the bank, and made dolls and furniture out of clay. They had chickens, worked in the garden, played with mice as their mother shelled peas, and canned beans. Basically, they were poor but happy: they lived on porridge three times a day and, at school, they would always have jam and peanut butter sandwiches. They were often left to their own devices, so much so that their oldest sister was like a mother to the rest of them.

Important celebrations for the family included Christmas and New Year's: everyone looked forward to midnight Mass. My grandmother was in the choir and would practice every day after school for Christmas. She still remembers today how much she loved the beautiful songs. Her mother would stay behind to cook the turkey and prepare for the *réveillon*[2]. The whole family would come as well as a few neighbors. The only gifts they would receive would be at school, which would typically consist of a brown paper bag filled with an orange and hard candies. On Christmas Day and New Year's Day, her parents would leave to do *la Ronde*, which consisted of neighborly visits around town. The kids had the house to themselves and would direct visitors to where they thought their parents might be. Once a year, her father would also bless his entire family in a solemn ceremony. The family moved to Saint-Boniface when she was fourteen. This is where she met her husband, my grandfather, and raised her family.

For this project, I spoke to many people and asked them to share, in their own language, whatever stories they felt comfortable in telling for the purposes of studying narratives, how they are built, and how stories play an important role in how we learn our language and culture. I give great thanks to my grandmother for the stories she agreed to share with me. Many of the themes and events of which she spoke also emerge in the narratives told by other Michifs across Manitoba, as we will discuss in later chapters.

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[2] [revɛjɔ̃]: French-Canadian and Michif/Métis Christmas tradition, when families gather after midnight mass for a meal and a celebration.

Until the age of eleven, I grew up southeast of Winnipeg, in close proximity to the gates of the Red River floodway, on a traditional river lot which was 400 feet wide and two miles long. There, my parents had a vegetable farm where they supplemented their income from market gardening with several different occupations. We also periodically had animals such as chickens, cows and pigs, as well as dogs, cats and rabbits. Living along the highway outside the city, we were isolated from neighbors, and so extended and nuclear family were central to our daily lives. Especially in the summer, we spent many days with grandparents and cousins. During the holidays, we still celebrated many of the traditions associated with French-Canadian culture. At Christmas, when we were old enough, we attended midnight mass with my father, while my mother stayed at home with the younger ones in the family. We then had the pleasure of attending the *réveillon* at my paternal grandmother's house. She made all kinds of food. I remember the doughnuts she made and how we would try to eat as many doughnut holes as we possibly could. There were also meatpies, eggrolls, butter tarts, other assorted pastries and everything else she would make for us to eat, both at Christmas and anytime we would come for a visit. My uncle and cousins would then play some music for us to sing along to and we would open a present before collapsing back home in the early morning. I remember the first few years I was allowed to come to midnight mass. On Christmas eve, I would try to do as much outside as I possibly could to tire myself out, so I could fall asleep early in the evening and be rested for the night. Although it worked the first time, every year after that, I was just too excited for the night to come to possibly fall asleep. Today, many members of my extended family have made considerable efforts to maintain aspects of these traditions for the new generation.

Both of my grandmothers shared many traits that formed the backbone of their respective families. They embodied hard work and perseverance. Faith was a cornerstone in their lives. They set an example for us of faith and love and of what it looks like to have a personal relationship with God, whether in times of joy, hardship, pain or celebration. Both grew up in poverty and faced challenges I will never know, but their love and kindness, ambition and dedication, support and generosity have shaped our families. Today, being the mother of daughters has made me think more and more about the role that my grandmothers, my mother and my sister, as well as my aunts, have played in our lives. I turn to them as inspiration for what I can be for my own children and, in turn, what I can teach them to be for each other and one day, for their own children and grandchildren.

So, this project has been for me an opportunity to learn more about my family's origins. Many of the experiences Michifs have shared with me as part of this project echo stories my grandmother told us about growing up. There is a collective memory and experience for Michifs in the Red River valley. Learning of others' experiences, memories and stories has helped me expand my knowledge and understanding of my own family's story.

This has also been an opportunity for me to celebrate my Michif/*Métis* heritage. As part of this process, I applied for Métis citizenship, and involved myself in community activities in both Manitoba, my home province, and Saskatchewan. I have met some wonderful people whom I respect deeply. My goal now is to have any work I do in the future honor those with whom I have recently collaborated as to further the goals and aspirations they have for their own languages as much as mine.

Furthermore, this work is also for the rest of my generation of Michif/Métis youth, in the hope of giving them a sense of communal experience. Dandeneau et al. (2012)'s work on Métis resilience indicates that most youth participants who were reclaiming their Métis identity experienced 'a cultural impoverishment': their grand-parents lived as Métis without declaring themselves as such, their parents never lived their Métisness and now, the youth are reclaiming their Métis identity, but do not know where to start. They are looking to discover, for them, what makes them Métis.

Wilson (2008) stated that if research does not change you, then you simply haven't done it right. These past seven years, and in fact, my entire academic journey, have undoubtedly changed my life. I have met so many people over the last twelve years who have helped me in some way or another in my journey. I feel grateful for what I have learned, and I am humbled by how much I still have to learn.

The period of time during which I wrote this thesis was, in many ways, a turbulent one. Over the course of my program, my husband and I were very blessed with the birth of two children. It was also the time of the COVID-19 pandemic. These have been times of uncertainty and fear, especially for our elder speakers most at risk from the effects of the virus. In the spring of 2021, as vaccinations for COVID were spreading, and numbers slowly dwindling following the second and third waves of the virus, the country was shaken by the news, from the Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc, of the discovery of a large unmarked grave containing the bodies of children at the Kamloops Residential School in British Columbia. In my community and many others, this

discovery brought a new wave of mourning and deep sorrow for the many child victims of violence and murder in the residential school system in Canada. As a mother, as a Métis, and as a human being, I am shattered by the horror of the abuse these children suffered, often for no other reason than they could only speak their mother tongue. This is very difficult for me to write but my absolute worst nightmare is to have my children taken away from me, only to never see them again, and I cannot bear knowing so many people, both parents and children, went through this hellish nightmare.

Unfortunately, this was only one residential school. After the news broke about the mass grave, other communities began scans of residential school sites. Sioux Valley Dakota Nation (in Manitoba) resumed work that had been due to start in 2019 and identified 104 potential graves in three cemeteries, in the hope of identifying victims and bringing their stories back to life. On June 2nd, a few short days after the announcement from Kamloops, Cowessess First Nation in Saskatchewan began scanning the cemetery near the former Marieval Indian Residential School. On June 24th, they announced a preliminary finding of a staggering 751 unmarked graves. The Cowessess First Nation (*nehiyawak* and *anishnabemwak*) believe that the Catholic Church removed headstones in the 1960s. Oral history of the community and elders knew of the burial site and that there were the remains of both adults and children onsite[3]. This residential school was in operation for almost a century, opening in 1899 and closing its doors only in 1996. Children from both Saskatchewan and Manitoba were sent to Marieval. Other unmarked graves were also found in Cranbrook, B.C. with the use of radar penetrating technology. The search continues by First Nations across the country, and more stories, names and truth continue to surface, thus confirming the oral history in many of the affected communities.

Cindy Blackstock, in Somos (2021), urges: “The survivors told [the truth about residential schools] through their tears and through the pain so that it would be documented. The way to really honour those children in the ground and the survivors is to implement those piercing [Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC)] calls to action”. Events such as these make us face again the question of what we are doing in our everyday lives to be part of the change we are hoping to see in our country. What are we doing to ensure such practices, overt or

[3] Statement from Chief Cadmus Delorme, of Cowessess First Nation. https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/saskatchewan/cowessess-marieval-indian-residential-school-news-1.6078375 (accessed June 24th, 2021)

covert, systemic and individual, are repudiated? How do we ensure that Indigenous values, worldviews, spirituality, ceremonies, traditions, histories, well-being, health and languages are reclaimed and treasured? And how can universities, as Western institutions, stand with Indigenous people, their Indigenous students and faculty, and give them a space to heal? How can they also atone for the role they have played in the assimilatory practices that have been far too prevalent in this country?

Since I myself am not a native speaker of an endangered language, such as the ones discussed in this thesis, I will not be able to fully comprehend what it means to have the weight of the future of a language rest on your shoulders. My francophone ancestors were not victims of violence because they spoke their language. For a time, however, it was forbidden in schools in Manitoba and teachers had to break the law in order to teach in the French language. My paternal grandmother frequently told us about having to frantically hide her books if ever a school inspector came by. As a speaker of French-Canadian, or *canadien français*, I grew up with the reality of speaking a minority language, the fear of losing one's language, and the need to fight for its rights and its recognition within the community. Many of my relatives fought for French language rights in Manitoba and that sense of pride and commitment to the protection of French in the prairies is very strong in our family.

In a minority language setting, speakers come to truly realize how much their language is their identity. When you manage to hold on to your language, your identity and your traditional ways, in spite of all the obstacles and in spite of the odds – just as many Michif elders, and other Indigenous peoples have – you discover that you are resilient and that you are a survivor. This knowledge in turn becomes the source of deep-seeded power.

For a SSHRC Storyteller competition, when we were asked to find a creative way to explain the purpose of our work, I was inspired to write a poem that I have included at the end of this preface chapter. The (whooping) crane is one of the oldest birds on Earth: fossils from 3.5 million years ago resembling the modern crane have been found. Its territory extends across the prairies, as well as throughout most of central and western North America. However, after only a few hundred years of European settlement and destruction of their habitat, this species was severely decimated, with only 21 cranes counted in 1941. Through countless conservation

efforts, in 2006-7, the numbers were up to almost 500, a number that has been maintained today[4]. The story of the whooping crane and its rise from near-extinction struck me as analagous to the story of many Indigenous languages in North America, including the languages unique to the Michif/Métis studied here. The Michif/Métis, also a prairie people, lived on an extended territory, travelling as intermediaries between many different peoples, until the decimation of the buffalo and the displacement of many of their communities forced them to find refuge in Road Allowances. Many speak of going *underground* during this period, of no longer living as Michifs. In this work, the cry of the whooping crane evokes the many languages that have been awakening in the past few years, thanks to the renewed interest from people, organizations and governments in protecting, promoting and revitalizing Indigenous languages. Today, more and more people are self-declaring *Métis* and applying for citizenship with the Métis Nation. As such, this song is a message of hope and optimism for the type of work we do as linguists, as educators, etc. to facilitate the reclamation of these endangered languages. It is a hope borne of the endless work, tireless dedication and passion that every speaker involved in this project has shown time and time again.

[4] https://naturecanada.ca/discover-nature/endangered-species/whooping-cranes/

The Crane

Have you ever listened to the song of the majestic whooping crane
The oldest keeper of the prairie sky and land
Kayaash she roamed free moving with the Earth’s seasons
And the sun shone brightly on her red-crested crown.

But with the dusk came hunters with their guns and steel
The crane sounded the guard call as the winter set in
She hid in the shadows of the shrinking grasslands
For a long time the old crane did not sing again.

Lost in the night their voices hoarse from quiet cry
Her children never knew her loud and rhythmic tune
Or the knowledge of the world she held in her silence
Without her call many did not know where to come home.

Now the dawn rises, her grandchildren flap their wings
Calling for the old whooping crane to sing again
Rising from the shadows, claws unearthing winter
Old crane joins her children in a cadenced choir.

The young rejoice in her song and the freed spring
Listen to every note, learn each of their meanings
Ask the wind to keep them in its undulating waves
Carefully carve them in the earth for safekeeping.

So when the chicks big and small hear the wind’s howl
They celebrate the old ways of the whooping crane
Eyes to the horizon, their hearts warm as they know
Never will the whooping crane be silent again.

Chapter 1: Introduction

"The study of narrative is the study of the ways humans experience the world". (Connelly and Clandinin, 1990:2)

The goal of this research project was to study languages of the Michif/ Métis[5] people through stories and consider the key components of doing research with stories and narratives. The outcomes of this process were to record, bank and eventually disseminate new language data for languages of the Michif people, in order to further our understanding of Michif narrative structure and its role in oral history. We also hope to help build a legacy for the speakers' families and future Michif/ Métis language learners. At the heart of storywork is building lasting relationships with the languages' speakers, as much as possible within the constraints of graduate work, through principles of Indigenous methodology, participatory action research and anthropological participant observation.

In this first chapter, we will first define the notion of *narrative*, and its main communicative functions, both recapitulative and evaluative (§ 1.1). Although Chapter 3 largely deals with aspects of Indigenous methodology, we will also include an introductory general discussion here in 1.2 of protocols specifically pertaining to storywork. We will also introduce some aspects of narrative structure specifically in Algonquian languages as well as some previous studies in narrative structure in Michif (§1.3). We will also contextualize this work by introducing who are the Michif/ Métis people (§1.4), and finally in 1.5, we will outline the contents of the following chapters and the remainder of the dissertation.

1.1. The narrative

Narratives are, in all their forms, language communication which requires a teller (speaker) and an addressee. Narratives are interactions, where the story is specifically molded and delivered with the addressee, or the audience, in mind. Together, the audience and the teller build coherence. The way stories are told, which stories are told, within a community may often "reflect and disclose ... cultural presuppositions and values" (Polanyi 1978 in Toolan, 2001: 159). Stories reflect a community's perspective and how they see the world. They embody a

[5]Both Michif and Métis terms of reference for the People/ Nation are used conjointly to reflect the fact that many Michif/Métis prefer to self-identify in their language, i.e. using *Michif* to refer both to their language and their people, while others still prefer to self-identify using the term Métis or *Métis* (French pronunciation). Métis is the term used by governmental bodies such as the Métis Nations, etc. and in legal documents such as the Canadian Constitution and other court cases, while the term *Michif* is often used in grassroots movements.

worldview and an understanding of the world and have some kind of purpose relevant to their community's values.

In its utmost simplicity, a minimal narrative is a "sequence of two clauses which are temporally ordered" (Labov, 1972:361). It contains one temporal juncture, which refers to the "non-reversibility of narrative clauses without change of the original semantic interpretation of the story" (Toolan, 2001: 148). In English, a simple shift in word order changes the semantic interpretation of the story, as in (1) (author's examples):

(1) a. I met my sister in town, we had coffee and went to a movie.
b. I met my sister in town, we went to a movie and had coffee.

In this case, the shift in word order (without a change in temporal juncture) changes the sequence of events. In (1a), meeting for coffee happens before the movie; in (1b), it follows.

The rest of this section is organized as follows: 1.1.1. includes an overview of narrative functions; 1.1.2, of types of narratives, with a particular interest for conversational stories and life stories. Finally, in 1.1.3, we discuss what makes a skilled storyteller.

1.1.1. Narrative functions

Events in a narrative are removed from the time of (story)telling, exploiting the language feature of *displacement*, i.e. "the ability of human language to be used to refer to things and events that are removed in space and time, from either the speaker or addressee" (Toolan, 2001: 5). This feature contrasts narratives from commentaries and descriptions.

Typically, narratives have an intention, or a trajectory, and have a double function. Labov and Waletzky (1997) identify a recapitulative function, i.e. to summarize and remember past events of a certain relevance of significance, and an *evaluative* function, which considers a narrative's role as a resource for its "human users" and the requirement that "a narrative has a point, is worth telling, as far as the teller (and preferably the addressee also) is concerned" (Toolan, 2001: 144). The nature of evaluative function in narratives is a point of difference between narratives and reports: in the latter, the audience needs to assign relevance to the narrator's recapitulations: in a police report, for instance, the narrator does not know which details of their report will be significant to the police officer or detective (Polanyi 1989). In stories or narratives, however, it is the teller who assigns prominence and makes relevance, relying on the teller-listener common understanding of the complex network of values and

beliefs, as well as manners of expression, they share to make sense of the world (see Labov and Waletzky 1967; Labov 1972; Polanyi 1989).

We discuss the evaluative function of narratives in Chapter 4, but in general terms, it refers to the means and narrative strategies and phrasings to sustain the significance and reportability of the story (Toolan, 2001: 151). The narrator uses an array of strategies to foreground story events to which they assign relevance and to mark key durative-descriptive background information essential to the contextualization and passage of time in the story. There are, however, no 'absolute' evaluative devices. Polanyi (1989:22) notes that "any device available for evaluation can be used non-evaluatively as well or can be so over-used that it becomes a textual norm". The evaluative function of a narrative permeates throughout the entire narrative in a variety of ways, including narrator comments breaking the thread of storytelling, and reported evaluations from the narrative or other characters in the time of the story. Changes in stress, volume, intonation, and changes in register; comparatives and other adverbials; repetition, reported speech are only a few phonological, lexical, syntactical and discoursal strategies at the narrator's disposal to assign prominence within their story (see Polanyi 1989).

1.1.2. Types of narratives

Schank (1990:29) identifies five different types of narratives, namely a) "official" stories whose sources are from formal institutions such as school or government; b) invented/adapted stories, created by people or individuals or rather adapted from reality rather than invented from nothing; c) first-hand "life" stories of the storyteller's personal experience; d) second-hand narratives, which are first-hand stories storytellers have heard or remembered; and finally, e) culturally common stories, which come from the environment.

The types of narratives studied as part of this project mostly consist of first person, or "life story" narratives, with interwoven elements of reported second-hand narratives from relatives. Linde (1993) identifies the evaluative point of first-person narratives as the illustration of an aspect of the speaker's character, conveying messages of *I am such and such a person, since I acted in such and such a way* (Linde, 1993:21). Narratives as life stories express our sense of self, "who we are and how we got that way" (Linde, 1993:3), and function as social units. By telling our life story, we engage with others to share with them our sense of self and to affirm our belonging to a certain social group, and the values of said social group permeate the narrative. Linde notes that in "both in its content (the items that it includes and excludes) and in

its form (the structure that is used to make it coherent), [a life story] is the product of a particular culture" (Linde, 1993:11). In the narratives presented in this dissertation, (co-)tellers share who they are as Michifs, who they were growing up, and how the reality in their community has changed over time.

In their form, narratives have some degree of formulation or prefabrication, and include types of sentences "that we have seen or heard, or think we have seen or heard before" (Toolan, 2001:4). They are not only social units, but oral units as well, told discontinuously, across a long period of time, as it is not possible to tell one's life story in one sitting. Tellers choose moments of their life stories, either that happen to surface to memory, or that best suit the particular setting and the specific audience, or addressees. They bring up their stories over many occasions, their stories often centering around landmark events, or life stepping stones, examples of which include career milestones, marriage and divorce, religious or ideological conversion (Linde, 1993:11). The narratives, furthermore, may also change over time to reflect the evolution of the tellers themselves, and "changes in [their] long term situation[s], values, understanding[s] and (consequently) discursive practices" (Linde, 1993:51). In the context of this research project, the narratives were often tailored to a double audience, namely to their family members or friends present, and to the researcher. Their relatives were often familiar with the stories, which had often been told before, but the focus of these narratives shifts to meet the goals of the research and the researcher.

In conversations, participants (i.e. users of the language) recognize when a story is being told, and when we move "out of the conversation and into a storyworld: [with] another time, often another location, populated by other participants" (Polanyi, 1989:15). The defining characteristics of conversation as defined by Rühlemann (2007 in Clancy 2015) include shared context, co-construction, real-time processing, and relation and discourse management. These features operate within given cultural and social conventions which shape a turn-taking system. Normal turn-taking (and contribution opportunities for participants) are disrupted when someone decides to tell a story. As such, the start of a conversational story is marked by some kind of entrance talk, which indicates the storyteller's intention, and ends with exit talk, which bridges back to the conversation where normal turn-taking can resume. Polanyi (1989: 46) identifies three main constraints for a conversational storyteller: a) the story needs to have a 'point', and be relevant to the talk at hand; b) it must be well integrated and grow organically from the

preceding conversation; and c) it must be specifically tailored to the recipients present, who will, in a successful conversational story, support the storyteller with tokens of affirmation and comprehension.

1.1.3. Skilled storytellers

In many studies on storywork, researchers ask the question of *what* makes a good storyteller. Archibald (2008) posed the question during her research to one of her contributors who replied, in reference to renowned local Stó:lō storyteller, Dolly Felix: "I just think when people are gifted with storytelling, the stories become so much part of their character and that's what really captures people's attention" (Archibald, 2008:66). Storytellers, in a way, become and embody their stories that come alive through their expressions, prosody and gestures. In Indigenous theory, in McLeod (2007)'s words, "great storytellers are embodiments of the social climate around them. Through storytelling, they are able to question the world around us. They are able to question the injustices that are often inflicted on them. Storytelling is a subversive act that causes people to question society around them" (McLeod, 2007:99-100). As McLeod (2007:13) shows, in the traditional Cree genre, bringing the addressees to question or critically reflect on the point or goal of the story is done very open-endedly, to allow for listeners to internalize the stories and learn for themselves the message conveyed by the storyteller.

Furthermore, Linde (1993) has also argued that a characteristic of a good storyteller is "their ability to construe a moral meaning for events that appear to others to be morally neutral. The best storyteller I have ever known appeared to live in a densely moral world" (Linde, 1993: 22). For example, if a bad meal typically elicits responses such as *this is inedible, this is no good*, the storyteller Linde knew might have responded *It's a crime to do this to a good steak*. As such, this "moral sensitivity allowed him to perceive almost all his experience as narratable" (Linde, 1993: 23). In other words, good storytellers transport us to their story, make us vulnerable and feel the emotions in the moment and the place to which we are brought. They have a gift of making their story feel relevant in some way to our lives, all the while asking us to question the world around us. To do so, storytellers rely on a variety of narrative strategies, from intonation and timbre of voice, to exclamations and gestures, the use of direct and indirect speech, and morphosyntactic choices such as the use of the narrative present to captivate their listeners and deliver their story.

Direct speech tells the story from the character's point of view, the character's tenses, pronouns, deixis and colouring, while indirect speech is from the narrator's perspective (Toolan, 2001: 130). These strategies can be used to bring the audience into the centre of the story, or to take some distance, as exemplified by Archibald (2008): "The greatest storyteller was Ed Leon. He could make any little story funny. Just the way he tells it, the expressions he uses, the actions. It wasn't just using your mouth, it was using your hands, your body" (Archibald, 2008: 65). Some narrative strategies, such as the process of evaluation and co-construction as well as temporal ordering, will be the focus of this dissertation (§1.2-1.3 and Chapters 4-5).

1.2. The process of Indigenous Storywork

Storywork within graduate and academic research is an emergent field for Indigenous researchers. Their presence in academic settings is a crucial step for valuing and prioritizing different types and sources of knowledge within these circles. Indigenous scholars are at the forefront of educating and sharing ways in which to meaningfully engage with the Indigenous community and elders in regards to research. In 1.2.1, we discuss key pillars of Indigenous storywork and in 1.2.2, different types of Indigenous stories or narratives.

1.2.1. Indigenous storywork

In oral cultures, oral narratives connect generations past to present and future, and carry knowledge crucial to survival, resilience and prosperity, as well as understanding of the world both visible and invisible. As Richard Preston has put it, discussing the importance of narrative in Cree collective memory, "narratives have been the basis for understanding Cree experiences" (McLeod, 2007: 11). McLeod goes on to add "It is through stories that memory and history are transmitted" in the *nêhiyâw* (Cree) world. In oral cultures, such as the *nêhiyawak*, the new generation is part of a collective much larger than themselves. In the Cree culture, as in many other Indigenous cultures, there is a moral responsibility to transmit stories of grandparents and other ancestors.

> "Kinship, *wâhkôhtowin*, grounds the collective memory within *nêhiyawêwin*. [...] *wâhkôhtowin* keeps narrative memory grounded and embedded within an individual's life stories. It also grounds the transmission of Cree narrative memory: people tell stories to other people who are part of the stories and who assume the moral responsibility to remember." (McLeod, 2007: 15)

McLeod states that Cree narratives could be understood as living organisms, but that, even with their dynamic structure, there is always "a great deal of stability" (McLeod, 2007:15) and reliability in the stories and storytelling process.

Archibald (2008) puts forth seven principles for using storytelling as a tool for teaching and education, the first four principles being referred to as the 4Rs and constituting the cornerstones of Indigenous methodology in storywork: respect, responsibility, reciprocity and reverence. To these four key principles, Archibald adds holism, interrelatedness and synergy. Stories are based on balance, making the four elements of our being, the heart, mind, body and spirit come and work together.

Archibald (2008) emphasizes the importance, as academics, of humbling oneself when engaging in storywork, taking on the role of student or listener. Listening, however, does not simply entail the physics of the auditory sense, but it means engaging in the story, "visualis[ing] characters and their actions" (Archibald, 2008: 8) as well as being vulnerable and let[ting] ourselves feel the emotions of the story and our emotional reactions. Vizenor (1987) echoes this idea of engaged listening: "The story doesn't work without a participant… there has to be a participant and someone has to listen. I don't mean listening in the passive sense. You can even listen by contradiction… So that's really critical in storytelling" (Vizenor, 1987:300-1). Chief Simon Baker, from whom Archibald did some of her research shared the teaching of "sit down and listen, and that's the thing, our ancestors used to say" (Feb 17, 1992, 2008:47). With their work, Archibald noted their research moved from the conventional interview process, to "research as conversation", i.e. an open-ended interview with both sides engaging, "research as chat", i.e. when researcher and participant(s) interact frequently and are familiar with one another, and finally, to "research as storytelling", when participants told life experiences to illustrate strategies and factors which have present day implications (Archibald, 2008:47).

For Indigenous scholars, especially, the key of research is balance and harmony. The story *Coyote's eyes*, told in 1982 by Terry Tafoya (Archibald 2008:7-10), speaks of the Coyote who, by not heeding Rabbit's council, lost his eyes and is staggering around, blind. His Cousins, Buffalo and Mouse, taking pity on him, each offer him one of their eyes. But Buffalo's is too big and Mouse is too small, one letting in too much light and the other, too little, and Coyote staggers about with his mismatched eyes. To Archibald, the metaphor of Coyote's eyes could show the relationship between orality, or oral traditions, and literacy; between Indigenous

storytellers and academic researchers; between research methods and Indigenous theory (methodology), as she explains: "Coyote was given the challenge of making her/his eyes work together, in harmony and balance, in order to have a clearer view of the world. I [Archibald] was challenged to bring together, in harmony and balance, a First Nations knowledge and way of knowing and research methodology" (Archibald, 2008:12). There are many ways in which Western academic practices and Indigenous methodology approach research and learning differently, in protocols, practices, goals, ownership and dissemination. Especially when it comes to work as personal as life stories and storywork, research is not possible without understanding and respecting Indigenous methodology protocols and relationships. In Chapter 3, we will revisit some of these principles of storywork in our discussion on Indigenous methodologies, and how they can be integrated practically in this research.

1.2.2. Types of stories and protocols

In most Indigenous traditions, there are two main types of stories that are told. First, there are personal life stories of lived past events important to history of the people, nation and community. Secondly, there are ancient stories, legends and epic tales, which are considered sacred and told in ceremony, or following specific protocols.

In Cree, 'spiritual histories' (or ancient stories) are called *âtayôhkêwina*. *Âtayôhkanak* "spiritual helpers" such as *wîsahkêcâhk* 'elder brother' and other spiritual grandmothers and grandfathers, figure in these narratives, which provides insight into the relationship of humans with the ecology and their environment. This relationship to the land is central to these narratives, and in the Cree worldview in general, "the relationship [of various beings] to Cree people is constructed more along the lines of relationship to space and location rather than linear time" (McLeod, 2007:17). As such, narratives are anchored both in generations and the relationship within family and community, as well as with the land and space to which families would be anchored and keep coming back to. As well, as stated by Archibald, the connection between time and space is inseparable: "The stories cannot be separated from geographical locations, from actual places in the land… And the stories are so much part of these places that it is almost impossible for future generations to lose the stories because there are so many imposing geological elements…" (2008:74). These stories are told following certain protocols and guidelines. Many Cree and other Plains Indigenous sacred stories, such as *wîsakecâhk* or *nanabozho* tales, are typically only shared with snow on the ground, the winter being the time,

traditionally, for storytelling. The Michif/ Métis people have a very rich folkore and wide repertoire of *lii contes* (Michif term for *âtayôhkêwina*). Amongst the best known figures in Michif/ Métis oral literature are *Wisaakechahk/ Nanaabozho*, *Chi Jean,* the Roogaroo (i.e. Michif variation of French *loup-garou* 'werewolf' and Cree shapeshifter), *li Djiabl* (the Devil, often in the form of a dog or a handsome stranger), the Windigo/Wihtigo, and the *mamaakwasesak* 'Little People'. They also have many *contes* featuring different personified animals (Préfontaine and Barkwell 2006).

Âcimowina, or *lii zistwer*, on the other hand, are life experience stories also transmitted through generations. Take for example, the memory of Jim Kâ-Nipitehtêw (Ahenakew and Wolfart, eds. 1998), who passed on stories of elders about the signing of Treaty 6l and other historical events. In the case of societies such as Canadian, or North American, where the Indigenous point of view and perspective is woefully absent in historical records, oral tradition and narrative accounts are all the more precious.

Although it is a fact self-evident to Indigenous peoples, in December 1997, in the Delgamuukw v. British Columbia case, the Supreme Court of Canada decided that courts must "come to terms with the oral histories of aboriginal societies," adding that "the laws of evidence must be adapted in order that this type of evidence can be accommodated and placed on an equal footing with the types of historical evidence that the courts are familiar with, which largely consists of historical documents" (Delgamuukw v. British Columbia 1997, para. 87 in Ignace and Ignace 2017). This right, to be able to rely on one's own epistemology (way of thinking) and understanding of the past to represent their own historical claims in court and other institutional systems, had been denied before then (Ignace and Ignace, 2017:13), and in this sense, this decision was a point of celebration and a victory in the re-affirmation of rights of Indigenous peoples. Archibald notes that many First Nations storytellers use personal life experiences as "teaching stories in a manner similar to how they use traditional stories" (Archibald, 2008:112). For example, Archibald's participant told his life story, which is now used in the grade curriculum in British Columbia: "You hear Elders say, "I want to share this [life story] with you so that you don't have to go what I went through" (Frank Brown in Archibald, 2008:114). His "life story has become a teaching tool for him and now others. His way of making meaning from it can benefit youth because of the many lessons/teachings it contains" (Archibald, 2008:114). There are explicit connections made between the life story experience and present day, often

taking back the youth of today to the time of the storyteller's childhood and upbringing, back to their ancestors' way of life, to their connection to the land, to their family, traditions, daily routines, and spirituality. This experience helps youth understand who they are and where they come from.

Oral narratives are crucial to understanding people, nations, their collective history. Ed St. Pierre, a Michif from Crescent Lake whose memories were published by Gabriel Dumont Institute and translated to their mother tongue, Michif, by his wife, Harriet St. Pierre, says as his closing remarks:

> "For anyone to be productive in life, they must first be proud of who they are, their culture, their language, and their heritage. We should ensure that our young folks achieve a good standard of education. [...] Young folk today are so lucky to have all this opportunity for training and education that's available, not like it was in the past. Education is so very important today" (St. Pierre, 2012: 59).

As such, his narratives on the way of life of being Michif in Crescent Lake have two ultimate goals for the future generation to which the stories are transmitted: 1) to instill and share pride of being Michif, their language, and their way of life in Crescent Lake; 2) to be a resource for education, that learning about the past is part of the all-too important education of youth today. Like many of Archibald (2008)'s participants (see above), the purpose of this life experience narrative is to help youth move forward and excel by knowing who they are and where they come from. They then assume the responsibility of remembering and embodying these teachings for their own descendants.

1.3. The structure of Indigenous narratives

My experience of listening to Indigenous narratives is that they often begin in the same manner, with an introductory statement, identifying oneself as the storyteller and contextualizing the environment of the story, i.e. the time, place and reason why this story is being shared. Jancewicz (2000) notes this also for Naskapi narratives, which typically start with an identifying sentence such as *nîya chusip kwânis* (It's me, Joseph Guanish) (Jancewicz, 2000:163), and then an introduction of the general topic, such as *I want to tell you about...*. Part of contextualizing the story is 'oral footnoting' (McLeod, 2007: 16), which is about acknowledging how the storyteller came to know the story. Furthermore, McLeod speaks of storytellers' humility, as they show *respect* for "the larger collective knowledge of their people: [they don't] claim to possess great knowledge" (McLeod, 2007: 17), said knowledge and stories being greater than themselves.

Jancewiz (2000) also notes the occurrence of repetitions in Naskapi narratives, to emphasize a feeling or an effect, such as a sense of togetherness at Christmas. In each repetition, there is a "slight shift in the grammatical structure" (Jancewicz, 2000: 167). If repetitions serve to emphasize an effect, they can also bring the discourse to its peak and build some narrative tension (Jancewicz, 2000:173). Repetition is a crucial part of narrative cohesion. Enumerations and expressions can be referenced throughout the narrative, as well as general semantic ideas, verb stems, morphemes or order markings (2000:175). Banks (1994 in Jancewicz 2000) argues that Naskapi repetition not only marks prominence but has pedagogical significance.

Cyr (1991:69-74) suggests the independent order is used to background events in Algonquian. Jancewicz (2000) notes a similar pattern in his narrative, where foregroundable common knowledge information (for community members) is backgrounded with the repeated use of the independent. In Menominee narratives, Milligan and Macaulay (2002) note that the independent verb largely has a quotative meaning, translated as *it is said that....*

Although there are not very many studies on narrative strategies in Michif languages, one of the narrative strategies Rhodes (2001) notes most commonly in his study of Michif textual narratives is the frequent embedding of direct speech (also a strategy attested in one of its parent languages, Cree). There are also, like in Naskapi, many instances of repetition. This strategy is common to most skilled Michif storytellers and mostly refers to instances where two sentences both refer to the same event. Although there is referential overlap and some lexical/syntactic parallelism, typically the second sentence offers a slightly different view or perspective. There are many examples of this in our data, and we provide just a few here (2-3):

(2) Repetition in Michif Fransay

Li gornoy si bon. Oh son bon, li kwis di gornoy son bon.

Li	gornoy	si	bon.	Oh	son	bon	li	kwis
the.PL	frog	is	good		are	good	the.PL	leg/thigh
di	gornoy	son	bon					
of	frog	are	good					

'Frogs taste good. Oh they're good, frog legs taste good'. (STL)

In this example from Michif Fransay, the repetition of *si bon/ son bon* serves to emphasize the tastiness of frog legs. Note the variation in inflection, the first instance of *si bon* in the singular inflection and later repeated in the plural as *son bon*.

Similarly, in (3), there are two instances of the root *meschi-* ‘to burn down’. The first instance is in transitive inanimate form (they *burned* them (inanimate) *down*) (VTI), with unnamed actors burning down houses in Ste. Madeleine to force out its inhabitants. The root’s second instance is an inanimate intransitive verb (VII), with the house as actor/subject, as such triggering a change of perspective.

(3) Repetition in (mixed) Michif

...**aen-kii-meschikahkik** not mezoon-inaan, **kii-meschiitek**, aen shipwehteyaahk akota ooshchi.

aen	kii-meschikahkik	not	mezoon-inaan,
COMP	PST-burn down.TI-3PL>0	1PL.POSS	house-POSS.PL

kii-meeschitek,	aen shipwehte-yaahk	akota	ooshchi.
PST-burn down-CONJ.0	COMP leave.AI-1EXCL	there	from

‘...After they burned down our houses, it (our house) burned down, we left from there (Ste-Madeleine).’ (GF)

Furthermore, Rhodes notes the process of overlaying in his corpus, and argues that this strategy is Michif-specific. Overlaying is defined mainly as a reiteration of groups of sentences, each group containing sentences that stand in paraphrase relation to sentences in other paragraphs, i.e. elsewhere in the story (Rhodes, 2001:458-9). Example (4) here is an example from Rhodes (2001) to illustrate this overlaying:

(4) Overlaying in Michif:

1. Enn fwa moon vyeu li bwaa kii-paytaaw, li bwaa moor.
   One time my husband brought home some firewood,deadfall
2. **Aygwa li bwaa ooma li swayr ngii-waapahtayn.**
   That evening, I saw that wood.
3. ***kii-waashishkotayw li bwaa ooma.***
   The wood glowed.
4. ***L’itay komm li feu.***
   It was like fire.
5. Aygwa kii-ashtaaw daan aen kwaen naytay li pwel kaa-kii-apit.
   He placed it in the corner near where the stove was.
6. **Ngii-waapahtayn ooma li bwaa kaa-tipishkaak.**
   I saw that wood when it became dark.
7. Daen aen kwaen kii-ashtayw.
   It was in the corner.
8. Toot li bwaa kii-shkwashtaaw.
   He piled up all the wood.
9. ***L’itay komm deu zyeu komm aen ashtayki, komm la flaamb kii-ashtayw.***
   It was like two eyes were there; like there was a flame.
10. **Moon garsoon wiishta kii-waapahtam.**
    My son saw it, too.

11. *Ngii-shaykishinaan.*
    We were scared.
12. *« Kaykway » ntayyihtaynaan, « kaa-waapahtamaah anima? »*
    We thought, what is this that we see?
13. *On l'a paansi, « s'itay li djiaab », ntayihtaynaan.*[6]
    We thought, For sure it was the devil. (Rhodes, 2001:458-9)

In this excerpt, there are four identified *microscripts,* which Rhodes (2001) defines as events described/told as the storyteller cycles through temporal order, expressing and highlighting details in different ways each time. If the story was to be told in a strict linear temporal order, the narrative might be re-organized by microscript, as shown below. The first event, in underlined sentences, elaborates on the narrator's husband bringing back home wood for the fire. The second microscript, i.e. bolded sentences, refers to the narrator seeing the wood in the dark. Bolded and italicized clauses are part of the third microscript, describing what the firewood looked like. Finally, the fourth microscript (italicized and underlined) describes the narrator's (scared) reaction.

Microscript 1: Bringing back wood in the home for the fire

(1) Enn fwa moon vyeu li bwaa kii-paytaaw, li bwaa moor.
One time my husband brought home some firewood,deadfall

(5) Aygwa kii-ashtaaw daan aen kwaen naytay li pwel kaa-kii-apit.
He placed it in the corner near where the stove was.

(7) Daen aen kwaen kii-ashtayw.
It was in the corner.

(8) Toot li bwaa kii-shkwashtaaw.
He piled up all the wood.

Microscript 2: Narrator notices woods in the dark

(2) **Aygwa li bwaa ooma li swayr ngii-waapahtayn.**
That evening, I saw that wood.

(6) **Ngii-waapahtayn ooma li bwaa kaa-tipishkaak.**
I saw that wood when it became dark.

(10)**Moon garsoon wiishta kii-waapahtam.**
My son saw it, too.

[6]Michif from the Turtle Mountain area studied by Rhodes is also known as heritage Michif, southern Michif, Turtle Mountain Michif or Michif-Cree. We will discuss this nomenclature further in Chapter 2.

Microscript 3: How the fire looked

(3) ***kii-waashishkotayw li bwaa ooma.***
The wood glowed.

(4) ***L'itay komm li feu.***
It was like fire.

(9) ***L'itay komm deu zyeu komm aen ashtayki, komm la flaamb kii-ashtayw.***
It was like two eyes were there; like there was a flame.

Microscript 4: Narrator's scared reaction

(11) *Ngii-shaykishinaan.*
We were scared.

(12) *« Kaykway » ntayyihtaynaan, « kaa-waapahtamaah anima? »*
We thought, what is this that we see?

(13) *On l'a paansi, « s'itay li djiaab », ntayihtaynaan.*
We thought, For sure it was the devil.

Each microscript contains repetitions, referring back to the same event, either providing a different perspective or adding a piece of information. The first clause of the first microscript (1) summarizes the entire event (the wood was brought into the house). Later on in the narrative, in clauses (5), (7) and (8), the events summarized in clause (1) are repeated, adding the fact that the wood is piled up, and in a corner. In the second microscript, clauses (2) and (6) are a repetition of one other, repeating both themes of *seeing the wood* and *the evening/darkness*. (10) adds some information, that not only did the narrator see the wood, but their son as well. This sets the stage for the fourth microscript, concerning their joint reaction to the glowing wood. The wood glowing is the content of the third microscript (underlined), the ideas of glowing eyes and fire being cycled around.

The circular storytelling format, embedded with repetition is, for Rhodes (2001), singular to Michif storytelling. In later chapters, we will explore elements of *how* stories are told, identifying basic structure of narratives, and elements combined to create coherence through causality and continuity (Linde 1993; Gimenez 2010). These are key for listeners to process and engage in the narratives in a particular way, in the Michif worldview and conceptualization of narratives.

1.4. The Michif/Métis people

The Michif or *Métis* nation, *la novel nasyon*, are a post-contact Indigenous people of the Prairies. Although many Michif/ Métis families originally moved to the West from the Great Lakes region, the common consciousness of the nation was born in the Red River valley. Not just the offspring of Indigenous (often Ojibwe) women and *les hommes du nord* (voyageurs who travelled West of the Great Lakes), the Nation formed and consolidated over many generations.

From the *hommes du nord*, voyageurs formed a group of Freemen, disengaged employees from their Eastern employers, who stayed in the North-West with their (Ojibwe) wives and children and began to live outside Indigenous bands. The families came together, and children began to intermarry, and with time no longer truly identified with their maternal Indigenous bands or eastern French-Canadian roots (Ens and Sawchuk 2015; Teillet, 2019:34-5). Oral history of elders, such as Brousse Flammand (Flammand 2020-1), speaks of eight generations of intermarriage for mixed-blood children to come together as a nation, and develop their own languages and ways of speaking, their own spirituality, ceremonies and traditions, and their own way of life. The ties of the Michif/ Métis to the land, to the Prairies or the North-West, is a central anchor of their identity: "Of all the things on earth, our motherland is the most important and sacred to us because we inherited it from our ancestors" (Teillet, 2019:11).

Although often referred to as buffalo hunters, well known for extremely well-organized and large horse and cart hunts, the Michif/ Métis experience in the Red River and on the Prairies has been particularly diverse. In the time of the fur trade, Michif/ Métis people (at the time known as *li Bruli,* or *li bwa bruli*) worked as interpreters or traders who often worked between the European traders and voyageurs of the North-West company as well as the Indigenous groups of the prairies, especially the Ojibwe whom they considered as family (Teillet 2019). Michif/ Métis kinship systems have always been complex: "In the midst of their migration, both seasonal and permanent, they [the Métis] came to rely on kin and define themselves through kin networks. [...] conceptualizing Metis ethnogenesis is a spider web, with finely spun connections of family, kin, and friendship obligations" (St-Onge and Podruchny, 2012: 62). At the time of the fur trade and the buffalo hunt, Michifs worked as hunters, traders, farmers, fishermen, interpreters, etc. depending on the availability of work and environmental conditions. Ens and Shawchuk (2015) argue that the genesis of the Michif/Métis people would have been much more challenging without the economic catalyst of the fur trade, which "put a premium on biracial and bicultural skills and offered relative isolation from the assimilating forces of large Anglo-American or Euro-Canadian populations" (Ens and Sawchuk, 2015:66).

As the landscape of the prairies shifted, the fur trade declined and the population of the bison, *li buflo*, was severely decimated primarily by governmental policies designed to clear the plains for the railway and starve Indigenous people in the plains, life for the Métis changed. While many Métis were working on the trapline or farming in the Red, Assiniboine and

Saskatchewan River valleys, the Canadian government was bringing in new settlers in the prairies to assimilate the Indigenous populations (Ens and Sawchuk 2015). From then on, the Michif/Métis have had to fight for the recognition of their existence, of their land, language, religious and hunting rights. Although the birth of the Nation is at the Red River, the homeland grew to be extensive as Michif/Métis people dispersed across the prairies on both sides of the Medicine Line (Canada-United States international border). The historic Métis homeland includes the three prairie provinces (namely Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta), and extends into western Ontario, eastern British Columbia, Northwest Territories and northern prairies in the United States.

The following map (Canadian Geographic, O'Toole, 2017) illustrates the traditional Michif/ Métis territory:

Figure 2: Traditional Michif/ Métis territory

As early as the beginning of the 19th century, there is a sense of nationhood that emerges among *lii bois bruli*. The song *la chanson di la gournouillère*, believed to be composed by the rhymester Pierriche (Pierre) Falcon the very night of the victory of the Battle of Seven Oaks over Lord Selkirk, on June 19th, 1816, is known by many today as the "Métis/Michif national anthem" (Chartrand, 2009:1). Ens and Sawchuk (2015) argue that the Battle of Seven Oaks was the

"military midwife in the birth of a new nation" (2015:68). Another symbolic marker of Métis nationalism surfacing during the Battle was the use of the blue flag with the infinity symbol, which in the twentieth century has become a universal symbol for the Nation (Ens and Sawchuk 2015).

Since its composition, *la chanson di la gournouillère* has been immensely popular amongst the Michif. It names the Métis by name, i.e. *li bois bruli*, and makes a claim to the land. It also captures a "quality [that the Métis] recognized in themselves" (Ens and Sawchuk, 2015). There are reports that the song was sung with much fervor during the Riel Resistance[7] in 1869 (Cowie 1913, in Ens and Sawchuk, 2015: 87), and was popular well into the mid-1870s (Ens and Sawchuk 2015). Even in 1885, it was apparently sung by Michif fighters in the Battle of Fish Creek to lift their spirits and steel themselves for battle (Chartrand, 2009:5). The second last verse is quoted here, to illustrate the jubilation and unity celebrated in the song:

> Oh! Si vous aviez vu tout si anglais,
> Ipi li bois bruli après. (bis)
> Di butte aen butte li Anglais culbutay.
> I li bois bruli jetai di cri di joaye![8]
>
> *Oh, if you only had seen these Englishmen*
> *And the Bois-Brûlés after them.*
> *From hill to hill the English stumbled.*
> *And the Bois-Brûlés let out shouts of joy!* (Chartrand, 2009:10)

At the time of the Red River Resistance (1869-70), the Métis came together and eventually formed a provisional government to negotiate the entrance of the Red River colony into Canada and to ensure a list of rights for the Métis was enshrined in the process, including a number of rights that pertained to equal language rights for both French and English in the courts, schools and legislature of the nascent province. It is to be noted that the 'French' spoken by the Métis in the Red River is *not* the standard Canadian-French. The 'French' spoken in the Red River was descended from the vernacular of the voyageurs, and influenced by Ojibwe and Cree (Burnouf et al. 2007). As more French missionaries and settlers would move in with a mandate to assimilate the Michif (Lavallée 1988), Michif people's language would be known by the new arrivals as

[7] Also known as the Red River Resistance.
[8] Michif spoken by Pierriche Falcon is also known today as Michif-French, or Michif Fransay. See Chapter 2 for a discussion on nomenclature.

“bad French”, and as *Michif* by their speakers. Furthermore, the list of rights did not include rights for other languages of the Michif/ Métis, who were often multilingual. The Michif/Métis of the buffalo hunt, for example, also developed a mixed language, which reflected their more intense contact with other Indigenous groups, particularly Cree as they dispersed further west. Even into the 1900s, the mixed language was referred to many speakers as “Cree”. Some songs from the era of the buffalo hunt have been recorded, including the Turtle Mountain song, which likely dates from the 1820s. This particular excerpt (see immediately below) is from a song recorded by Bakker (1997) from Modeste Gosselin in 1988. The song refers to the buffalo hunt in Red River carts, which mostly occurred between the 1820s and 1870s.

> La Montagne Tortue kâ-itohtânân
>   *We're going to Turtle Mountain*
> En charette kâ-wîtapasonân
>   *We're going in a Red River cart*
> Les souliers mous ka-kiskênân
>   *We're going to wear moccassins*
> L'écorce de boulot ka-misâhonân
>   *We'll wipe our asses with birchbark*! (Bakker, 1997:170; Teillet, 2019:101).

Michif/Métis people, as an Indigenous people of the prairies, were for a very large part of their history, an oral people and culture. As a nomadic people in constant movement, they left very few permanent structures or monuments: “the people in this history walked lightly on the land, at least in terms of their physical effect on the geography” (Teillet, 2019: xiv). Without many physical traces of their existence, many stories told by the Métis recount the movements and role of their ancestors in the many battles, both on the field and in the courts, that the Métis fought for recognition of their rights. To be connected to a prominent actor, a hero, in the many events of Métis history is a source of pride for Métis today.

These stories are how the Métis Nation defines its citizens, as argued by Teillet: “[The citizens’] stories and their motherland form the demarcation line between those who are of the Métis Nation and those who are not. Only the descendants of those who lived the stories within the geographic boundaries of their motherland are part of the Métis Nation” (Teillet, 2019:xiv). This sentiment echoes similar statements from Chartrand (2009:1): “As a group or collective, a people knows itself, and it is known, by its homeland and its stories which have been woven into the collective mind of the people through repetition over many generations”. As such, stories do not just document the history of the Michif/Métis nation, but they essentially define who the

Michif/Métis people are. Although there are countless books and reports on the identity of the Michif/ Métis people and their history[9], there are very few studies of Michif/ Métis narratives in the Michif people's own languages. These narratives, told in the Michif speakers' mother tongues, speak most loudly and forcefully of who are the Michif and *la novel nasyon*.

1.5. Organization of thesis

This thesis is organized in the following sections. Chapter 2 outlines some key characteristics of three languages unique to the Michif people. These languages have emerged separately from different situations of contact. Michif Fransay emerged in the Red River valley, la *rivyer roj*, from contact between old vernacular *voyageur* French in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and Algonquian Indigenous languages such as Ojibwe and Cree. Speakers remember multilingualism in their families, where their mothers spoke an Indigenous language, and their fathers, French (Lavallée 1988; 1991). Their own language emerged in the younger generation as they interacted with one another.

Mixed language Michif emerged from intense contact between (Michif) French, presumably, and southern Plains Cree in the Turtle Mountain region, as the Michif moved across the homeland for the buffalo hunt and were at times forcibly dispersed. Many of its speakers understand the birth of their language as a spiritual coming together of two nations, the French and the Cree in the Red River, and a gift from Creator to the new nation that closes the hoop, and unites two peoples that would otherwise be very different (Flammand 2020-21; Fleury in Adam 2020).

For Northern Michif, or Métis-Cree, a first theory of its contact origin is that northern Plains Cree spoken in northwestern Saskatchewan was influenced to varying degrees, depending on the community, by the French of missionaries (Bakker 1997). There are also oral history accounts of Métis Cree/ Northern Michif being born from the contact between (mixed) Michif and northern Plains Cree. In this understanding, speakers of (mixed) Michif who moved to northwestern communities would have been assimilated by speakers of the Cree language varieties in the area.

The fact that the Michifs have so many languages unique to them, emerging from different situations of contact, has had repercussions in education, politics, planning, and policy.

[9] For example, see Andersen 2014; Barkwell and Dorion 2016; Ens and Sawchuk 2015; Foran 2017; Hogue 2015; Macdougall 2010; Payment 2009; St-Onge et al. 2012; Trémaudan 1935; Giraud 1945.

The fact that three languages are known by their respective speakers as *Michif* is not a fact well understood in these contexts, and they find themselves conflagrated as one language or dialects of a single language, which is impossible as there is no mutual intelligibility.

These languages, along with other languages, such as Plains Ojibwe, Plains and Swampy Cree, Dakota, Denesuliné, French and English and other unique varieties known as *Brayet* (Stobie 1970; 1971) and *Bungee/ Bungi* (Stobie 1970; 1971; Blain 1989; Gold 2007; 2009) make for the rich linguistic landscape of the Michif, a testament to their resilience and adaptability. Working to preserve these unique language varieties is key to preserving the complexity of the Michif linguistic reality.

The process of working with narratives, and how they can inform research in various disciplines such as linguistics and language learning, includes building relationships, working with storytellers in a collaborative manner, and respecting the protocol of Indigenous methodologies. Chapter 3 outlines the key characteristics of both Indigenous methodologies and participatory research (PR), two research methods which valorize and focus on collaborating *with* participants of the research. While PR focuses on collaboration and reciprocation in all contexts of social and human research, Indigenous methodologies emphasize research on Indigenous protocols and epistemology.

There are undeniably recurring themes in working within an Indigenous methodology and participatory research. They involve everything from an organic, authentic relationship with the community and its members, their equal participation – both sides considered experts and bringing particular knowledge, requiring the researcher to take on the role of student or learner – and making sure the work is accessible and meaningful to the people who are 'subjects' of the research. Working with the other party at multiple steps in the process enables the creation of various outputs of interest for both the speech and academic community. It challenges researchers to have a human-to-human relationship with participants and to show their vulnerabilities to participants, resulting in a work not only of the mind, but of the heart, spirit and body.

Positive relationships are at the core of 'collaborative' research. Although it can be often challenging to fully implement the collaborative principles of participatory research at the graduate level, for example, there are other approaches, such as the anthropological participant observer method, which can be called upon to build positive relationships and advance research.

Chapter 3 focuses on the process of storywork and how elements of these research methods can be incorporated in graduate projects, especially in the Michif context, and in the larger scope of endangered languages.

In Chapter 4, we discuss how interactional linguistic components of conversational storytelling and narratives such as co-construction constitute a verification and vetting process between peers sharing their community and family histories. More specifically, we focus on aspects of the functional and interactional narrative analysis by considering a subset of Michif Fransay stories which were told in group settings. The members of each group interact and work together to weave a narrative, and these elements of co-construction give insight on common experiences shared by the co-tellers and to what extent it is a shared lived experience. The co-tellers give an inside perspective to commonalities and variations within their community and family life and work together in a process of review and verification of their community/ family history. Co-tellers form a community and are active participants throughout the narrative. Their tokens of affirmation, agreement, remembrance, negation and derailments are key elements of the process of the co-construction. These constitute an important part of the evaluative component of narratives and give an internal perspective on the social factors which are at the heart of narrative divergences.

Building an oral history for one's community is continuing the crucial practice of oral traditions, which in oral cultures are "accurate and valid self-representations about the past, informed, however – as all historiography is – by our own people's hermeneutic: In both form and content, narratives of the past are deeply embedded in the way we read meaning into accounts of events" (Ignace, 2008:19). The perspective and epistemology of a people form their way of telling stories, interpreting and anchoring the space and environment in which they live and have lived.

Chapter 5 explores aspects of the coherence and cohesion of (mixed) Michif narrative structure. We focus particularly on verbal morphosyntax and the use of conjunct complementizers *chi*, *aen* and *kaa-*. These complementizers, like in other Algonquian languages, occur in (mixed) Michif before conjunct verbs, which in Michif occur principally in subordinate clauses. Although some previous literature (Bakker 1997; Rosen 2007; Bakker and Papen 2020) includes general discussions on the contexts of occurrence of each complementizer, they have been understudied in Michif. Chapter 5 includes an initial typological study of the use of

complementizers in Algonquian languages, exploring similarities between Michif and other Algonquian languages, particularly in the Cree-Innu-Naskapi continuum.

The use of these complementizers is central to building coherence and complex sentences in the language and to building relationships of sequence or causality between events. Their use throughout narratives reflects their aspectual and modal values. Through a qualitative exemplified discussion, we show that *chi-* is a marker of Event modality; *aen-* is a marker of Event modality and imperfective aspect; and *kaa-* is a relativizer and marker of perfective aspect.

Finally, Chapter 6 concludes the dissertation by turning our gaze to the future to consider the importance of understanding and studying narrative structure to applied linguistics and language education. As speakers of Michif languages are aging, we are at a crucial juncture to create new speakers and to set the optimal conditions for language reclamation. Most existing learning resources and textbooks focus on introductory aspects of the languages, without delving into more complex or higher-level language absolutely crucial to achieving fluency. Knowing how to build a narrative and connect complex sentences are essential to becoming a fluent speaker. Thus, we hope that applying our study of narrative structure to language learning and developing language resources can ultimately contribute to revitalization and reclamation efforts, such as supporting speakers and learners, as well as helping to facilitate new domains for language use and opportunities to speak.

Chapter 2: Languages of the Michif people

"Let us acknowledge the rich linguistic traditions of our [Michif] people, and thereby honor our multilingual ancestors as well as our contemporary communities, families and individuals" (Chartrand, 2009:3).

One of the delineations between dialect and language that is often referenced is Max Weinrich's observation that a language is simply *a dialect with an army and a navy.* It expresses the all-too-real truth that, for better or worse, politics and language are very often intertwined. Even the main linguistic point of distinction between language and dialect, i.e. mutual intelligibility[10], is often disregarded for the sake of political divisions: an often-cited example, the Serbo-Croatian languages of the Bosnian, Croatian, Montenegrin and Serbian peoples, are structurally the same languages. They are all varieties of Shtokavian and are mutually intelligible. For political and historical reasons, however, they are considered separate or distinct languages (Crystal, 2000:11).

The question of *what* constitutes or is considered *Michif* language(s) has also been influenced by political factors. At times, it can be wrought with confusion or conflict. The understanding of what the term *Michif language* encompasses differs from region to region. It is used by speakers, the Michif/Métis general population, and Métis organizations and institutions to recognize language varieties spoken only amongst Michifs across the Nation's homeland. Michif/Métis people have always been polyglots, who shared "kinship, military, political and harvesting relationships with other indigenous groups living in the same geographical territory" (Barkwell 2017:1). As such, nêhiyawêwin/ nêhinawêwin (Plains Cree/ Swampy Cree*)*, nakawêmowin *(*Plains Ojibwe/ Saulteaux[11]*)*, Nakoda, Dakota, French and English are languages commonly spoken by the Michif/Métis people (Mazzoli 2019a; Rosen 2004). As Chartrand (2009) puts it: "we [the Michif] speak a variety of languages, as befits our traditional economic niches in the fur trade, small scale trade, and the buffalo hunt" (Chartrand, 2009: 2). Multilingualism of the Michif is ultimately a product of their adaptability, mobility and ability to network and build relationships: it was indispensable to their way of life.

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[10] The understanding that dialects are mutually intelligible while separate languages are not.

[11] Although the term Saulteaux is dispreferred by some, it is included here as it is used respectfully in some naturalistic data discussed in later Chapters to refer to the *nakawêmowin* language. Other than discussing this naturalistic data or previous literature references in which the term is used, *nakawêmowin*/ Plains Ojibwe is employed elsewhere.

As a result of many attempts to eradicate the Michif/Métis people, they have (been) dispersed across the prairies. They had also spread out in the Plains looking for bison: in the 1880s, Michif/Métis people moved across Montana, North Dakota, Saskatchewan and Alberta as well to hunt and follow the buffalo. Throughout their extensive territory, they have developed, additionally to all other languages they could speak, languages of their own, to speak *within* their own communities and their own homes. While Douaud (1985) characterizes Michif multilingualism as *linguistic compartmentalization*, where each language spoken has a specific purpose or domain, the development of languages unique to the Michif is a result of linguistic *convergence*, where many languages spoken by the Michif come together, influence one another to create a *new* language (Douaud 1985). Three of these unique language varieties have come to be known within their own speech communities as *Michif*.

As Bakker (2004) points out, the word used to refer to a people is often the same word used to refer to their language. For instance, Germans speak German, the French speak French, etc. However, he states, "the Métis/ Michif people typically speak different languages in different communities" (Bakker, 2004: 5) and "Michif-French and mixed Cree-French are traditionally called *Michif* by the speakers themselves. In recent years, the Metis of Northwest Saskatchewan have also called their variety of Cree by the name "*Michif*" (Bakker, 2004: 6, emphasis mine). As such, the reality within the Michif nation is that three different languages are called *Michif* today by their own speakers.

In 2.1. we will provide an overview of the three languages referred to as Michif. In 2.2-2.4, we will present a quick grammatical sketch of each of these languages and draw some parallels and similarities among them. In 2.5, we will then present various accounts of the genesis and evolution of these unique language varieties.

2.1. One name for many languages

The three languages that are known as *Michif* are 1) Michif-French, described as an old dialect of French with slang terms and influences from Algonquian languages; 2) mixed language Michif, or Cree-French, described by Bakker (1997) as a mixed language in which noun phrases originate from (Michif-) French, and verb phrases from (southern) Plains Cree (nêhiyawêwin), and more recently in Gillon and Rosen (2018) as mainly Algonquian; and finally 3) Métis-Cree, or Northern Michif, a variety of Cree spoken by northwestern Michif people, which includes many French borrowings and influences. In 2.1.1, we outline speech

communities for each language variety, and in 2.1.2, the political and social implications of having three language varieties known by the same name.

2.1.1 Speech communities

In Michif communities such as St. Laurent, St. Eustache, St. Ambroise and St. François-Xavier in Manitoba; St. Louis and Batoche in Saskatchewan and Lac La Biche, St. Paul and St. Albert in Alberta (Burnouf et al. 2007), *Michif* language can refer to what many specify now as *Michif Fransay*[12] (or Michif-French). It dates back presumably to the late eighteenth century, and incorporated many elements of Algonquian languages such as Cree and especially (Plains) Ojibwe in an old variety of French (§ 2.1). Michif-Fransay would have also been spoken in other Michif/Métis communities such as Richer, St. Adolphe, St. Pierre, St. Agathe (Pointe-à-Grouette) and the Morris area in Manitoba, although it is no longer spoken widely in these areas. With the arrival of French-Canadian and Breton immigrants in some of these communities as well as French priests, nuns and missionaries, it became deprecatorily known by many as a *bad French* or *bâtard/mauvais français* (Lavallée 1988; 1991).

Second, the term *Michif* language refers to what is specified by many as either mixed Michif, heritage Michif, southern Michif, Turtle Mountain Michif or Michif-Cree (or French-Cree). This is the case in Michif communities throughout the prairies, including road allowances and wintering camps such as St. Lazare, Ste. Madeleine, Binscarth, Sana Clara, Duck Bay, Camperville, Li Kwaen (The Corner), Yorkton, Prince Albert and Round Prairie (Saskatoon), Qu'Appelle Valley area (Lebret, *Li For* (Fort Qu'Appelle), Lestock, etc.) and Turtle Mountain (Crawford 1983; Bakker 1997; Burnouf et al. 2007; Mazzoli 2019b). Some Michif speakers from these areas recall referring to their language as *Cree* within their families or *French Cree* (Bakker 1989), before using the term *Michif*. In North Dakota and the Turtle Mountain Reservation, the language has been referred to as *Chippewa Cree* (Laverdure and Allard 1983). As it is spoken across such a large territory, Bakker (1997) concluded that the language must have formed before the dispersion of the Michif people began. This has been identified as a fairly unique mixed language, born from intense contact between Plains Cree and the French of the voyageurs and Michifs (§ 2.2).

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[12] This spelling convention follows the orthography in the Michif Fransay dictionary as spoken by the people of St. Laurent (Bruce et al. 2016).

Finally, more recently, *Michif language* is also used in northern Saskatchewan Michif/Métis communities such as Ile-à-la-Crosse, Green Lake, Beauval and Buffalo Narrows to refer to the language specified as either Northern Michif, Ile-à-la-Crosse Michif or Métis Cree. Rather than originating from Michif-French, many of the French components in Northern Michif are said to be borrowed directly from French missionaries who came to the area (Bakker 1990; 1997; 2004; Burnouf et al. 2007) (§ 2.3). It is also said in local oral history that many Michif families dispersed, leaving south-central communities to move up north, and gradually adapted to speak the northern Plains Cree-based variety. There are some speakers who remember their parents' generation using more French than they use today. The number of French borrowings varies from northern community to community, some incorporating more borrowings than others. Here as well, speakers recall referring to their language as Cree, all the while being conscious that their way of speaking was *different* than other Cree[13] speakers in the area. Anecdotally, in fact, it seems a trend in northern communities to use the term 'Michif' to refer to the French-source nouns used in their language. More often than not, speakers today seem aware of the Cree-source and French-source word for a particular nominal referent, and so they distinguish between the 'Michif' and the 'Cree' word for a noun. This is the case also in Ahenakew (2009)'s dictionary, where he offers both options for some entries.

In the end, speakers of these three languages self-identify as *Michif* speakers because all three, in one way or another, are *unique* to the Michif/Métis people and are spoken only by Michif people amongst themselves, in their families, amongst their relatives, friends and community. Not only that, but referring to their language variety as Michif sets them apart from other groups/nations (often relatives or neighbors) who are linguistically similar, such as the French-Canadian for Michif Fransay and the northern Plains Cree and Woods Cree for Northern Michif. Even those who consider Michif-French strictly as a dialect of French admit that it is singular to the Michif people and different than any other variety of Canadian-French (see Lavallée 1991; Papen 1984; 1993; 2004; 2010; Papen and Marchand 2006 for discussions). Similarly, Bakker (1997) shows the uniqueness of Michif as a mixed language, in the sense that grammatical complexities of both French and Cree are maintained in the language. Even now

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[13] I often heard the term 'hard-core Cree' from Northern Michif/ Métis-Cree speakers to refer to northern Plains Cree/ Woodland Cree speakers from the area.

that some of the French nominal grammatical features have weakened, it remains a language where the influence of the contact languages is strong.

Bakker provides some precedents in which different languages self-identify or are referred to by the same name: for instance, "in South America, the name Garifuna is used for two unrelated, very different, Amerindian languages and even for a kind of French!" (Bakker 2004: 6). The fact that this has also happened in Michif is none too surprising given the fact that Michif/Métis people were always polyglots, whose livelihood often depended on trading, negotiating and living with many other nations, and that they were forced to disperse across the West due to displacement, poverty, and a conscious effort from the Canadian government to disperse the Michif nation. Within this historical context, we can hardly be surprised that many unique language varieties specific to the Michif/Métis have arisen in different areas of the homeland[14].

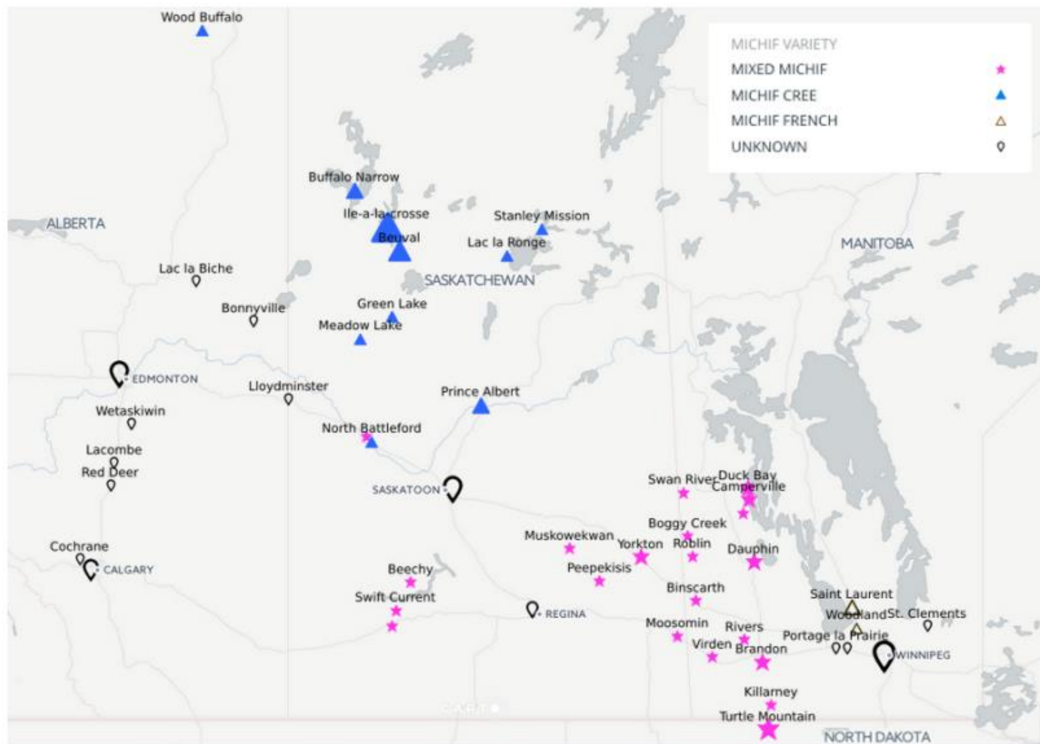
As such, there is not *one* language shared by the entire Michif/Métis nation (with the exception of English today): the Michif/Métis, like other Indigenous peoples of the prairies, travelled extensively across the prairies, connecting with their relatives across the Red River valley, the northern prairies and the Missouri region. Multilingualism has always been a defining component of Metisness. French, English, Michif, (Plains) Ojibwe and Cree could all be, in fact, considered Michif languages, and this "creates a division along language lines unattested in other communities" (Rosen, 2004:76). Each language spoken by the Michif/Métis people, whether it be (Plains) Ojibwe, Swampy Cree, Plains Cree, Dakota, Woods Cree, English or French, has its specific use and is integrated into Métis culture (Douaud 1985; Bakker 1997; Rosen 2004). Michif/Métis people worked as voyageurs, traders, interpreters, fishermen, buffalo hunters and farmers and played a pivotal role in the negotiation of treaties (Stevenson 2004), the shaping of the United States-Canada border (Hogue 2015), as well as the creation of the province of Manitoba. Michif/Métis buffalo hunters spoke Cree and other Indigenous languages and often interacted with larger traders associated more with European culture and languages (Hogue 2015). In the Red River Settlement, in 1810, it seems that *nakawêmowin* (Plains Ojibwe) was the prevalent language, followed by Cree and French (Bakker 1997). By 1840, the Michif (Cree-

[14] C.f. 1.5 for general definition of Michif/Métis homeland.

French) language seems to have become a fixed code associated with the buffalo hunt (Bakker 1997).

This map from Mazzoli (2019a) begins to show the overall distribution of the three languages. Here, we also have differences in nomenclature: in this legend, in addition to mixed Michif (§2.3), the term *Michif Cree* refers to Northern Michif spoken in the Ile-à-la-Crosse area (discussed in §2.4), and *Michif French* to Michif Fransay (§2.2). Even today, we see very little overlap in geographical areas between these languages, with the exception of urban centres, such as Prince Albert, North Battleford and Saskatoon (Saskatchewan).

Figure 3 : Speech communities of languages of the Michif people (Mazzoli 2019a)



Michif-French (§2.2) is much more widespread than this map would indicate, as it is also present in the St. Lazare area, in St. Eustache, St. Ambroise, as well as communities in Saskatchewan such as Batoche and St. Louis. Furthermore, the southern rural areas of Manitoba (e.g. St. Jean-Baptiste) along the Pembina highway, are still inhabited by many Michif/Métis families who have retained many properties of Michif Fransay[15]. Some of the starred communities have very

[15] Many members of my own family lived in this area, and their language variety was known within the family as 'le français de campagne' or 'country French' and bears many similarities to the Michif spoken in St. Eustache and St.

few or no speakers left: for example, in Muskowekwan, only a few people indicated they were Michif speakers in the 2011 census, with no speakers left today (Mazzoli 2019b). St. Lazare is not listed in the map, although it is a community of origin for speakers of both (mixed) Michif and Michif Fransay. Anecdotally, families of the south-west region of Manitoba, for example, would have had some family members whom, among other languages, would have spoken the mixed language Michif as well as Michif-Fransay. However, it seems that only one language would *typically* become the language of the home.

Big city centres are also marked *unknown* on Mazzoli's map. However, both Michif-French and (mixed) Michif speakers reside today in Winnipeg, many of them involved in various language projects and activities. There are many language work initiatives occurring in other urban centres as well. In Regina (SK) for example, there are speakers and semi-speakers of (mixed) Michif doing language work through SUNTEP Regina and schools taking part in the Michif Early Learning program in partnership with the MN-S.

In Saskatoon (SK), both (mixed) Michif and Northern Michif are taught in public schools, and speakers of both languages (as well as some Michif-French speakers) live in the urban centre. Descendants of Round Prairie, or la Prayrii Roon, a Michif wintering camp originally about 40 km from the urban centre, have moved to Saskatoon, as well as other Michifs from nearby communities such as Crescent Lake area, whose (grand-) parents and family would have spoken (mixed) Michif. However, members of northwestern rural communities such as Green Lake and Ile-à-la-Crosse have also moved to Saskatoon and mostly speak Northern Michif. The example of Saskatoon and other topics related to challenges of nomenclature will be discussed in 2.5.

In a sense, these languages seem to have surfaced amongst the Michifs similarly to regional languages, traditionally connected to specific families and/or communities. In the case of France, for example, languages such as the Oc and Oïl languages, Gallo, Normand, Breton, Catalan, and Alsatian are defined as regional languages as they are spoken in only part of the national territory. By the same token, they have been in use for a longer period of time than French has as a common language (Ministère de la Culture, n.d.). These are traditional to their

Laurent. Further studies are needed to establish to what point these varieties are related and how much Michif French has been impacted by contact with French-Canadian speakers in the Pembina area.

land and protected as a part of the country's cultural heritage. They also have various influences from neighboring languages. Linguistically, most are described as dialects (such as Alsatian) or isolates (Basque). As we will show in the following sections, languages of the Michif are anchored, connected to specific communities and/or regions across the Métis homeland, and an important part of the traditional cultural heritage of the Michif/Métis, as well as crucial to the identity of Michif/Métis as a distinct Indigenous people, separate both from their European and Indigenous relatives or neighbors.

2.2. Michif Fransay: A brief overview

Michif Fransay is believed to have originated in the Great Lakes region (Papen 2012a), the place of origin of some of the Michif families that moved to the Red River. Linguistically, it has been classified as a dialect of Laurentian French (Burnouf et al. 2007; Papen 2010), sharing some similarities with other varieties (Papen 1993). Importantly, it is not always easily intelligible by Francophones and even those who consider it a dialect of French and not a Michif language recognize it as a fairly unique variety of French (Papen 1984; 1993; 2004; 2005). Lavallée (1991) stresses the importance of considering this language variety as not "a non-standard form of the French language", but the "mother tongue of the Métis people at St-Laurent", so it can be understood as "a valid form of language and not a misuse of the standard form" (Lavallée, 1991:82). The purpose of the following discussion is to revisit some of the morphosyntactic and discoursal particularities of Michif Fransay previously presented in Papen's studies in the 1980-2000s. These remain quite productive in Michif Fransay today and often speak to the Algonquian influences on the language. Some of these features and constructions are also attested in (mixed) Michif, closely linking Michif Fransay and the French-source components of the mixed language.

Michif Fransay was much more widely spread than it is today, where it is mostly attested in only a few remaining communities. Vielfaure (2010:77) notes that, with the heavy influx of *canayen* (i.e. French Canadian) or French-Canadian immigration, most Michif people in Saint-Boniface and southern communities such as St. Pierre and St. Malo came to speak French-Canadian. St. Adolphe, St. Agathe and the Morris area, for example, had many Michif Fransay speakers. Lina Le Gal, who grew up in St. Adolphe in a Breton family, learned to speak Michif Fransay as a child from her neighbors and friends. Payment (2009) notes that Michif Fransay and

Canadian French were the main languages of inhabitants in Batoche and the surrounding areas. Canadian French was the language in the home as well as the language of instruction until the 1920s when it was replaced by English across Saskatchewan. Until the early 1900s, Cree, Ojibwe and Siouan languages were also spoken in the area.

There are important existing corpuses of Michif Fransay, including Henri Létourneau's interviews with both *canayen* and Michif Fransay speakers in communities in Manitoba, Saskatchewan and North Dakota in the '70s, which are all archived and transcribed at the Saint-Boniface historical society. In the 1980s, Nicole St-Onge and Philippe Beaudin interviewed *canayen* and Michif/Métis families from the St. Eustache and Fort Rouge area. Also in the late 1980s, Father Guy Lavallée interviewed a large subset of elders from his Michif community, Saint-Laurent (MB) for his thesis completed in 1988. Both of these corpuses are crucial as both Beaudin and Lavallée were members of the community they surveyed and were both Michif Fransay speakers. Papen (1984; 1993; 2003; 2004; 2005; 2006; 2010; 2012a; 2012b, etc.) has extensively researched and published on various aspects of Michif Fransay phonology and morpho-syntax.

Today, Michif Fransay speakers are largely attested in St. Laurent, St. Eustache, St. Ambroise and St. François Xavier in Manitoba; St. Louis and Batoche in Saskatchewan and Lac La Biche, St. Paul and St. Albert in Alberta (Burnouf et al. 2007).

Papen has outlined many of Michif Fransay's particularities, including the neutralization of gender distinctions (2.2.1); subject pronoun omission (2.2.2); possession constructions (2.2.3); use of the complementizer *que*; basic tense and verb paradigms (2.2.4); and finally a brief overview of the organization of Michif narratives (2.2.5). These aspects of Michif Fransay, although documented by Papen largely in the 80s, are still (at least somewhat) attested in our new corpus, gathered in 2018-2019 (see Chapters 3-4).

2.2.1. Neutralization of gender distinctions

The neutralization of the gender distinction in French-source pronouns and articles as well as genitive constructions are attributed to Algonquian influence. In standard Canadian French, there is a gender distinction in the third person pronouns, both singular and plural (*il, elle*; *ils, elles*). It is also the case for demonstratives (*celui-là, celle-là; ceux-là, celles-là*). In principle, these pronouns must agree with their antecedent in person, gender and number. However, this does *not* apply in Michif Fransay, where the third person feminine singular

pronouns *al/ a* (equivalent of *elle*) and a masculine antecedent such as *ton garçon* 'your boy' can be coindexed (Papen, 1984:125). Furthermore, the impersonal *ça/sa* is also used to refer to both singular and plural entities, animate or inanimate (Papen, 1984:125).

2.2.1.1. Masculine/Feminine gender alternations

The pronoun *y* occurs in recordings from St. Eustache and St. Laurent for third person plural *they*, and both masculine and feminine third person *he* and *she* (5a-f).

(5) Third person pronouns

a. Feminine (animate) singular y

Pis celle-la **y** trish.
And DEM.F **3SG.F** cheat.3SG.PRS
'And this one, she cheats.' (STE1)

b. Masculine (animate) singular *y*

Pi mon pepere [name]. Ben lui y djizait lii zistwer.
Pi mon pepere. Ben lui **y** djizait
And 1M.POSS grandpa Ah 3M.DISJ **3M.SBJ** tell.3M.IMPF

lii zistwer.
DET.PL stories
'And my grandpa McKay, he would tell stories'. (STE1)

c. Impersonal/dummy pronoun *y*

On sharriyait d'l'eau pi y faisait fret.
On sharriyait d' l'eau pi **y** faisait fret.
1PLcarry.IMPF PTV DET.water and **IS** make.IMPF cold
'We were carrying some water and it was so cold (outside)'. (STE1)

d. Feminine (inanimate?) pronoun

J'voylay aynk la ash. Y alay dimaym a la port.
J' voylay aynk la ash. **Y** alay dimaym
1SG see.IMPF only DET.F axe **it.INAN** go.IMPF as such

a la port.
at DET.F door
'I was only seeing the axe. It was going like this at the door'. (STL3)

e. Unspecified third person plural

Y ripawsay li brazyayr, ripawsay tot.
Y ripawsay li brazyayr, ripawsay tot.
3UNSP iron.IMPF the.F bra.PL iron.IMPF everything
'They ironed bras, they ironed everything'. (STL4)

There are no occurrences of the pronoun *a/ al* referring to masculine third person in our data, only to feminine singular third persons. There are some instances in which speakers alternate between *a* and *y* for third person feminine referents. All bolded pronouns refer back to the speaker's mother, who used to make and sell coats or *kapo*:

f. Suzanne : Kan **al** a fini, __ m'en enwayi powr amni li kapo a la fam. Ah bin j'dji. Fo byin ki dji. **Y** sharjay ayn pyas y kar. Shpens bin. 'Ayn pyas y dmi' ji dji. 'Ta mayr **a** ma dji ayn pyas y kar.' (STL7)
*'When **she** was done, **she** sent me to bring the coat to the woman. 'Oh well' I said. **She** charged a dollar and a quarter. I think. 'A buck fifty' I said. 'Your mom **she** told me a dollar and a quarter.''*

In Algonquian morphosyntax, including (mixed) Michif, third person pronouns do not distinguish for biological gender. The Cree singular third person pronoun *wîya* and third person plural *wîyawâw* (Ojibwe *wiin* and *wiinawaa/wiinwi*) do not distinguish between male and female referents, information only discernable through discoursal context. As many Michif Fransay speakers grew up speaking, understanding, or being surrounded by (Plains) Ojibwe and/or Cree, it is possible that this particular feature of Michif Fransay was influenced by the features of these Algonquian languages.

2.1.1.2. The use of pronoun sa/ça

There is also evidence that *sa* (or *ça*) is largely used in our corpus to refer to unspecified third persons, where there has been no previously established referent in the discourse. In (6a), we assume that *sa* refers generally to their mothers, and grandmother ancestors:

(6) a. Y a lonten kan sa fayzay kwir. L'onvay lewr riset dan lewr tet. Sa rgarday paw dan li liv powr swivr ayn riset.

Y	a	lonten	kan	**sa**	fayzay	kwir.
IS	is	long.time	when	**3UNSP**	do.IMPF	cook.INF

L'onvay	lewr	riset	dan	lewr	tet.	**Sa**	rgarday
have.3PL.IMPF	3PL.POSS	recipe	in	their	head	**3UNSP**	look.IMPF

paw	dan	li	liv	powr	swivr	ayn	riset.
not	in	DET.PL	book	for	follow.INF	DET.F	recipe

'A long time ago, when they cooked, they (unspec) had recipes in their head. They (unspec) didn't look in their books to follow a recipe.' (STL7)

In (6b), unspecified *sa* is interchanged with *y*:

b. Sa l'apelay la pataws. Oh yeah. Si saw k'y djizay law.

Sa	l'apelay	la	pataws.	Oh yeah.	Si	saw
3UNSP	called.it	DET.F	*patasse*		IS	this

k'	**y**	djizay	law.
that	**3PL**	say.IMPF	there

'They called it *pataws*. Oh yeah. That's what they called it.' (STL3)

As we saw in (5e), it is also possible to use the plural pronoun *y* in an unspecified context. Furthermore, *sa* can be used with a plural established referent (6c):

c. Sa fam pi ses deux filles sa parlait yaenk l'anglais.

Sa	fam	pi	ses	deux	filles	**sa**	parlait
POSS.3F	wife	and	POSS.3PL	two	daughters	**3PL.F**	speak.IMPF

yaenk	l'	anglais.
only	DET	English

'His wife and his two daughters they only spoke English.' (STE1)

In this case, the plural referent is *sa fam* (his wife) and *ses deux filles* (his two daughters), the two referents placed in focus position.

2.2.2. Subject pronoun omission

In certain contexts, Michif Fransay speakers may completely omit the subject pronoun in their sentences. Papen (1984:126) notes it is most common with a third person subject, but not exclusively. In Michif Fransay, the verb is not clearly inflected for third person[16]. The following examples (7) and (8) are from this project's corpus:

(7) Sa gotay kom la pol on dziray. Sontay bon. Sontay bon!

Sa	gotay	kom	la	pol	on	dziray.
3	taste.IMPF	like	DET.F	chicken	1PL	say.COND

___sontay	bon.	___Sontay	bon!
be.3PL.IMPF	good	be.3PL.IMPF	good

'It (frog legs) tasted like chicken one could say. Oh they were good. They were good!' (STL7)

[16] Similar to Laurentian French, where phonologically there is no difference: even though third person is marked with final *-t* and first and second persons with *-s* in standard orthography, orally, they are homonymous [vivɛ].

(8) Non, ji dji. Ayn pyas y dmi! J'la gagni, m'a doni son pyas y dmi!

Non',	ji	dji.	'Ayn	pyas	y	dmi.'	J'	la
No	1SG	PRS.PTCP	One.F	dollar	and	half	1SG	3SG.F

won.PTCP

gagni,	___	m'	a doni	son	pyas	y	dmi!
won.PTCP		1SG.OBJ	gave.PSTPTCP	3SG.POSS.F	dollar	and	half.

(*Talking about batering)* ''No' I said. 'A buck and a half.' (Laughter) I won. She gave me her dollar and a half!' (STL7)

In both (7) and (8), referents of the omitted pronouns have been previously established in the discourse and it remains clear who are the subjects of these clauses. The existence of Pronoun Drop in French Michif, according to Papen (1984) is due to its strong Cree influences. Cree, unlike French, is a polysynthetic language with extensive verbal inflectional morphology and could certainly, under some analyses, be classified as an agreement pro-drop language (where the pronouns are dropped because of strong inflectional morphology), such as shown in this partial verb paradigm for the verb *to run* (Papen, 1984:126):

(9) a. nipimipahtân.

ni-	pimipahtâ	-n
1SG -	run.AI	-1/2SG

'I run'

b. kipimipahtân.

ki-	pimipahtâ	-n
2SG -	run.AI	-1/2SG

'You run'

c. pimipahtâw.

pimipahtâ	-w
run.AI	-3SG

'S/he runs'

Consequently, Pronoun Drop from Cree on the structure of French has led to the innovation of a derivation in Michif-Fransay not found in either of its base languages: Discourse Pro-Drop, or NP-ellipsis, in which the use of null pronouns is conditioned by *discourse familiarity* (rather than inflectional morphology). This form of pronoun ellision is also referred to as "radical pro-drop" and attested in languages such as Chinese and Japanese, both of which have little verbal inflectional morphology (Haig 1976; Neelman and Szendroi 2007).

2.2.3. Possession constructions

Possession constructions in Michif Fransay, in the case of third person possessors, have been noted as particular, presumed to be influenced by Algonquian languages (Papen 1984; 2004). There are two possession systems that Papen (2004:13) attests in Michif Fransay: the first, less common, is the use of a preposition such as *de/à* (of), like in Laurentian French. The second is a construction in which the possessor occurs before the possessee, and the possessee contains a possessive pronoun, such as in (10):

(10) En allant dans le docteur son petit bois.

En allant	dans	le	docteur	son	petit	bois.
go.PROG	into	DET.M	doctor	3SG.POSS.M	little	bush.

'Going into the doctor's bush'. (Papen, 1984:129)

We find these singular constructions in our corpus both from St-Eustache (11a-b) and St-Laurent. Both the following examples refer to kinship terms and relations:

(11) Possession in Michif Fransay

a. S'tait [name] son père?

S'tait	[name]	son	père?
3UNSP.IMPF		3SG.POSS.M	father

'It was [name]'s father?' (STE2)

b. Longtemps shi mwai pour gardi [name] sa psit fille.

Longtemps	shi	mwai	pour	gardi
Long.tim	at	my.place	for	babysit

[name]	sa	psit	fille.
	3SG.POSS.F	little	girl

'... for a longtime at my place to babysit [name]'s little girl.' (STE2)

However, the preposition *de/à* possession construction is also attested, such as the following example (12), where the possessee co-occurs with a definite (non-possessive) determiner, followed by the preposition *de* and the possessor:

(12) Sa s'tait l'frer de ton grand-pere.

Sa	s'tait	l'	frere	de	ton	grand-père.
3UNSP	is.IMPF	DET.M	brother	of	2SG.POSS.M	grandfather

'It was your grandfather's brother.' (STE2)

This data is contra Papen (2004:13), who found that, in the case of inalienable possession and dependent nouns (in Cree, kinship terms, body parts, etc.), the possessive pronoun must immediately precede its noun in Michif Fransay, no matter what adjuncts are added (13):

(13) C’est un de mon oncle (*un oncle) qui est avec un de son ami (*un ami)

C’est	un	de	mon	oncle	qui	est	avec	un	de
It	one	of	1.POSS	uncle	comp	is.3SG	with	one	of

son	ami
3.POSS	friend

‘It is an (one of my) uncle(s) who is with a (one of his) friend(s).’
(Papen, 2004: 13)

Notwithstanding this variation, the possessor-possessee construction is more frequent in the corpus, showing that one of the most striking morphosyntactic particularities of Michif Fransay is still maintained today. As we will discuss in 2.3, this possession construction is also a feature of (mixed) Michif.

2.2.4. Tense and organization of narratives

Our narrative corpus shows that many tense-aspect-modes are productive in Michif Fransay, such as the pluperfect, the simple future, the conditional (both present and past), and in a few rare instances, the subjunctive. The following table (Table 1) shows the basic present inflection in Michif Fransay, as discussed in Papen (1984).

Table 1: Michif Fransay present indicative (first column, quoted from Papen 1984:128)

	Michif FR.	ENG
1SG	ʒə~ʒɪ ʃɑ̃t	*I sing*
2SG	ʧɪ ʃɑ̃t	*you sing*
3SG	i ~ a ~ ʃa ʃɑ̃t	*he/she sings*
1PL	ɔ̃ ʃɑ̃t	*we sing*
2PL	vu ʃɑ̃te	*you (pl) sing*
3PL	i ~ a ~ ʃa ʃɑ̃t	*they sing*

Papen (1984:127) notes that, for the use of the present perfect, the auxiliary used is almost always inflected from *avoir* ‘to have’. This is also attested in this project’s narratives, where the *venir* ‘to come’ paradigm is inflected with *a* (from *avoir*), and not from *être* ‘to be’, as is the case with Laurentian French. As we did not explicitly elicit paradigms, person forms are shown here for various verbs, namely *venu* ‘came’, *mi* ‘put’ and *bâtchi* ‘built’. For forms such as 3SG where *venu* is unattested in the narratives, we provide an alternate example, in this case *bâti* ‘built’:

Table 2: Michif Fransay present perfect (examples extracted from narratives)

	Michif FR.	Laurentian FR.	ENG
1SG	j'a venu	je suis venu	*I came*
2SG	tchi a venu	tu es venu	*you came*
3SG	i's'a bâtchi	il/ elle s'est bâti	*he built*
1PL	on a venu	on est venus/ nous sommes venus	*we came*
2PL	vuz a venu	vous êtes venus	*you (pl.) come*
3PL	y l'on mi	ils/ elles ont mis	*they put*

There is also use of the pluperfect: in (14a-b), we show examples from narratives in both St. Eustache and St. Laurent corpuses, in local speech act participant and third person inflections.

(14) Pluperfect

a. M'en rappelle. Quand j'avais eu [name].

M'en	rappelle.	Quand	**j'**	**avais**	**eu**	[name]
1SG.REFL	remember	When	**1SG**	**have.IMPF**	**have.PTCP**	

'I remember. When I had had [name] (i.e. gave birth to [name], had her as a baby).' (STE1)

b. Mi l'onvay dimawshi li angar law apray. Pi apray saw on n'avay bachi ayn kwizin.

Mi	**l'onvay**	**dimawshi**	li	angar	law	apray.	Pi
But	**3PL.have.IMPF**	**demolish.PTCP**	DET.M	hangar	there	after.	Then

apray	saw	**on**	**n'avay**	**bachi**	ayn	kwizin.
after	that	**1PL**	**have.IMPF**	**build.PTCP**	a.F	kitchen.

'But they had taken down the hangar there after. Then after that we had built a kitchen.' (STL7)

The future is expressed in two different constructions in Michif Fransay, namely a near future *go + INF* construction, as well as an inflectional simple future construction, as shown in Table 3:

Table 3: Michif Fransay future inflections (data from St. Eustache narratives)

Person	**go + *INF***	ENG	**Simple future**	ENG
1SG	m'a ameni ~ j'va faire	I'll bring ~ I'll make	j'dziri	I'll tell so/ I'll say
2SG	t'a va finir ~ tchu va akroshi	you'll finish ~ you'll hang up	(tu) dzira	You'll say
3SG	y va s'faire frappi	(s)he'll get hit	Y rira	(s)he'll laugh
1PL	on va jili	we'll freeze	on djira[17]	we'll say/ tell
2PL	*unattested in narratives*		*unattested in narratives*	
3PL	*unattested in narratives*		*unattested in narratives*	

It could be argued however, that the simple future inflection marks the *irrealis* feature of future tense, as it can also occur in conditional contexts, as shown in (15a-b) from our corpus:

(15) Conditional with future tense

a. Asteur on fait pu sa on djira.

Asteur	on	fait	pu	sa	**on**	**djira.**
Nowadays	1PL	do.PRS	not	this	**1PL**	**say.FUT**

'Nowadays we don't do this anymore one *would* say.' (STE1)

b. Si sa parlay en Fransay, on l'ara kompri mi sa parlay en saultaux tolten.

Si	sa	parlay	en	Fransay	**on**	**l'ara**
If	3UNSP	speak.IMPF	in	French	**1PL**	**have.FUT**

kompri	mi	sa	parlay	en	saultaux	tolten.
understood	but	3UNSP	speak.IMPF	in	saulteaux	always

'If they spoke French, we *would* have understood them, but they always spoke in Saulteaux.' (STL4)

This pattern is also attested in Papen (2012b), who also finds that Michif Fransay speakers will often use the future in lieu of the Laurentian French conditional. This is not to say that the conditional is never attested. (16) is an example of the use of the conditional present in our corpus, and (17), of the conditional past inflection:

(16) Sa gotay kom la pol on dziray.

Sa	gotay	kom	la	pol	**on**	**dziray.**
3	taste.IMPF	like	DET.F	chicken	**1PL**	**say.COND**

'It tasted like chicken, one would say.' (STL7)

[17] This Future example is used in a conditional context. The other examples are used in Future tense context.

(17) Y aray falu tsy gard ton fu.

Y	**aray**	**falu**	tsu	gard	ton	fu.
3UNSP	**have. COND**	**need.PTCP**	2SG	keep	2POSS	fire

‘You would have needed to keep your fire.’ (STL7)

Papen (2012b) notes the Laurentian French subjunctive is often replaced by the indicative. Our data corroborates that Michif Fransay does not really have a subjunctive mode, but with a few exceptions, such as (18), where the subjunctive *mɛt* is used over indicative *mɛ*:

(18) Djizay kosay fo ji met didan.

Djizay	kosay	fo	**ji**	**met**	didan
3PL.tell.IMPF	what	need.I	**1SG**	**put.SBJ**	in.it

‘S/he would tell me what I needed to put in it.’ (STL7)

This is unsurprising, as there was already a neutralization in certain paradigms between indicative and subjunctive present in standard Laurentian French. As such, for example, indicative *on se couche* ‘we are lying down’ and subjunctive verbs *qu’on se couche* (to lie down) are identical. The following (19) is from St. Laurent, which has an instance of *kosh* and then, another instance of where we would expect the subjunctive in Laurentian French, but there is an indicative in Michif:

(19) Avan k’on s’kosh law. Law folay k’on fay la pawt di pin law pi...

Avan	k'	**on**	**s'**	**kosh**	law.	Law	folay	**k'**	**on**
Before	that	**1PL**	**REFL**	**sleep.IND/SBJ**	there	There	need.I	**COMP**	**1PL**

fay	la	pawt	di	pin	law pi...
make.IND	DET.F	dough	of	bread	there

‘Before we went to bed. We had to make the bread dough.’ (STL7)

In this case, the subjunctive form you could expect in Laurentian French is *fasse*, as opposed to the indicative form *fait* (or (19), *fay*). More studies are needed to complete the paradigms, I hope to continue discussing aspects of Michif Fransay’s verbal complexity in future research.

In terms of conjunctions, complex conjunctions often occur in Michif Fransay, namely *quand que, comme-que, si-que*. In subordination constructions, the subordinator *que* is frequently used. Temporal progression markers in oral narratives include (Papen 2012) *pis, pis là, pis (et) après ça, pis là et encore*. Markers of progression specifically marking sequencing and resumption include *ça fait que/là, toujours ben (que)* in sentence-initial position, and *pis toujours ben (que)* in the middle of the sentence.

2.2.5. Algonquian borrowings

There are also some lexical borrowings from Algonquian such as the expressions *temps de cayoshe* (*cayoshe* from *kaya:s* ‘long ago’); *chicoque* ‘skunk’ (from *sikahk*); *rababoo* ‘stew’; *pizenne* ‘gopher’ (Papen 2006). Certain nicknames in the community can also be borrowed from Cree, such as *Waaposh* ‘Rabbit’ (STE2).

Michif Fransay has been the locus of innovation often triggered by the intense contact with Algonquian languages such as (Plains) Ojibwe and Cree. Presumably, the intense contact and high bilingualism of this language variety and *nêhiyâwak* as Michifs dispersed south and further west to engage in the buffalo hunt with their Cree relatives were the catalyst for the creation of the mixed language Michif.

2.3. Mixed language Michif: A brief overview

This mixed language has at times been specified as heritage Michif, Turtle Mountain Michif, southern Michif or Michif-Cree[18], with very little consensus on this terminology across the nation. Its origins date back to the late eighteenth or early nineteenth century (Bakker, 1997), from intense contact between southern Plains Cree and Michif Fransay, presumably (Papen 1993; 2010; Burnouf et al. 2007; Bakker and Barkwell 2006). Its striking uniqueness from other languages in the prairies is that it seemed to have integrated grammatical systems and complexities from both its languages of origin, as a rare example of a true mixed language (Bakker 1997)[19].

[18] Heritage Michif is a specifying term used at the Gabriel Dumont Institute to distinguish resources in this language from those in Northern/Ile-à-la-Crosse Michif, and in the Canadian geographic Indigenous peoples atlas (2018). In my experience drafting an Memorandum of Collaboration with the Manitoba Métis Federation (see Chapter 3), heritage Michif was also the preferred term. The term ‘southern Michif’ is used in certain publications found in the Métis virtual Museum (GDI), favored by the grassroots Prairie to Woodlands Indigenous Revitalization Circle, as well as presently by the Louis Riel Institute. The term ‘Michif Cree’ is used in certain current federal government publications and news releases, such as this 2021 release on the appointment of the Indigenous language commissioner (https://www.canada.ca/en/canadian-heritage/newsroom/the-first-commissioner-and-directors-of-indigenous-languages-are-appointed.html#michif.). The language is also referred to as “Turtle Mountain Chippewa Cree” in Laverdure and Allard’s 1983 dictionary from the Turtle Mountain area. These specifying terms are used *only* to distinguish between more than one language that self-identifies as Michif. Otherwise, it is most likely referred to as Michif.

[19] There are some arguments in favor of Michif no longer being a true mixed language today (Gillon and Rosen, 2018), but strong indications remain that it was so originally. Rather than favoring one nomenclature over another for this language variety, because of its origin as a mixed language, we will refer to this language in this particular comparative chapter as mixed Michif, in line with Mazzoli (2019a).

Because of the strong phonological/lexical similarities between Michif Fransay and the noun phrases and French-origin components of (mixed) Michif, it has been suggested (Bakker 1992; Papen 1993; Bakker and Papen 1997; Burnouf et al. 2007) that the French-origin nouns in (mixed) Michif originate from Michif-French, rather than another variety of "canayen" or Laurentian French. In fact, the French component in both languages clearly seems to have evolved from Canadian-French spoken by voyageurs (Burnouf et al., 2007:iii)[20].

Typically, in (mixed) Michif, determiners and nouns have a Michif French source, while demonstratives are from Plains Cree. Gillon and Rosen (2018) recently argue that although there is a strong presence of French-source lexicon and grammar in the Determiner Phrase (DP), it still largely functions as an Algonquian DP. Verb morphology and syntax are Algonquian: typically French-source verb phrases are either invariable or incorporated into Cree verbal structure.

Mazzoli (2019a) estimates a remaining 100-150 speakers of mixed Michif. Most speakers are seventy years or older, but there has been lot of renewed interest in present times to revitalize, promote and transmit the language in many of its speech communities. This renewed enthusiasm could be attributed to Métis Nations across Canada identifying it as their *national* language (Barkwell and Fleury 2017) and to its singularly (mixed) nature, which experts such as Bakker (1997) had deemed unique and of particular interest. The language has been taught in a Master-Apprentice program (see Prairies to Woodlands Indigenous Language Revitalization Circle); in community settings (e.g. community classes with the Michif Cultural Connections Company in St. Albert (AB), and the Gabriel Dumont Local 11 and City of Saskatoon (SK)); at pre-school and elementary school levels (e.g. see MN-S Michif Early Learning Pilot Project (MELPP) (Métis Nation 2021)); and at post-secondary institutions (e.g. SUNTEP Regina and Saskatoon campuses; University of Manitoba; Brandon University, etc.).

The Gabriel Dumont Institute and the Louis Riel Institute, among others, are stewards of fairly large corpuses of the language. Both have published children's literature with a Michif translation and other language teaching tools and dictionaries. Other large corpuses include interviews by Bakker and by Crawford, whose unpublished audio recordings are housed at the University of North Dakota; McCreery, who recorded over 500 hours in Manitoba on behalf of

[20] Both language varieties still retain today old French terms, expressions and pronunciations no longer of frequent use in French-Canadian/ Laurentian French varieties. The possessive construction noted in Michif Fransay, for example, is also found in mixed Michif (e.g.: *ma seur soon kavali* 'my sister's caller/boyfriend).

Nicole Rosen (Adam 2020); and Sammons, whose corpus includes recordings with 25 (mixed) Michif speakers and constitutes the first audio-visual corpus for Michif (Sammons 2019). Many speakers have also done their own language banking work, but some express the pressing need for more work on language banking for preservation and identification of speakers, i.e. building a network of speakers who haven't necessarily been involved in previous language work and recording their language, stories and experiences. Existing language manuals and dictionaries include Rosen and Souter (2015); Fleury (2013); Laverdure and Allard (1983); Flamand (2002) and the Algonquian Dictionaries Project's Michif Dictionary (Rosen (ed.), 2021). Resources, such as online courses, are constantly being created today by educators, grassroots organizations, not-for-profit corporations and/or speakers.

Some of the mixed language aspects that have fascinated linguists and other language experts include the language's maintenance of two separate gender systems from its two main source languages, i.e. feminine/masculine and animate/inanimate distinctions, and the overall structure of the DP (Papen 2003a-b; Gillon and Rosen 2018; Sammons 2019; Rosen 2020) (c.f. 2.3.1.). There has been also extensive debate on whether or not the language has a mixed phonology (Rhodes 1977; Papen and Bakker 1997; Bakker 1997; Fitzsimmons et al. 2014; Prichard and Schwayder 2014; Rosen et al. 2020). Although we will not delve further into this question here, we will show that some speakers today do have mixed morphophonological and voicing assimilation rules (c.f. 2.3.2.). Finally, although the verbal structure *is* basically Algonquian, there are some differences from its mother language, Cree, including preverbal morphology, use of obviative, as well as use of conjunct and other less frequent modes (2.3.3). Finally, we will overview the little bit of data available on discourse markers and structure for the language (2.3.4) and the other languages which have influenced the language, namely (Plains) Ojibwe and English (2.3.5).

2.3.1. Nominal features in (mixed) Michif

This section discusses some of the main features of the noun phrase in (mixed) Michif, namely animacy and gender, as well as the possessive construction. Sammons (2019) finds that both gender and animacy classification systems are both still productive and stable in Michif speakers. Both agreement systems are covert, manifesting themselves in other constituents of the DP and verb phrase: the animate/inanimate distinction is reflected in both verbal agreement and the choice of demonstrative:

Table 4: (mixed) Michif demonstratives (from Sammons 2019):

	Inanimate	Animate
this (one)	ooma	awa
these (ones)	ohiin	ookik
that (one)	anima	ana
those (ones)	anihi	anikik
that (far one)	neema	naaha
those (far ones)	neehi	neekik
which (one)	taanima	taana
which (ones)	taanishi	taaniki

The masculine/feminine distinction is marked on the choice of determiner, either definite, indefinite or possessive singulars: *la*$_{F0}$ /*li*$_{M}$ (definite), *enn*$_{F}$ /*aen*$_{M}$ (indefinite), *ma*$_{F}$/ *moon*$_{M}$ – *ta*$_{F}$/ *toon*$_{M}$ – *sa*$_{F}$/ *soon*$_{M}$ (possessives). The restricted set of adjectives which can occur before the noun in standard French and French varieties maintain gender agreement in Michif (i.e. *gro/grosse* 'big', *pchi/pchit* 'small'), but not post-nominal French-source adjectives (e.g. colours[21]).

Papen (2003a:129) and Sammons (2019) have shown that the assignment of animacy in Michif largely still aligns with animacy in its source language, i.e. Plains Cree, with some exceptions with Cree arbitrary animates, i.e. when there is no correspondence between natural animacy and grammatical animacy. In those cases, some originally animate nouns have been re-analysed as inanimate in Michif, such as *lii baa* 'socks', which is inanimate in Michif, but its Plains Cree equivalent, *asikan-ak* is animate (Sammons, 2019: 202).

In terms of gender assignment, Sammons argues that (mixed) Michif and standard Canadian-French mostly correspond in gender assignment, and in cases where they don't align, Michif is more likely to assign a default masculine value. The exceptions are English-source borrowings, who can often be assigned feminine gender[22].

[21] *La kilot blaan*$_{F}$ 'the white pair of pants' vs. *li gaan blaan*$_{M}$, 'the white glove' whereas Canadian-French has a *blanc*$_{M}$/*blanche*$_{F}$ 'white' gender-based inflection.

[22] Sammons (2019), like Gillon & Rosen (2018), mostly considers standard Canadian-French gender assignment, without focusing on vernacular French varieties of the prairies, especially Michif-French (Michif Fransay), in which there has already been much gender variation. Gaborieau (1985), in his book *A l'écoute des franco-manitobains*, documents particularities of Manitoba French and shows that gender has been unstable in vernacular varieties of Manitoba French (le *franco-manitobain*) for a long time. Similarly, in Michif Fransay, there are, among others, many lemmas assigned masculine gender which have feminine gender in standard French, and a handful of examples of English borrowings which have been assigned feminine gender. Rosen (2020) refers to this gender instability in French, particularly in vowel initial words, borrowed words and words that switch gender by analogy with other phonologically similar forms (Rosen 2020: 156).

Sammons (2019) thus concludes that no interactions seem to exist between the two systems of noun classification (i.e. gender and animacy) and that Michif is perhaps “best analyzed as having two separate, co-existing systems of nominal classification, rather than a single combined system” (2019:241). She proposes that Michif would have kept both systems intact from its source languages and that they function separately from one another, following their own separate patterns[23].

Possession is expressed in two different systems in Michif as well, depending on the source language of the noun in question. With French-source nouns, the French-origin possessive pronouns occur (as shown in Table *5*), and in the plural, in conjunction with Cree-source suffixes, as exemplified in (20) with the possessee *biibi* ‘baby’.

Table 5: French-source possessive pronouns in mixed Michif

	Singular possessee		Plural possessee	English equivalent
Possessor	Masculine	Feminine	M/F	
1SG	moon	ma	mii	*my*
2SG	toon	Ta	tii	*your*
3SG	soon	Sa	sii	*his/her*
1PL	Notr		no	*our*
2PL	Votr		vo/ tii	*your*
3PL	Leu		leu	*their*

Although the possessee and possessor number features are marked by the use of pronoun, the possessor number is also marked in a person suffix (1PL *-inaan*; 2PL and 3PL *-iwaaw*) affixed to the possessee noun, such as these examples, with 1EXCL possessor with singular possessee (a) and 1EXCL possessor with plural possessor (b):

(20) a. ekwana **notr bibi-inaan** anihi gii-wawekinenaan avik lii vyeu linj.
ekwana notr biibi- inaan anihi gii-
that.one.AN 1PL.POSS baby- 1PL DEM.INAN.PL 1PL.PST-

wawekin -enaan avik lii vyeu linj
dress.SO.AN -1PL>3 with DET.PL old clothes
‘That was **our baby** we dressed it up there in old clothes.’ (VD)

[23] Anecdotally, there is some re-analysis happening amongst speakers for whom masculine determiners *aen*$_{ind}$/li$_{def}$ are re-analysed as markers of inanimacy, and feminine determiners *enn*$_{ind}$/la$_{def}$, as markers of animacy. Although this does not yet seem to trigger any language change, or any differences in the use of the pronouns, one could wonder if it will do so in the future. In (mixed) Michif, I have only come across this tendency in conversation, but mention it here because it is also a point of discussion in Northern Michif, for which we will provide examples in 2.4.

b. Pi lii psit kann di baking powder, maana anihi lii kouver anima ekwani **no nasiet-inaan.**

Pi	lii	psit	kann	di	baking powder	maana
And	DET.PL	little	can	of		used.to

anihi	lii	koover	anima	ekwani
DEM.INAN.PL	DET.PL	lid	DEM.SG	these.ones.INAN.PL

no	nasiet-inaan.
1PL.POSS	plate-1PL

'And the little cans of baking powder. Those lids, they were **our plates**.' (VD)

In the case of Cree-source nouns, for example in *-moshom* 'grandfather' and *-oohkom* 'grandmother', as well as *maamaa* 'mother' and *paapaa* 'father', the Cree possessive prefixes are maintained, as well as the third person obviative suffix, such as:

Table 6: Cree-source possessive pronouns in mixed Michif:

	Grandfather	Grandmother
1SG	**ni**moshom	**n**oohkom
2SG	**ki**moshom	**k**oohkom
3SG	**o**moshom**a**	**o**ohkom**a**

In the case of a third person possessor, with full NP referent, the same possession construction attested in Michif Fransay is also attested in (mixed) Michif, such as in (21a-c). The possessor is bolded and the possessee, italicized:

(21) Possession construction with third person possessor

a. Si kom enn mezon loon ayish **nipaapaa** *sa mezon*.
My dad's *house* was like a long house. (VD)

b. **Nimaamaa** *soon aami* too'ltaan maana nandaw kii-tashpinatowak eh.
That was **my mom's** *friend* they always did something to each other (playing tricks). (HM2)

c. Pi yaenk **nipaapaa** *sa shmiz*. Folay dan li paar akohtaat.
And only **my dad's** *shirt*. She had to hang it on the fence. (M2)

Like we discussed in 2.2, this particular possession construction places the possessor in first position, followed by possessive pronoun + possessee in adjacent position. This is a feature not found in any other variety of French with the exception of Michif Fransay, thus drawing a parallel between Michif Fransay and the French-source components of mixed Michif.

2.3.2. Phonological rules

There is a certain amount of speaker-dependent variation in the realization of phonological rules in Michif. Amongst some speakers of Michif, in most cases of Cree-source words in Michif, [g] and [k] are in complementary, allophonic distribution, where /k/ is voiced [g] between vowels and maintained as [k] in other contexts, such as the following rule: /k/ > [g]/ V_V. This tendency is recorded in the spelling of the Turtle Mountain Chippewa Cree dictionary. However, this is not universal amongst Michif speakers, as Bakker (1997) noted an overwhelming non-voicing of /k/ between vowels amongst his consultants.

Notwithstanding, in the case of French-source words, all speakers seem to maintain /k/ and /g/ in phonemic opposition, which is illustrated in the following near-minimal pairs:

Table 7: French-source words /g/ and /k/ phonemic distinction

/k/ vs. /g/ > /#_	/k/ vs. /g/ > /V_V	/k/ vs /g/ >/V_C	V_w
[g]rii *gray*	ma[g]azaen *store*	li[g]liiz *(the) church*	bis[k]wii *biscuit*
[k]rikay *cricket*	a[k]orjhyoon *accordion*	l'ae[g]l *the eagle*	aen ni[g]wii *needle*
[g]aatoo *cake*	i[k]ol *school*	lii zi[k]layr *the lightning*	
[k]anoo *canoe*	aen raa[g]oo *a stew*	lii zi[k]riichur *the writings*	

As such, there is variation in voicing rules for Michif speakers: firstly, additionally to the phonemic opposition in French-source words, some Michif speakers will also alternate between [g] and [k] in complementary distribution in Cree-source contexts. In the case of others, [g] does not occur in Cree-source words or morphemes. A very simple but common example is *e[k/g]wa* 'and', which some speakers produce as [egwa] and others as [ehkwa]. However, in either case, there is a notable exception where /k/ and /g/ are in phonemic opposition in Cree-source morphology. This is due to the merging of Plains Cree Slot 1 and 2 preverbal markers in Cree-source verbs. These two pre-verbal slots were identified as distinct from one another in Bakker's 1997 descirption of mixed Michif, as shown here in this simplified morphology table of independent verbs in Table 8:

Table 8: mixed Michif independent verb morphology (Bakker, 1997 :99)

1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**	**8**
Person marker (IND) *ni-* *ki-*	Tense markers *ki:-* *wi:-* *ka-*	Modality *ka:kwe-* 'to try' *pu:ni-* 'to quit'	Verb stem	Valency Causative Benefactive Applicative Passive Reciprocal Reflective	Subject & Object Agreement	3rd person AGR	COND -i

Bakker shows here that underlying person and tense markers are in two separate preverbal slots (1 & 2), like in Cree. However, as shown in Bakker (1991), Rosen and Souter (2015), and our data, Slots 1 and 2 have merged in the independent order (c.f. 2.3.5). In Table 9, we show pre-verbal slots for Independent verbs in the first and second persons. The first column shows pre-verbal prefixes for past tense paradigms. In Cree, first person prefix *ni-* and past tense prefix *ki:-* remain distinct from one another, but in Michif, they have merged as a single prefix, i.e. *gi:-*. In the case of second person, Cree *ki-ki:-* '2SG-PAST' has similarly merged as *ki:-*. A parallel pattern is found in future/near future/desirative paradigms, as shown in the second main column in the table:

Table 9: Vowel elision and consonant conflation in Michif verbal prefixes

		Past preverbal slots		**Future preverbal slots**	
		Slot 1	Slot 2	Slot 1	Slot 2
First persons	Cree	ni-	ki:-	ni-	ka:- wi:- (volition)
	Michif	**gi:-**		**ga:-** **nwi:- (volition)**	
Second persons	Cree	ki-	ki:-	ki-	ka:- wi:-
	Michif	**ki:-**		**ka:-** **kwi:-**	

As such, in Michif, there is a phonemic opposition between prefixes *gii-* ~ *kii-*, i.e. denoting first and second persons respectively in the singular and inclusive/ exclusive in the plural. Table 10 shows the Michif independent order inflections for first and second persons for the verb *kîwê-* 'go home' for both past and future tenses.

Table 10: Voiced/voiceless distinctive contrast in Michif – Past and future prefixes in independent

	Prefixes		*go home*		**kii/gii- (Past tense)**	**kaa/gaa- (Future tense)**
2sg	kii-	kaa-	**kiiw-**	-aan	*You went home*	*You will go home*
1sg	gii-	gaa-		*1/2sg*	*I went home*	*You will go home*
21	kii-	kaa-	**kiiw-**	-aanaan	*We (incl) went home*	*We (incl) will go home*
1pl	gii-	gaa-		*1pl/21*	*We (excl) went home*	*We (excl) will go home*

Similar phonological rules apply to the initial voiceless consonants of verbal roots in present tense, exemplified in the table below:

Table 11: Voiced/voiceless distinctive contrast in Michif – Present tense independent

AI Verb	**2SG**	**1SG**	**1INCL**	**1EXCL**
run	**p**imbaahtaa**n**	**bimbaahtaan**	**p**imbaahtaa**naan**	**b**imbaahtaa**naan**
laugh	**p**aahpi**n**	**b**aahpi**n**	**p**aahpi**naan**	**b**aahpi**naan**
go to...	**t**oohtaa**n**	**d**oohtaa**n**	**t**oohta**naan**	**d**oohta**naan**
call...	**t**epwaa**n**	**d**epwaa**n**	**t**epwaa**naan**	**d**epwaa**naan**
go home	**k**iiwaa**n**	**g**iiwaa**n**	**k**iiwaa**naan**	**g**iiwaa**naan**
leave	**sh**ipwehtaa**n**	**zh**ipwehtaa**n**	**sh**ipwehtaa**naan**	**zh**ipwehtaa**naan**

As shown here, voiceless stops and fricatives are voiced for first person singulars and first person plurals. The person prefix *ni-* is dropped after the voicing assimilation of the tense prefix's onset consonant. The second person prefix *ki-* is also dropped, without assimilation. As such, in present tense paradigms, the only distinction between first and second person singular as well as first person plural inclusive and exclusive is the voicing of the initial consonant.

2.3.3. Verbal morphology

Bakker (1997) notes some reduction of the Plains Cree paradigm in (mixed) Michif, including the absence of the preterite and dubitative forms, but that other than some reductions, the morphology is basically equivalent. As discussed in 2.3.1, Michif nouns are assigned gender and animacy, the latter reflected in the verbal morphology. As such, the Algonquian four-way classification of valency and animacy can describe Michif:

Table 12: Verbal classification

Valency	0 animate participants	1 animate participant	2+ animate participants
Intransitive	VII	VAI *animate actor* VAIt *animate actor, inanimate goal*	
Transitive		VTI *animate actor, inanimate goal*	VTA *animate actor, animate goal*

Imperative, independent and conjunct/ dependent modes are productive in Michif like in other Algonquian languages. An important exception noted by Bakker is that the conjunct mode is not as frequently used in the matrix/main clause in Michif as in Plains Cree, for instance (Bakker 1997). Bakker's 1997 table for Cree and Michif verbal morphology is listed again here, this time including both conjunct and independent order paradigms. For instance, Slot 1 includes independent order present tense prefixes *and* conjunct order complementizers:

Table 13: mixed Michif verb morphology (adapted from Bakker, 1997:99; Mazzoli, 2019a:6)

1 – Order	**2 – Tense/ Mood**	**3 - Preverbs**	**4**	**5 - Derivatives**	**6 – Themes**	**7 & 8 – Agreement**		**9 – Mode**
Conjunct marker (CONJ) *ee-/aen* *kaa-* *chi-* Person marker (IND) *ni-* *ki-*	*ki:-* *wi:-* *ka-*	*ka:kwe-* 'to try' *pu:ni-* 'to quit' *nohte* 'want'	**Verb stem**	Valency Causative Benefactive Applicative Passive Reciprocal Reflective	TA TI	Obviative	Person AGR	COND/SUBJ -i

In Chapter 5, we will discuss the distribution of said conjunct order markers or complementizers shown in Slot 1. We will discuss then in greater detail their role in marking both aspect and modality, and as such, their importance to overall narrative structure.

2.3.4. Discourse and narrative organization in Michif

There is very little description of elements of Michif narrative structure, such as verb serialization, use of particles and complex sentences. Bakker (1997) offers a morphological and syntactic description of Michif, namely copula constructions, question sentences, negative sentences (see also Wolfart 2010), relative clauses and 'modality' clauses.

Some discourse particles identified for Michif include *e:sa* 'it is said', which according to Bakker (1997) is particularly found in fairy tales; *ma:na* 'usually', as well as *ayi* or *ayish* 'ehm' as hesitation markers. English particles such as 'but' and 'well' are also commonly attested as Michif narrative markers (Bakker 1997).

2.3.5. (Plains) Ojibwe influences

The differences between Plains Cree and (mixed) Michif in phonology and morpho-syntax are attributed to an underlying Ojibwe influence. For instance, the merging of Proto-Algonquian reflexes *s and *ʃ into /ʃ/ occurs in (mixed) Michif, as opposed to /s/ in Plains Cree. In Plains Ojibwe (nakawêmowin) and other dialects of Ojibwe, the contrast between /s/ and /ʃ/ is maintained. Furthermore, even in the Cree-source verbs, adverbs and demonstratives, there can be the presence of nasal vowels, such as *õhĩ* (demonstrative inanimate plural), *cĩ* (question marker) and *mẽtawe* (play), which are much more typical of Ojibwe than Cree (Bakker 1990).

Furthermore, Bakker (1991) attributes the conflation of slot 1 and 2 verbal prefixes initial consonants with initial root consonant to Ojibwe (see Tables 8 and 11), which he shows is an intermediate stage between Plains Cree and (mixed) Michif. This table is from Bakker (1991:13), showing vowel elision in Plains Ojibwe (Saulteaux in Bakker 1991) first person prefix *ni-*, which leads to conflation between prefix consonant *n-* and an initial consonant on the verbal root:

Table 14: Bakker (1991:13) Michif consonant conflation

	Plains Cree	Saulteaux	Michif
1 + *k* initial	ni-k-	ng-	g-
1 + *t* initial	ni-t-	nd-	d-
1 + *p* initial	ni-p-	mb-	b-

Bakker links this distinction between voiced and voiceless consonants to the optional voicing of stops in intervocal positions, and says that this is a process also noted in other dialects of Central Algonquian (Rhodes and Todd, 1981:59-60).

Finally, the difference between (mixed) Michif independent order first person inclusive suffix *-naan(ik)* and Plains Cree *-naanaw(ak)* is also attributed to Ojibwe (Bakker 1990), for which first person inclusive morphology is also *-naan(ik)*. Bakker discusses the fact that *nakawêmowin* speakers regularly visited the Red River Settlement, and that there would have been many instances of Ojibwe-Michif bilingualism. Many Manitoba Michif/Métis people on the

shores of Lake Winnipeg and Lake Manitoba still have *nakawêmowin* as their Indigenous language (Bakker, 1990:17).

As Michif peoples moved further northwest and settled amongst the Woodland and northern Plains Cree in northwestern Saskatchewan and northern Alberta, another language variety emerged amongst these Michif groups, which today is often referred to as Northern Michif or Métis-Cree.

2.4. (Northern) Michif: A brief sketch and overview

Northern or Ile-à-la-Crosse Michif[24] has been classified as a variety of northern Plains Cree 'Y' with varying French influence. It has been recorded spoken in various northwestern Saskatchewan communities including Ile-à-la-Crosse, Beauval, Pinehouse, Green Lake, Buffalo Narrows, all communities in which Cree and sometimes Denesuliné is also spoken. It is also spoken in some northern Alberta communities. This language variety is taught in the school system, namely at Rossignol Elementary School in Ile-à-la-Crosse and supported by MELPP (Michif Early Learning Pilot Project). Staff from the Rossignol High School and the Ile-à-la-Crosse School Division has also developed the curriculum for Michif high school courses (Michif 10, 20, 30, i.e. Grades 10-12) for the Ministry of Education in Saskatchewan. The staff also contributed to the publication of the Northern Michif dictionary and grammar (Ahenakew 2009). The language is different from the Cree dialects (i.e. Northern Plains Cree and Woodland Cree) also spoken in northwestern Saskatchewan. In general, communities in northwestern Saskatchewan have been very involved in the promotion and the transmission of their languages, including Cree and Northern Michif, for example at the Pinehouse radio station CFNK. There are also many interviews in Northern Michif available on the Gabriel Dumont Institute YouTube channel.

My recent experience as an apprentice of Laura Burnouf, a Northern Michif and Cree speaker, was an incredible opportunity to learn firsthand some of the particularities of this language variety. Laura is a very dedicated advocate for language revitalization in the province,

[24] In the case of this language variety, there are also many terms used in resources and literature: the term "Northern Michif" is used in Gabriel Dumont Institute resources and applications and the Indigenous Peoples Atlas of Canada. The term "Ile-à-la-Crosse Michif" is used in Burnouf et al. 2007, also published by the GDI. The term "Métis Cree" is also used in the Algonquian Linguistic Atlas for this language variety. As Northern Michif is the most widespread term in most recent publications, we will use it here for this chapter.

and for the well-being of her region. She is currently serving as the area director for Northern region 1, and has been a language instructor and mentor in Mentor-Apprentice programs for many years. It was an honor and pleasure to experience the Mentor-Apprentice programs, even with Covid restrictions, particularly with someone as kind, passionate and knowledgeable as Laura. Many times, in our sessions, we compared the Cree languages of northwestern Saskatchewan, namely (northern) Plains Cree and Woodland Cree to the language of her parents, who were both Michif.

2.4.1. Nominal borrowings from French

Bakker (1997) found a varying number of French nouns among speakers involved in his research, with 5 to 45% French-source nouns being noted. Many speakers can interchange a large subsection of their vocabulary between Michif (French-source nouns or phonologically intergrated English borrowings) and Cree. Ahenakew's grammar book and dictionary, the most extensive resource published on the language, often offers both a French-source and a Cree-source noun for various nominal referents. Table 15 shows a sample of such alternative entries in the dictionary, for a few food-themed terms:

Table 15: Sample from Ahenakew (2009) with "Michif"/ nêhiyawêwin alternate entries

From Ahenakew (2009)	Northern Michif French-/English-source entry	Northern Michif Cree-source entry
Apple	l'pom	pîcikwas
Bannock	lakalet	pahkiwîsikan
Carrot	l'korrot	oskâtask
Butter	l'batarr	tohtôshâpopimî
Broth	l'rrababô	mîcimâpoy
Cabbage	li shô	otîhîpakwa
Biscuit	l'biskwî	pahkwisikânis
Beer	la byayr	pîstêwâpoy
Candy	l'kândî	sôminis

Similar lexical themes for "Michif-source"/ French-source nouns are found in the narratives we recorded with speakers of Northern Michif from Beauval and Ile-à-la-Crosse.

Table 16 outlines a large sample of French-source words from these recordings, as well as from our language documentation sessions with speaker Laura Burnouf (from Beauval SK). It shows the thematic patterns of these French-source words in the language.

Table 16: French-source words in Northern Michif corpus (stories and MA sessions)

Farm			
li trakteur	*Tractor*	la ter	*the dirt*
li shaan	*Field*	li toner	*thunder*
lii stook	*Stooks*	la posyer	*Dust*
dahorr	*Outside*		
Food			
lii rasan	*Raisins*	li soopwi	*supper*
la farinn la fleur	*Flour*	lii karot	*carrots*
la residence	*Residence*	la pol	*chicken*
la sop	*Soup*	li pwut	*Mug*
la psit kwuiyayr/ choyer	*the little spoon*	la fracassi	*vegetable stew*
lii patak	*Potatoes*	la rubaboo	*boiling stew*
li paen	*Bread*	li fornoo la pwel	*oven* *the stove*
la galette	*Bannock*	li tashoon	*Rag*
la poutsine	*Poutine*		
School and religion			
la seur	*the nun*	la mes	*Mass*
li pêre	*the priest*	l'agliz	*Church*
la residence	*the residence*	l'ikol	*School*
Tobacco		**Clothing**	
li cigarette	*the cigarette*	li baa	*Socks*
li cigar	*the cigar*	l'shapoo	*Hat*
People		la kilot	*Pants*
la vyey/ li vyeu	*old people*	la shmizh	*the shirt*
mi paren	*my parents*		
la famii	*Family*		
Others in the home			
li psi canoe	*the little canoe*	li (psi) kwaen	*the little corner (of the house)*
lii porte	*the door(s)*	li portre	*pictures*
li piano	*Piano*	li shofa	*the couch*
li vyelon	*Fiddle*		
la plot	*the ball*		
Expressions			
gaati porrii	*spoiled rotten*	daan...	*in...*
saandzi	*nosy*		.

As such, although this is possibly influenced by the nature of the narratives, in which we talked fairly extensively about food gathering, preparation and consumption, there seems to be a particularly notable proportion of French-source nouns available to Northern Michif speakers to designate food and kitchen terms. Exploring the distribution between French-source and Cree-source nouns in Northern Michif should be explored in future research to see whether or not

there are indeed certain domains of language use in which we find more French-source over Cree-source nouns.

French-source nouns in Northern Michif also co-occur with a French-source productive system of possessive determiners, as illustrated in the following table:

Table 17: Possessive determiners

	Feminine OBJ	Masculine OBJ	Plural OBJ
Definite	la	li	lii
1POSS	ma	moon	mii
2POSS	ta	toon	tii
3POSS	sa	soon	sii

These possessive determiners as well as definite determiners may co-occur with Cree-source demonstrative determiners (*ooma/ awa*). In some instances, the possessive determiners occur in conjunction with the definite determiner which is cliticized to the noun. Note that in many of these cases, the possessive determiner is masculine and the clitic determiner, is *la* (feminine), while in others, such as *galette*, the gender aligns. The data shown in Table 18 is compiled from language documentation sessions, which followed the recording of narratives. *Where is…* indicated in the first line is the sentence frame used to elicit these phrases:

Table 18: Possessive & demonstrative constructions

Tanwi	*where is (inanimate)*	*Tanwa*	*where is (animate)*
moon foorshet ooma toon foorshet ooma soon foorshet ooma	*my fork (this one)* *your fork (this one)* *his/her fork (this one)*	la kwuyer awa ma kwuyer awa ta kwuyer awa sa kwuyer awa	*the spoon (this one)* *my spoon (this one)* *your spoon (this one)* *his/her spoon (this one)*
moon botshin toon botshin soon botshin	*my shoe* *your shoe* *his/her shoe*	la shmiizh ooma ma shmiizh ooma ta shmiizh ooma sa shmiizh ooma	*this shirt* *my shirt (this one)* *your shirt (this one)* *his/her shirt (this one)*
moon taashoon toon taashoon soon taashoon	*my rag* *your rag* *his/her rag*	la kilot ma kilot ta kilot sa kilot	*the pants* *my pants* *your pants* *his/her pants*
moon lataab toon lataab soon lataab	*my table* *your table* *his/her table*	la galet ma lagalet sa lagalet	*the bannock* *my bannock* *his/her bannock*
moon laport toon laport soon laport	*my door* *your door* *his/her door*		
mii bleuen tii bleuen sii bleuen	*my blueberries* *your blueberries* *his/her blueberries*	mii zaraanzh tii zaraanzh sii zaraanzh	*my oranges* *your oranges* *his/her oranges*

Some inanimate nouns in the above table keep the original gender assignment in a clitic now integrated as part of the word, such as *latab*. Reanalysis of determiners is attested also in mixed Michif (as well as Creole languages and other Indigenous languages such as Dene): Rosen (2007) shows examples of partitive determiners *di* 'of' and masculine definite determiner for vowel initial words *l'* reanalyzed as part of the lexical root, such as *diloo* 'water' and *dootmiil*[25] 'oatmeal' (Rosen, 2007: 215). In the reanalysis in Table 18 Northern Michif examples, the determiner slot is free for the possessive determiners, which are not feminine, but rather masculine in origin (*moon, toon, soon*).[26]

Furthermore, in Northern Michif, Bakker (1997) notes the complete absence of French-source adverbs and prepositions, the virtual absence of (Plains) Ojibwe influence, as well as the consistent use of Cree-source function words. Bakker (1997:144-148) offers a short comparative study of (mixed) Michif and Northern Michif, concluding that both languages are different in many respects and must have developed completely independently. Section 2.4.2. discusses some aspects of his phonological comparative work, and 2.4.3 elaborates on some morpho-syntactic particularities of the language.

2.4.2. Northern Michif: Phonological Comparative work

Northern Michif verb structure is similar to (northern) Plains Cree. Bakker (1997) concludes there is no notable influence from (Plains) Ojibwe onto Northern Michif, and no real record of French-source verbs or instances of French-source noun incorporation. Unlike (mixed) Michif, both preverbal prefixes are maintained, as *ni-kî-kîwân* (I went home), which is in line with Cree morphology.

Bakker (1997) considers phonological, lexical and morphological characteristics in complementary distribution between Northern Michif and (mixed) Michif. In terms of phonological characteristics, in Northern Michif, Proto-Algonquian sibilants /s/ and /ʃ/ have

[25] Phonologically and morphologically integrated borrowing from English.
[26] Such as in (mixed) Michif, some speakers are re-analysing masculine possessives as markers for inanimacy, and feminine possessives, as markers of animacy. Here, it seems to perhaps have, some effect on language change, as inanimate *port* 'door' and *tabl* 'table' show some gender misalignment: both nouns are feminine (with determiner *la*), but have masculine possessives. Most examples from Table 15 come from discussions with a Northern Michif speaker on this reanalysis of masculine/feminine gender. Although there is some consistent reanalysis of French-source feminine words which correspond to inanimate Cree-source words such as *bootshin, foorshet, laport, lataab*, it is not consistent across French-source nouns. For example, it is still said *ma/ta/sa schmizh* 'my shirt' and not **moon schmizh*, even though *schmizh* 'shirt' is an inanimate noun.

merged as /s/, like in Plains Cree and Woods Cree. In (mixed) Michif, however, Proto-Algonquian sibilants have merged as /ʃ/. Similarly, the reflex of Proto-Algonquian /ʧ/ is produced as /ʧ/ in (mixed) Michif and /ʦ/ in Northern Michif: in other words, sibilants are alveolar in the latter and palatal in the former. Cree-source words in (mixed) Michif maintain the contrast between [e:] and [i:] found in Southern Plains Cree, while in Northern Michif, Proto-Algonquian *[e:] and *[i:] have merged into [i:]. Finally, as discussed in previous sections, Bakker notes that, in Northern Michif and varieties of Cree, [k] is voiced between vowels but often not so in (mixed) Michif. All these differences between northern and (mixed) Michif, according to Bakker (1991), can be possibly attributed to the influence of (Plains) Ojibwe on (mixed) Michif, and lack thereof in Northern Michif. In this same vein, all (mixed) Michif speakers who sat down with Bakker (1997) used some Ojibwe-source words, while no Ile-à-la-Crosse Northern Michif speakers did.

2.4.3. Northern Michif: Morpho-syntactic Comparative work

There are some key differences between Northern Michif and (mixed) Michif verbal morphology. Most notably, the transitive ending for first person exclusive acting on a third person plural (1pl > 3pl) is *-na:nak* in Northern Michif and *-na:nik* in (mixed) Michif (Bakker 1997). In (mixed) Michif, the first person inclusive has the same suffix *-naan* as first person exclusive. As such, first inclusive and exclusive are contrasted only by the person/tense portmanteau prefix (*gii/gaa-* for past/future exclusive and *kii/kaa-* for past/future inclusive). On the other hand, Northern Michif maintains the inclusive morpheme *-nânaw* (Ahenakew 2009), similarly to Cree dialects.

Northern Michif's morphology also differs from its Cree dialect neighbors in at least one aspect, namely the conjunct order third person plural (3PL) morpheme. In Cree, as well as (mixed) Michif, the conjunct third person plural morpheme is *-cik*/*-chik*, while in Northern Michif, it is *-twâw*. Note the following contrastive example:

(22) Third person plural *-twâw* vs. *-cik*: '*they are almost up/awake*' (author's examples)

a. Cree: Kêkâc wâniskâ**chik**
b. NM: Kêkâc wâniskâ**twâw**

This morphological difference is one of the most notable between Northern Michif and its Cree counterparts.

Furthermore, in (mixed) Michif, speakers can incorporate French or English noun or verb phrases in a Cree verbal construction. In Northern Michif, this type of 'mixed' verb is unattested in Bakker's (1997) research. For example, constructions like *labu:iwan* 'it is muddy' (23b) and *ka:lisɛlibreti:cik* 'when they celebrate' (23c) are attested in (mixed) Michif (Bakker, 1997:146). A few such incorporations are also attested in this project's (mixed) Michif stories, for example, when referring to applying a mud and hay mixture *la booz*, to seal and insulate a log house (23a):

(23) a. labooziwak
La-booz-i-wak
The.F-mud&hay-AI-IND.3PL
'They apply a mud-hay mixture (on the log house).' (VD)

b. labu:-iwan
la- bu:-iwan
the.F-mud-II.IND
'it is muddy.' (Bakker, 1997:146)

c. ka:-lisɛlibreti:cik
ka:- li- sɛlibret -i: -cik
COMP- the.PL celebrate -AI -3PL.CJ
'when they celebrate'

Speakers of (mixed) Michif may also incorporate English nouns into verbs, such as in (24a-b):

(24) a. Retire-i-yaan
Retire-AI- CJ.1SG
"...(that) I retire" (MF)

b. Hitch-hike-ii-t
Hitchhike-AI-CJ.3SG
"...he hitchhikes" (MF)

Furthermore, in Northern Michif, numeral constructions follow Cree order (Numeral-Noun), while in (mixed) Michif, French numerals are used in a Numeral-Determiner-Noun construction. These comparative examples are from Burnouf et al. (2007), which provides the same example sentences and vocabulary lists in (mixed) Michif, Northern Michif and Michif Fransay, as provided by their speakers.

(25) a. (mixed) Michif : Andrea Menard deu lii CD kii-oshitow.
Andrea Menard **deu** **lii** CD kii-oshito-w.
Andrea Menard **two** **the.PL** CD PST-make-3SG
Andrea Menard has released two CDs. (Burnouf et al., 2007:48)

b. Northern Michif: Andrea Menard kî-pakitinam **nîso** kâwâwîyayâki sîkwascikanisa.

kî-	pakitin-am	**nîso**	kâ-wâwîyayâk-i	sîkwas-cikanis-a.
Pst-	release-3sg>0	two	COMP-round-0.CJ	silver-hard-PL.INAN

‘Andrea Menard has released two CDs.’ (Burnouf et al., 2007:20)

Bakker (1997) also noted that conjunct verbs are commonly found in main clauses in Northern Michif, but only exceptionally so in (mixed) Michif. In Plains Cree, the conjunct order is considered anaphoric or “dependent”, meaning that the conjunct verb often occurs in main clauses if the referent or topic has already been established and that the dependent verb relays back to previous discourse (Cook 2008). As such, to superficially show the difference in repartition of independent and conjunct verbs across a narrative between both languages, here are two narrative excerpts describing animal encounters. These are oral narratives, and so periods mark natural pauses.

In the first narrative, Laura Burnouf recounts in Northern Michif an encounter with a bear on the road. Conjunct order and subjunctive/conditional inflections are bolded, while instances of the independent order are underlined:

ta-nōcihtāyahk ta-pimohtīyahk.
...one hour to walk (to town).

So nisīmisak [name1] ekwa [name2] ekwa nimāmā ekwa [name3] mīna.
My younger sisters [name1] and [name2] and my mom and also [name3].

kitâhtawî nipimohtânân kitahtawiy **kā-wāpahtamak** kīkway **kā-kashkitīwāk ī-matwī-waskawīt** ekotī in the distance.
All of a sudden, we were walking, and all of a sudden we saw something dark (black). He was stirring/moving around there in the distance.

kwayispi êkwa Joan *itwīw* “mashkwa ana” ekwa nimāmā **ī-wihtamākoyahk** ēkā **ta-waskawiyahk** ēkwa ēkâ-īkwa **ti-atahîpwîyahk** kwayispi êkwa îkotâ.
And then Joan said: “that’s a bear!” and my mom, she told us not to move, and we froze and we just stood there.

Ninīpawinān mwāc ni-waskawānān **kā-wāpamāyahk** ana maskwa.
We didn’t move when we saw the bear walking alongside the road.

ī-pimohtīt sisonī mīskanahk īkwayispī êkwa. asōwaham mīskanahk.
And then he went across the road. At that time we were really scared.

ispī kwayaki ni-sīkisinān kīkway nitiyihtīnān.
We were thinking on what to do (on the situation).

māka ayis um. nimāmā *mashkawisīw* mwāc makîkwê ékwa mwâc **î-wâpamikoyahk** ana maskwa.
Since my mom was strong and since that bear didn't see us, we thought perhaps nothing would happen[27]. (Burnouf 2018)

This second oral narrative, told by Verna Demontigny in mixed Michif, recounts an encounter with a mouse in the kitchen:

Akoshi aen mataen akwa **aen-tishpayik**. Aan iver anima.
Because one morning, as it happened. It was winter.

kii-kishinaw dan la mezon a koz uh li swer maana.
It was very cold in the house because at night

Nipaapaa gii-ponaam nandaaw djis onz eur pi takashtiw la mezon apre li mataen.
my dad used to build a fire around ten, eleven o'clock and. The house had gone cold, cooled off by morning.

akoshi akota bimishinin. pa haenk gii-kwanihin ma faas koz kosh tenn enn pchi souri **chi-pe-pahkishi** nete oshchi.
And so I was laying there. And only I covered my face, cause I was scared a little mouse was gonna fall from up there.

gii-kwanihin ma faas aenk mii zyeu gii-waapahten pii mon fron. mishishi ditaapin nete an l'ayr.
I covered my face, you can only see my eyes and my forehead. I'm looking up.

keyachish mi zyeu kipaahen aen pchi souri **kaa-pahkishi** dan mon fron.
I just close my eyes and a mouse fell right on my forehead.

mitoni pashkat **aen chiishtinit**. Dan mon fron (paahpiw).
It just really pinched my skin. On my forehead.

Baashakohpaahtaan. Aenk enn zhaket boshchiken. Bashkopaataan. Dahorre zhipwaahtaan.
I jumped to my feet. I'm only wearing a nightgown. I jump up to my feet. I leave running outside[28]. (DeMontigny 2018)

These excerpts reflect Bakker's observations, i.e. that conjunct verbs more likely occur in subordinate clauses in mixed Michif, but in both main and subordinate clauses in Northern Michif, and this in an oral narration of events. Careful research is needed to properly establish the differences in conjunct order use in both languages.

Furthermore, Bakker (1997) notes that only French definite articles are borrowed into Northern Michif, while mixed Michif has both indefinite and definite French-source determiners.

[27] Translation done by L. Burnouf & C. Cenerini.
[28] Translation done by V. DeMontigny & C. Cenerini.

Take the following equivalent sentences from Burnouf et al. (2007), where the definite feminine determiner *la* is used in Northern Michif and the indefinite feminine determiner *enn* in (mixed) Michif is used to translate English indefinite DP *a sash*:

(26) a. Northern Michif
Ispihk Back to Batoche Days kâ-kî-ispayiki ni-ki postiskawâw ***la*** **sancîrr** êkwa nipostiskîn napakiskisina.
At *Back to Batoche* Days, I wear **a sash** and moccassins. (Burnouf et al., 2007:14)

b. (mixed) Michif
Batoche ka iitootayn ***enn*** **saenchur** flayshii gishkawow pi lii sooyii moo.
At *Back to Batoche* Days, I wear **a sash** and moccassins. (Burnouf et al., 2007:42)

Finally, while for some (mixed) Michif speakers, the French preposition *dã* has become *sa* (i.e. *sa sa maẽzũ* 'in her house') and *dans un* has merged in (mixed) Michif as *daẽ*, these changes are not at all attested in Northern Michif (Bakker 1997).

In conclusion, Bakker (1997) identifies some fundamental differences in various aspects of the languages' structure in order to re-iterate the fact that these two languages have evolved separately from one another and should be treated as distinct. That being said, there is little other research comparing mixed Michif and Northern Michif, or Northern Michif with its counterpart, northern Plains Cree, as spoken in Northwest Saskatchewan. However, as we discuss in 2.5, there is a clear sense amongst speakers of Northern Michif that their language and their way of speaking are distinct from the Cree spoken in their communities. The large network of kinship of the Michif/Métis people as well as the extensive nature of the vast homeland which they shared with their kin, has resulted, as we have discussed in 2.2-2.4 in many instances of high levels of language contact and multilingualism. It is from these contexts which arose the *expressive* need for Michif/Métis people to affirm their own separate identity through language.

2.5. One name for many languages: Policy, political and social implications

Although the Michif/Métis people's vast homeland and its extensive trading, hunting and gathering activities led to a particularly rich linguistic landscape, this is not without its present-day socio-political challenges, especially in terms of language education, planning and policy. As discussed earlier in 2.1, the language varieties we have described, i.e. mixed Michif, Michif Fransay and Northern Michif do not have many overlapping speech communities. However, in the process of urbanization with many Michif/Métis people moving to main centres, some cities

and towns now host speakers and advocates for two or more languages self-identifying as Michif[29].

In the case, for example, of the city of Saskatoon, there is a strong presence of both 'mixed' and 'Northern' Michif languages and speakers and advocates for both of these groups work in the education sector. Many Michif/Métis people in this city have ancestors who settled in the historic wintering camp of *La Prayrii Roon* (Round Prairie), which was originally around 40kms away from where the city is today, near the South Saskatchewan River, where the town of Dundurn is now located. Before 1885, families hunted buffalo in this area, but left for over two decades to take refuge in Montana and elsewhere after the 1885 Resistance. When they returned in the early 20th century, they were unable to farm the poor soil of the area and many families ended up moving to Saskatoon in the 1920s and 30s (Waiser 2017). Many of these families spoke (mixed) Michif and their descendants today are important advocates for the language.

As the biggest central urban centre in Saskatchewan, Saskatoon has also become the home of many Michif/ Métis whose families have lived in the northwestern part of the province, and have spoken or speak Northern Michif and/or northern Plains or Woodland Cree. As such, today, at various levels within the city's and the Métis nation's governments, institutions, and policies, both these language varieties have often been confused or understood to be the same language, or at least dialects of the same language. However, as we have discussed in 2.3 and 2.4, there is limited intelligibility between speakers of both languages and they have been shown to have emerged, or originated, distinctly. Nonetheless, they are often funded, and talked about in local media and other sectors as if they are one and the same.

For instance, there are two main publicly funded school divisions in the city, namely the Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools (GSCS) and the Saskatoon Public School division (SPS). Through their Memorandum of Understanding with CUMFI, a Métis Local of the MN-S in the city (GSCS 2016), Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools teaches their students Northern Michif, particularly through their Métis cultural program at St-Michael School. As of 2020, SPS has a Memorandum of Understanding with Gabriel Dumont Local 11, another MN-S Local in Saskatoon (SPS 2020), as well as CUMFI (CTV News 2018). The former is a Michif/Métis local which focuses on the education, promotion and reclamation of (mixed) Michif. Consequently,

[29] Speakers are aware of these differences, but this can be difficult to navigate for non-speakers or community outsiders.

(mixed) Michif is taught and promoted to students through their First Nations, Inuit and Métis Unit and the Michif cultural program, presently hosted at Westmount Community School. (Mixed) Michif was also offered in community classes in 2018 and 2019 (prior to COVID-19 pandemic closures) through a partnership with the City of Saskatoon and the Gabriel Dumont Local 11.

In 2020, the Métis Nation-Saskatchewan also approached five school divisions to develop the Michif Early Learning Pilot Project (MELPP) which aims to teach the "Michif language" to pre-kindergarten and kindergarten classes in three communities across the province, namely Regina, Saskatoon and Ile-à-la-Crosse (MN-S 2020; 2021)[30]. This is an outcome from the Métis Nation Early Leaning and Child Care Accord signed in 2019 between the Métis National Council and the Government of Canada. Saskatoon Public Schools, Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools, Regina Public Schools and Regina Catholic School Division and the Rossignol School Division in Ile-à-la-Crosse are all involved in the implementation of a Michif-language program for early years in one of their schools. However, if all programs refer to their language of instruction as *Michif*, they in reality refer to two separate language varieties. In Saskatoon only, Saskatoon Public Schools (SPS) and Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools (GCSC), the two major school divisions in the city, both offer a Michif language program. St. Michael School of the GSCS focuses on Northern Michif and Westmount School of SPS on (mixed) Michif.

This poses considerable challenges in the sense that speakers or advocates/learners of one variety or another may not recognize other varieties as legitimate languages to be known or called *Michif*, whereas one variety or another can be known in their speech community as the only Michif.

Consider this excerpt from the Canadian Geographic Indigenous Peoples Atlas of Canada, regarding languages spoken by the Michif/ Métis people:

> "The Métis are primarily known for speaking Michif, the official language of the Métis Nation. However, the Métis speak other languages, including French Michif, a dialect of Canadian French with some Algonquian linguistic features, which is spoken in St. Laurent, Man., St. Ambroise, Man., and St. Louis, Sask.; Northern Michif, a Plains Cree dialect with extensive borrowing of French nouns, which is spoken in northwest Saskatchewan in and around Île-à-la-Crosse..." (Canadian Geographic 2018).

[30] The program was expanded to more schools in 2021.

In this article, the only language properly referred to as Michif is the mixed language, and it is the only one designated as the 'official language' of the Nation. Other unique language varieties to the Métis/Michif such as Michif (French), Northern Michif, Bungee, as well as Indigenous languages such as Denesuliné, (Plains and Swampy) Cree and (Plains) Ojibwe are relegated to a secondary position. This designation as "official language" comes from the Métis National Council, which declared 'Michif' to be the national language of the nation on July 23, 2000:

> Ashpinaen li Bon Jeu/Kischay Manitoo ka Pakittinat lee Michif ota seu la toyr. Meena ashpinaen li Bon Jeu/Kischay Manitoo ka miyikoyak ta lawng inan, en Michif chi-itayhtahmak, pi en Michif chi-pimawtichik. Ekoushi li Gouvarnimaw di Michif chi-itwayt, Michif si la lawng di li Nawsyoon.
> *Whereas the Metis emerged in Canada as a distinct nation with a unique culture; and whereas during the genesis of the Metis Nation, Michif evolved as a distinct language of the Metis Nation; and whereas it is recognized within international law that language is one of the requirements of the establishment or reaffirmation of Nationhood; therefore be it resolved that the Metis National Council recognize and declare Michif as the historical and official language of the Metis Nation.* (Barkwell and Fleury 2017)

However, at the time of the inception of new languages among the Michifs, there was no one language associated with the nation, and as the majority of Michifs were multilingual, they were able to communicate with one another across communities.

As such, presently, when there is reference to the term *Michif (language)* in socio-political, pedagogical, and mediatic resources, it is not always clear whether language varieties are all conflated under *one* language, or if it refers to one specific language variety, without any context. At times, nuances are made. The Métis Nation Michif language portal notes that "the languages now known as Michif were the Métis versions of 'Cree' and 'French', despite their differences with standard Cree or French-Canadian French. The old people referred to the language we now call Michif as the 'Cree spoken by the Michif'. Michif-French was referred to as the 'French spoken by the Michif'" (Métis Portals 2019).

There are also cases where Michif-French and Northern Michif are referred to as different 'versions' (i.e. dialects) of either one language considered to be the 'first' or 'original' Michif language (Adam 2020 identifies mixed Michif as the 'first' Michif language); or of each other, with different origin stories and historical Michif communities, as is the case in Chartrand (2009:3):

> "When I refer to the "Michif" language, I mean that Michif people speak Michif, just as the English say they speak "English" and the French say they speak 'French'. It does not mean that the Michif spoken by any community is

> necessarily the same as that spoken by another community. We must not impose an artificial uniformity on the rich variety of lifestyles lived by our people, including linguistic variety".

Chartrand's statement is a response to ongoing debates, often "vexatious" (2009:3) of what can constitute Michif. As more and more resources are created, they are setting a standard across communities on what the world considers to be 'Michif'. One of the speakers from St-Eustache, in her stories in this corpus, shared that she was told by her own community members that in fact she did not speak Michif. Rather *Michif* was to be understood as what was in the Heritage Michif app (built from Fleury 2013 Michif dictionary entries)[31].

Chartrand (2009) expands on why it has subconsciously been so important for the Michif nation leaders to only recognize *one* mother tongue. He attributes this tendency to the political and ideological functions of a language, particularly that language, institutionally, has traditionally played a key role in shaping a national identity. Chartrand (2009) notes the association of language "with territory and thus homeland, and so it has been used to support the territorial claims of nationalists. Here the expression *mother tongue* can be associated with the idea of fatherland or motherland" (Chartrand, 2009:3). Then, stepping away from the idea of "variations of Michif speech" (Chartrand, 2009:2), he goes on to express that there is not just *one* mother tongue amongst the Michif people, a fact which "no amount of historical revisionism, linguistic circumlocution, or political insistence can change" (2009:3). This perspective corroborates Bakker (2004)'s statements to the effect that Michif-French, Northern Michif/Métis-Cree and mixed Michif are three separate languages, all unique to different historical Michif communities and families, where speakers all self-identify as Michif. In this sense as well as in many others, the birth and growth of the Michif nation has been like no other.

As for the challenges that this creates, they are numerous. There is often debate on which language variety and project should receive priority funding and revitalization efforts (Adam 2020). When building a Memorandum of Collaboration with the Tri-partite self-negotiation with the Manitoba Métis Federation (MMF) for this particular project, there was an understanding and a pressing priority for the MMF to preserve and support (mixed) Michif in particular, especially

[31] These attitudes have the potential to be particularly hard for Michif Fransay speakers, who, as we will discuss in 2.6, have been told for decades that their language is nothing but 'bad French'. To now be told by their own fellow Michif/ Métis that their language is "not real Michif" is devaluing yet again an extremely distinct, unique, and rich way of speaking, a linguistic treasure of many Michif communities in its own right.

as it is the most endangered language spoken by Michifs, with the fewest estimated amount of speakers.

Counting speakers and establishing subsequent strategies of language planning and policy becomes all the more difficult. The 2011 Canadian Census list 445 speakers of Michif, with 315 of them in Saskatchewan and Manitoba (Gillon and Rosen, 2018:2). In the subsequent 2016 census, Statistics Canada reported that 1170 people reported speaking "Michif" (1030 of which identify as Métis), 560 stating they had acquired the language as their mother tongue and 645, as a second language (Statistics Canada 2016). This number is then often used to cite speaker numbers for (mixed) Michif, even though there is no specification on the census as to which Michif language varieties are referred to by the question. The Manitoba Métis Federation, for example, gives an estimate of less than 1000 speakers for the (mixed) Michif language (MMF, 2021). In the Métis Nation – Saskatchewan press release on their Michif Early Learning Pilot Project (MELPP) (MN-S 2020), they cite the 2016 Census, stating that only 640 people speak "Michif" in Canada. By this, they are most likely refering to the total of speakers who have declared Michif as their language most spoken in the home (275) and those who list it as a secondary language in the home (360) (2016 Census, Highlights table[32]).

However, this inflates the actual number of (mixed) Michif speakers, which, as previously discussed, Mazzoli (2019a) estimates to be closer to 100-150. Other estimates include a survey conducted in North Dakota (in Mazzoli 2019b) *Kitchitwa Ondwewe Nooding*, which reported 45 (mixed) Michif speakers in the Turtle Mountain reservation (24 fluent, 21 semi-fluent). In Brandon, Mazzoli (2019b) reports that although there are 2800 Métis living the city, less than a dozen are speakers of (mixed) Michif. A recent article in Canadian Geographic (Adam 2020) briefly summarizes this inconsistency in numbers:

> "According to the 2016 Canada census, Michif was the mother tongue of 725 people and the language spoken at home by 275 people, but those numbers include as many as four languages spoken by the Métis. Some now say there may be 500 fluent speakers, but others estimate fewer than 100 people speak fluent Michif today" (Adam 2020).

[32] Visit https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/dp-pd/hlt-fst/lang/Table.cfm?Lang=E&T=41&Geo=01 for more information (last accessed May 5th, 2022).

Furthermore, there are *no* official counts or records of Michif Fransay speakers still living and speaking the language, nor for Northern Michif speakers. In 2004, Papen estimates that the number of Michif Fransay speakers from Alberta to Ontario was between 5000 and 7000 speakers, a number which has assuredly dwindled in the past fifteen years. As such, having no official mechanism to reflect the reality that three different, distinct languages have the same name, it becomes difficult, even impossible, to properly understand the precariousness of each language's situation.

In the Métis communities of the North-West Territories (NWT), for example, there are an estimated 300 Michif speakers (Trail's End 2016). This number, however does not refer to one language, but in the context of the NWT, the term *Michif* refers to French/Slavey Michif, Chipewyan/French Michif and Cree Michif, or basically to any case of incorporation of French into a local indigenous language (Trail's End 2016). These of course, have arisen completely separately from one another and from Michif language varieties elsewhere in the country.

The fact that speakers of three separate, distinct languages self-identify and refer to their own language as Michif points, in and of itself, to the complexity and uniqueness that surrounds the genesis of the Michif people. As a post-contact Indigenous people, the Michif/Métis had many relatives, both Indigenous and European across the prairies, and roamed, then settled across a vast homeland. The following point of discussion explores some stories and theories on the genesis of the multiple language varieties of the Michif people.

2.6. The genesis of the Michif people and their unique languages

In this section, we focus on how each of these languages seem to have been born and have evolved in their speech communities, relying on documented history and oral stories of speakers, their lived experiences and the teachings they received from their own elders. There is some historical evidence that code mixing existed amongst the voyageurs, as they were generally considered "great talkers, have long yarns to tell, and are not over scrupulous in their narrations, which are made up of an almost unintelligible jargon of the English, French and Indian languages" (Ross 1856[1962] in Bakker 1997:166). In 2.5.1, we focus on (mixed) Michif, and especially on the spiritual aspect of its genesis; in 2.5.2, on Michif Fransay, and the multilingual aspects of their communities; and in 2.5.3, on Northern Michif (Métis Cree).

2.6.1. The genesis of (mixed) Michif

(Mixed) Michif origins (henceforth known as Michif in this subsection) date back to the late eighteenth or early nineteenth century (Bakker 1997). Bakker and Papen (1997) speculate that Michif must have been spoken at least by the early decades of the nineteenth century. Bakker (1997) laid a foundation for the understanding of the mixed language of the Michif people, identifying it as a unique *mixed* language which arose from contact and maintained grammatical complexities from both languages of origin.

Bakker (1991:18; Bakker and Papen 1997) classifies four types of bi- or multilingual situations. The first, or type 1, refers to that language shift that happens across a generation, when the older generation speaks Language A and the younger generation, Language B. The second type is a form of diglossia, where two or more languages are used in different domains. In type 3, two languages are used in practically all situations, do not have specific functions, and their speakers identify as bilingual, with two identities. Code-switching is also very common in this language situation.

Finally, the fourth type of multilingual situation involves speakers of Language A and B, who, for whatever reason, do not identify either with the group speaking A or B. Within their own communities and home, they end up speaking a mixture of Language A and B, a new language "more or less consciously created" (Bakker and Papen 1997:18), which is language C. People have a new identity (C), and as such, Language C becomes the language of the community, either spoken beside the origin languages or not. This is how Bakker speculated the mixed Michif language came to be. Meakins (2013) notes that Michif is actually the only mixed language spoken today largely independently of its source languages, i.e. that (mixed) Michif speakers today do not typically also speak Cree or French.

The creation of a new identity and, with it, a mixed language, is attested only in a few instances globally (Bakker 1997; Meakins 2013). Media Lengua, for instance, originated from young Quechuan men who were learning Spanish, after moving to the city to work. Although they might still identify as Quechuan, they also identify with the Spanish urban culture (Meakins 2013). Mednyj Aleut, similarly to Michif, arose from mixed marriages between Russian fur seal hunters and Aleutian women.

Contrary to creole languages, which are created out of a need for bridging communication between two groups, mixed languages are born out of the need to express a new

identity (Golovko 2003; Meakins 2013). Mixed languages are created in contexts of high bilingualism (Golovko 2003), and in the case of mixed marriages, such as Mednyj Aleut and (mixed) Michif, there is a fusion of two groups and the offspring of these unions come to self-identify as a separate group (Bakker 1997; Meakins 2013).

Oral history passed on to Michif speakers corroborates the hypothesis that the mixed language emerged along with the Michif identity. On Brousse Flammand's website blog (Flammand 2020-1), he shares the teachings his grandparents passed on to him about the genesis of the language. The nation and the language are synonymous with one another and are honored gifts from the Creator. His grandfather and grandmother, along with many other Michif elders, agree: their language was given to them by the Creator. It, as well as the Michif individuals and the nation they form, were 'released' or put on to the earth from the spirit world, just like other nations and languages. The Michif nation was spiritually destined to become the New Nation, *la noovel nasyoon*.

The formation of the Nation, and alongside it, the mixed language, happened, as it is understood in oral history, over the course of many generations. Flammand (2020-1) shares that it must have taken around eight generations, the first four of these generations identifying as mixed bloods, and the last four as Michif. It is over the course of these last four generations that language and nationhood or collective consciousness are created. Although the Michif people/Nation have a foot in each world, i.e. French-European and Cree and/or Ojibwe, they have created their own world, their own identity.

These central teachings were also passed on to Norman Fleury, a notable and very active Michif elder speaker. Raised by his grandmother, he shares with Canadian Geographic her teachings on the gift of the Michif language from Creator:

> "God made the world, made everything. Over the water, there's people. The Germans speak German, and the English speak English. Over here, the Sioux speak Sioux; the Blackfoot speak Blackfoot language. God created all those people. It's just like a hoop, a circle. It was our turn to be created, and we finished that hoop. We were the last nation that God created, and he gave us a language and we're a nationality. We're Michif and we speak Michif. We brought that hoop together. [...] God gives us those kinds of connections, spiritually, with the world, with our own nations, our stories, our histories, our medicines, our belief systems that are all connected. We cannot put things together without having that spiritual connection." (Fleury in Adam 2020)

Bakker argued for many years that Michif was a mixed language like few others: not a trade language, a Pidgin, a creole or a case of code-mixing (Barkwell and Bakker 2007). Barkwell and

Bakker suggest that the double ancestry of Michif people is reflected in the "mixed nature of Michif" (2007: 176), where the most considerable aspects of the origin languages' grammars are preserved.

Many Michif elders remember the language being referred to as *Cree* as they were growing up, i.e. speaking *aan crii.* Flammand (2020-2021) describes the impact that years of repression had on Michif people and how they could live their culture and speak their language. As Michifs were trying to avoid persecution following the 1885 Resistance, it was better to identify one's language as Cree, i.e. a First Nation language, rather than to identify as Michif.

2.6.2. Origins of Michif-French

Michif French (henceforth referred to as Michif in this subsection) presumably emerged around the Red River valley in the early nineteenth century (Papen 1993). For instance, there is some evidence that sound changes particular to Michif, such as [e] > [i] had already occured in the mid-1800s, as George Caitlin gave the name of *bro-cas-sie* for Broken Arm, the name of a Cree chief in Minnesota, who he painted (Bakker and Papen 1997). The language retains many characteristics of old French varieties and seems to have evolved from Canadian-French spoken by voyageurs (Burnouf et al. 2007).

Frank Ducharme provides the following teaching for the emergence of Michif Fransay in his community of St-Laurent, Manitoba:

> "I have a theory about the origin of our language that we speak and it goes this way: It is, say, in the year 1800 at Red River. This French fur trader who works for the Northwest Company meets this beautiful Indian woman. They get together and, nine months later, I am born. My French father has to leave the household to hunt and trap the furs for the Company; sometimes he is gone for two or three months at a time. In the meantime, I am at home alone with my mother, who does not understand a word of French but who continually speaks to me in her mother tongue, either Saulteaux or Cree. I grow up learning my mother's language. When my father comes home from the hunt, he speaks to me in his language, which is French: he does not know either Saulteaux or Cree. So, I grow up learning both an Indian language and the French language. As I interact and play and speak with other children who were in the same situation as I was, we develop this new language, called Michif French (in Lavallée, 1992:84, translated from the interview transcript)."

Ducharme's understanding of the genesis of Michif Fransay echoes many aspects of the genesis of (mixed) Michif. For one, the emergence of a new collective consciousness in a new generation creates a language that draws elements from the languages of their parents and other ancestors. Similarly to (mixed) Michif, there is an understanding that this new language variety emerges

over a few generations, and although there is a new identity/language formed, children also walk in both their parents' worlds.

This is broadly the experience, for example, of Agathe Chartrand, an elder and wisdom keeper from St-Laurent, MB, who remembers her own grand-mother and peers speaking Saulteaux (*nakawêmowin*) and Cree (*nêhiyawêwin*). As a young girl, she herself could understand Saulteaux, but her younger relatives (such as Suzanne in the following excerpt) might not. Her generation would respond in Michif. The other co-teller, Lorraine, shows that conversely, her mom's generation was in transition, her aunt being able to speak Saulteaux, but her mother, not:

(27) Multilingualism in St. Laurent

Agathe: J'm'en rapel ji restay avek ma gran-mayr. On n'avay ayn vyey la vyeyl [name]. Parlay en Cree. Ma gran-mayr to parlay en Cree.
I remember I lived with my grandmother. We had a vyey, the old lady [name]. She spoke Cree. My grandmother too spoke Cree.

Lorraine : Ma tawnt.
My aunt.

Agathe : Sa parlay. En saultaux. Mi kan sa volay paw j'aten law. Sa parlay en Cree. Sa l'enten ji l'ay/ konprenay li mo. Kan sa volay paw kosay sa bavasay mi. Sa parlay en Cree paw mal itou.
They spoke. Saultaux. But when they didn't want me to hear/understand, they spoke Cree. I understood words. But when they didn't want me to know what they were talking about. They spoke Cree a lot too.

Lorraine : En saultaux.
In Saulteaux.

Agathe : En saultaux ito.
In Saulteaux too.

Lorraine : Mom y parlay/ non Mom y parlay paw en saultaux mi y konprenay. Uh ma tawnt [name]. Parlay en saultaux. Pi ma mayr riponday en Michif.
Mom spoke/ no Mom didn't speak Saulteaux but she understood. My aunt [name] spoke Saulteaux. But my mom answered in Michif.

Agathe : Oh pareyl kom mwin. Ma gran-mayr je restay avek me parlay en saultaux.
Oh just like me. My grandma I would live with would speak to me in Saulteaux.

Lorraine : Mi y konprenay tot mi... y parlay paw.
But she understood everything, but... didn't speak it.

Agathe : Mwin sh'komprenay. Jamin parli mwin en saultaux. Sh'konprenay tot mi sh'povay paw parli.
Me, I understood. I never spoke in Saulteaux, me. I understood everything but I couldn't speak it.

Lorraine: Drol saw in?
Funny thing eh?

Agathe: Mmhmm.

Suzanne: Powr saw k'jaymay saw ali shi memayr. Kan Agathe itay law. A koz Agathe konprenay kan ki m'parlay. J'rgarday Agathe powr kosay ki ki djizay. Y si Agathe itay paw law. Oh. Folay j'aseyl pawnsi kosay kil la dji."
That's why I liked going to grandma's. When Agathe was there. Because Agathe understood when they talked to me. I would look at Agathe to know what they said. And if Agathe wasn't there... I had to think about what they said.
(...)

Agathe: Mon gran-payr parlay en fransay lwi.
My grandfather he spoke French him.

Suzanne : Wi.
Yes.

Lorraine : Parlay paw en saultaux?
He didn't speak Saulteaux?

Agathe : Parlay en saultaux ito. Mi parlay en fransay ito.
He spoke in Saulteaux too. But he spoke French too.

Lorraine: Ta memayr y parlay paw pantot en fransay?
Your grandmother she didn't speak French at all?

Agathe : Non.
No. (STL10)

In this excerpt, the wisdom keepers of St-Laurent share their recollections on the linguistic situation in their families, which strongly echo Frank Ducharme's theory on the genesis of Michif in St. Laurent. Agathe's grandfather spoke French, and her grandmother didn't, speaking only Cree and Saultaux. The next two generations understood their (grand)mother's Indigenous mother tongue, but typically could not respond in the languages in question. Rather, they spoke the language that had emerged, Michif, amongst themselves.

Through extensive processes of assimilation and eradication, there are some Michif speakers who have retained only certain elements of their mother tongue, having used mostly either English or 'standard' Canadian-French for their adult lives. However, these same speakers as well as others remember instances where their way of speaking and their language were incomprehensible to other French-Canadians. As such, if Michif Fransay is considered a dialect or a variety of Laurentian French (i.e. Canadian French) unique to the Michif people, it is nonetheless significantly different from other Laurentian French varieties.

For example, Evelyn recounts her memories of moving to Montréal and conversing with her co-workers:

> "Comme la tsu penses j'va parler Métis. J'ai demeuré à Montréal tsu vois tsu l'entends j'ai changé. Parsque sh'travaillais avec les canadiens-français. Y'm'corrigeait tol'temps. Pi quand j'a commensi a travayi avec/ dans le departement de viande. Avec les français. Sa m'corrigeait tol'temps pi sa m'compranait pas. Sh'parlais Métis pi pas un qui m'comprenait pas. So après dix ans travayi avec euzotr y m'ont dzi. 'Ts'tais fine Evelyn mais uh. On riait mais on comprenait pas ton langage.' » (STE2)
> *Like now you think I'm going to speak Michif. I lived in Montréal, you see, you hear it, I changed. Because I worked with French-Canadians. They always corrected me. And when I started working in the meat department. With the French. They always corrected me and they didn't understand me. I would speak Michif and not one would understand. So after ten years of working with them they told me. "You know you were great Evelyn but um. We would laugh but we didn't understand your language."*

Similarly, Evelyn remembers the early years with her husband who was originally from Montreal before moving to Manitoba:

> "Mais quand j'a rencontri mon mari en soixante et sis à South Port Airforce. Lwui y vient de Montréal. Mwai j'vnais de. On s'compranait pas. Si la langage de l'amour qui parlait. (Laughter) On s'a mariyi pi. Sa peut s'dire. Si vra! On s'compranait pas. L'langage itait diffarent.' (STE2)
> *When I met my husband in '66 at South Port airforce. He comes from Montreal. I came from. We didn't understand each other. We spoke the language of love (Laughter). We got married and. You could say. It's true! We didn't understand each other. The language was different.*

Michif Fransay has proven to be remarkably resilient, considering that it has been disregarded and derided on many different fronts, both by those who dismiss it as bastardized, bad French and those who do not view it as a Michif language. Father Guy Lavallée, a Métis from the community of Saint-Laurent, MB, documented the treatment of the Michif/Métis in his home community, especially by the missionary clergy in the education system and the newly arrived Breton family immigrants. Agathe Chartrand alludes to their differences in language and the hostile treatment they received from the instructors:

(28) School experience

Agathe: On konprenay paw li sewr. Sa parlay asi l'bo fransay. Nozot on parlay not lawngaj.
We didn't understand the nuns. They spoke the 'good' French. We spoke our language.

June: Si sa no djizay. On parlay en savaj.
They would tell us. We spoke savaj[33].

[33] This word remains untranslated as it is not to be understood as equivalent to English word 'savage'. The use of the French-source word [savaʒ] does not carry the meaning of fierceness, uncontrolled violence or primitiveness associated to English word 'savage'. Rather, it often speaks to a connection to the land in its natural state (*une fleur*

Agathe :	Yeah.
Joyce :	To din ko on parlay anglay. Pi folay paw k'on parl pantot si on parlay paw. Anglay. *All of a sudden we would speak English. And we couldn't speak at all if we didn't speak English.*
Lorraine :	On parlay paw fransay kom fo/[34] *We didn't speak French well/*
June:	Fransay. *French.*
Agathe:	Yeah.
Joyce:	Folay paw k'on parl. Folay k'on rest trankil. *We couldn't talk. We had to stay quiet.*

Father Guy Lavallée shared his own experiences in his publications on his home community of Saint-Laurent, particularly pertaining to entering post-secondary institutions and leaving his community: "At school, we were supposed to speak the 'real' French, le vrai Français, that is French as they spoke it" (Lavallée, 1988:178). At college, he remembers feeling that "the inevitable stark reality appeared before me: Give up your Métisness and your Michif language – become a Canadian like the rest if you want to "make it" in this world!" (Lavallée, 1991: 90).

However, if there are many instances and shared experiences of misunderstandings, assimilation, and persecution, there are also some cases of finding affinities with other French varieties, such as Ken Beaudin's experience in France:

(29) Travels

Ken:	J'avais aiti en France la. En quatre-vingt-douze. Aiti en France pi not guide la. Y parlait l'fransais. Y parlait set wit langues. 'Mwai j'veu t'parler en fransais' y dji. Twai tsu parle le fransais' y dji. 'D'a peu pres djiz neuf san veint seink.' *I had gone to France. In '92. Gone to France and our guide there. He spoke French. He spoke seven or eight languages. 'I want to speak in French to you' he told me. 'You speak French from about 1925.'*
Philippe:	Oui. *Yeah.*
Ken:	Aw. But y m'konprenay comme faut. *But he understood me well.*

This lived experience corroborates the notion that Michif Fransay is an old variety of French with slang terms and influences from Algonquian languages. Many people of St. Laurent, as well as other Michif communities, such as St. Eustache, value their language as a vital part of their

sauvage 'a wild flower', *un animal sauvage* 'a wild animal'). Many Canadian-French and Michif speakers confirm in personal communications that this word carried no negative or derogatory connotation towards First Nations peoples, unlike the English false friend 'savage'.

[34] In interview transcripts, a slash (/) refers to an interruption in speech or false start.

identity. Lavallée states that the people of St. Laurent used the Michif language "as a unifying symbol of group identity" (1991:85), as early as the late 1800s. The St. Eustache Local has a sub-committee focused on the preservation and promotion of their culture, identity and language. The wisdom keepers of St. Laurent, through sheer determination and force of will, have created and self-published the first Michif Fransay dictionary that reflects the language as it is spoken in St. Laurent.

The dictionary includes both an alphabetized and a thematical organization of select nouns, verbs, prepositions, adverbs, and adjectives. The elders' biographies are provided in Michif Fransay, as well as a few chosen prayers, recipes, etc., making their dictionary a valuable handbook for beginner and intermediate learners looking to explore, study, and use Michif Fransay. They have received national attention for their work and have travelled across the country to elder conferences to speak and share their knowledge.

As June Bruce says so well:

> A group of us decided that **we wanted to preserve our very unique language in St. Laurent.** We wanted to leave this for our children, our grandchildren and your children's children. **[…] My hope is that we captured our language and you will read and learn. And then we will know that we did a good thing"** (Bruce et. al, 2016:80).

2.6.3. Northern Michif (Métis Cree)

Bakker (1997) tentatively proposes that the mixture of Cree and French is a recent innovation in the Ile-à-la-Crosse area. In the nineteenth century, Denesuliné was spoken in the area along with *r*- and *l*-dialects of Cree. In earliest written reports on the community of Ile-à-la-Crosse in the eighteenth century, inhabitants of the area were mostly or only Denesuliné, who spoke Athabaskan languages. As the nineteenth century went on, the presence of the Cree continued to grow: they presumably spoke a *r*-dialect of Cree. Bakker proposes that "sometime […] around 1900, the *r*-dialect shifted into a *y*-dialect, and around the same time the French elements seem to have entered the language" (Bakker, 1997:178).

French borrowings in Northern Michif (henceforth known as Michif in this subsection) vary from community to community, speaker to speaker, but many food and household terms (e.g. fruit, vegetables and cooking), for example, are often borrowed from French. It is believed that these borrowings were predominantly from missionaries and traders present in the

community, rather than a situation of Cree/Saulteux – French multi/bilingualism within the families, like in the case of (mixed) Michif and Michif Fransay speakers.

Conversely, oral history suggests that some of the old people from Ile-à-la-Crosse and surrounding communities' language used to more closely resemble (mixed) Michif, but that it subsequently gravitated to the Cree who were moving to the area.

Regardless, there has been a sense among speakers that there is a strong, distinguishable difference between the language spoken by the Michif/Métis people and those of the Cree people in the same area. Marie Favel, born in Beauval, alludes to some differences in the Cree spoken by Cree and Métis people in the area:

> "My grandma was First Nations. From Canoe Lake. [...] She was the one that taught me more about the Cree language. By the way she spoke. But I was stuck with the Michif one. I didn't know at the time that's how we said it." (MF)

She also shares some recollections on language differences from school:

> I remember uh. Going to school. And the/ the nuns were there. There were the teachers. And I remember them asking us "How do you say this in Cree?" "How do you say 'table' in Cree?" I would say "la shayz". You know all these words in Cree. She said/ and I kept saying. "No that's not Cree" they said. I said "Yes it is!" (laugh) And they kept telling me "No it's not Cree." "Tell me the Cree word." That's all I knew. It's the French words. And especially nouns. And uh. They said "That's French." And I/ that's the first time I knew that my language was different. And that's how I grew up. (MF)

There is clearly much more work to be done on the origin of Michif in the northwestern part of Saskatchewan.

2.7. Conclusions

This chapter discusses the three distinctive languages, today known as Michif by their speakers, which have emerged in different situations of contact and interaction between Algonquian western languages like Plains Cree dialects and Plains Ojibwe, and Canadian French. As such, these language varieties or ways of speaking all eventually became known as Michif, since in their speech communities, they were unique and distinctive to the Michif/Métis people that spoke them. That being said, there is evidence of contact in each language variety in one way or another, bringing two ways of doing together (to different degrees), and making it their own. They are non-mutually intelligible languages that speak to the remarkable adaptability and relationship-kinship building abilities of Michif/Métis people. This demonstrates the resiliency and tenacity of the Mitchif/Métis people and their commitment to keep their languages alive as

an integral part of their identity. It also poses the question in regards to whether a common consciousness shared amongst the Michif extends beyond language, as a people who shares a common history, kinship systems, values and traditions but do not all share the same language.

Chapter 3: Methodology and data collection

"*Collaboration is not a method of data collection on par with elicitation, the production of grammaticality judgments, or the experimental manipulation of variables. Instead, in emphasizing collaboration, linguistic fieldworkers seem to be striving for something more general: a way to integrate positive social relations into their research practices*" (Dobrin and Schwartz, 2016:256).

The goal of this research project was not only to record and study new narrative data in languages unique to the Michif/Métis, but to do so in a way that incorporated as many core aspects of participatory research and Indigenous methodologies as possible in a graduate project. Participatory research (or community-based research), as well as Indigenous methodologies favor collaborative approaches. As discussed below, many researchers outline some challenges for collaborative work, especially for graduate students, and discuss other possible methods such as participant observation. This ethnographic method is above all designed to focus on the interpersonal relationships within the research project, and more precisely, on what constitutes a good relationship from the consultant's or community's perspective (Dobrin and Schwartz, 2016). Wherever possible, forms of participant observation, as well as other core principles of Indigenous methodologies and participatory research, were integrated in this project. At the core, these various methods of ethical research look at the multiple facets of building respectful, reciprocal relationships. When it comes to narrative work, building trust and reciprocity is crucial to the success of the project, as consultants are entrusting the researcher with *personal* stories.

In 3.1, we outline the most crucial aspects of Indigenous methodology; in 3.2, we discuss the core principles of participatory research. In 3.3, we will discuss some challenges of collaborative research and ethnography as a possible research framework alternative. In 3.4, we discuss how aspects of these aforementioned frameworks have been applied to this graduate research project as a means of building good relationships and achieving multiple project outcomes.

3.1. Indigenous methodology

Indigenous methodologies, unlike feminist and phenomenological traditions, cannot be classified 'under the wing' of qualitative research for two main reasons (Kovach 2009): firstly, Indigenous knowledges have a fluidity and motion that is manifested in the distinctive structures of tribal languages. For example, Wilson (2008) argues that evidence and knowledge of relationships is found in the Indigenous language itself. At CUIERIP (Carleton University

Institute on the Ethics of Research with Indigenous Peoples), elder John Medicine Horse Kelly outlined how contextualization and specificity are crucial to understanding Indigenous knowledge systems, i.e. understanding specific information within its context, with which the goal of generalization in Western research and theory often does not align well. Secondly, Indigenous methodologies are guided by tribal epistemologies, and tribal knowledge is not Western knowledge (Kovach 2009; also in Tuhuwai Smith 2012; Wilson 2008; Lambert 2014). Qualitative research methods have mostly been designed within Western frames of reference, and outline processes for relationship-building between non-Indigenous scholars/ Western institutions and Indigenous communities.

The Indigenous methodologies framework includes principles for researchers both as outsiders or insiders/members of the community, recognizing the fact that more and more Indigenous people are entering academia and pursuing research projects to benefit their community/nation. These principles also do consider what a researcher can do as an outsider to get involved and get to know the community with which they have chosen to work. Contrarily, in the Participatory Research (PR) methods that we will discuss below, the framework is designed primarily for building collaborative relationships between a speech community and an outside researcher.

The role of the researcher working with Indigenous peoples is radically changing. This shift in the researcher's role is essential for the prospects of continuing and growing relationships between Indigenous peoples and institutions (Sium and Ritskes 2013). From 'discoverer' conducting *terra nullius* research (Martin and Mirraboopa 2003; Wilson 2008; Manuel and Derrickson 2015), the researcher's role is being redefined as a facilitator (Sium and Ritskes 2013; Kovach 2009; Brown and Strega 2005). The researcher takes on the role of learner and listener when working with elders and knowledge keepers. It is crucial to rightfully place value on the knowledge people are accepting to share with you and to show this in sincere acts of gratitude (Regan 2010; Campbell 2010).

The researcher is "no more important or knowledgeable that anyone else. All [he is] doing is sharing some of my relationships, revealing some of the connections that make up this theory" (Wilson 2008:134). That being said, it is crucial for researchers to consider ways in which they can offer their services, skills, specialized knowledge or connections to give back to the community. Examples of service done at the request of and under the direction of speakers

include help with archiving and conversion of old tapes into digital files, providing support in endeavours such as grant writing or letters of references, and collaboration in the teaching and/or development of language classes and curriculum, assisting in the navigation of university/government policies and bureaucracies.

To give back also means to make the products of the work readily accessible to the community; there is a sacredness and responsibility in maintaining personal and community integrity and in respecting the fact that communities retain ownership of data (Brown and Strega, 2005:282; Lambert 2014:33). Researchers, especially outside researchers, should also reflect on how they can personally participate in the community. As such, "researchers also need to participate and live in the community and not just watch. People will accept them better if they participate. They are bringing something to the community" (Lambert 2014: 83).

Wilson (2008) identifies the 1990s and 2000s as the beginning of the 'Recent Aboriginal Research Phase', where a space for collaborative research has slowly begun to develop within institutions. As more and more Indigenous scholars share their own Indigenist perspectives, they have moved from adapting their work for western frameworks, to decolonizing this framework and articulating their own research frameworks. At its core, Indigenous methodology favours reciprocal, respectful relationships and relational accountability. Indigenous researchers act as a bridge between previous research and the community's knowledge, working with and walking in both 'worlds', i.e. academia and community, reconciling their objectives and priorities (Archibald 2008). The research is understood as gathering and sharing knowledge (Brown and Strega 2005) in a reciprocal relationship. It should always consider the impact of motives and intentions on persons and communities (Brown and Strega 2005).

In brief, Indigenous methodology means answering to all of your relations and fulfilling those relationships around you (Wilson 2008; Lambert 2014). This brings us, ultimately, to the key point of Indigenous methodology: it is, at its core, rooted in *miyo-wicêhtowin* or 'good relations', building and cultivating authentic relationships with the people with whom you collaborate and giving back in any way possible (MacDougall 2006; Wilson 2008; Kovach 2009; Lambert 2014). Relationships, however, are not simply between people:

> "[Indigenous is] collective, it's a group, it's a community. And I think that's the basis for relationality. That is, it's built upon the interconnections, the interrelationships, and that binds the group... but it's more than human relationships. And maybe the basis of that

relationship among Indigenous people is the land. It's our relationship to the land. There's a spiritual connection to the land" (Wilson, 2008:80).

Empirical knowledge is not the only way to understand the world for Indigenous peoples and scholars: Cultural knowledge must also be considered and integrated in the research. For example, it is very difficult to speak of Michif language genesis and ethnology without speaking of the spiritual relationship speakers hold with their language and its origin. The fact that language is considered to be a gift from Creator, tied to notions of community and homeland, is crucial to understanding the value speakers attach to language. This basic principle should guide how researchers engage in their research.

Another important principle in Indigenous methodologies is to ground and locate oneself within one's work and locate the work within communities or culturally contextual sites, rather than institutions, whenever possible (Kovach 2009; Chilisa 2012; Lambert 2014). One way to achieve this is to begin any sharing of knowledge, or dissemination of research (such as a book, thesis or presentation) with an auto-biographical chapter or preface (Brown and Strega 2005; McLeod 2007; Archibald 2008; Kovach 2009; Tuhuwai Smith 2012; Lambert 2014). The practice of sharing autobiographical or personal information allows researchers to share their own connection to the community of study; how the research project has personally changed or affected them in their daily life; and, if they are part of the community themselves, their family history and stories, as well as their personal stake in the success of the research and how it is relevant to the larger context of the research.

The principle of relevance (Kirkness and Barnhardt 1991; Archibald 2008; Lambert 2014) is key to an Indigenous methodology. Although we will discuss this more at length in 3.4, in this project, partly to ensure that the project was as relevant as possible to people and communities involved, speakers decided which stories they wanted to share for the project and whether or not they wanted to sit individually or in pairs or groups to do so. Some chose to share stories of their families and their role within their communities which had not been previously documented or disseminated. Others shared childhood memories, funny stories, or stories spiritual in nature. In the long term, these stories are to be banked in community records or integrated as part of the communities' own language documentation and revitalization efforts. Some of these stories will hopefully become precious family keepsakes. Finally, inasmuch it is crucial for this work to be relevant to the individuals and communities that took part in this

project, it is hoped that its outcomes will also be relevant to the Michif collective consciousness and a larger subset of the Michif/Métis nation.

Research should also be focused on change, and even though it is not universal, it is applicable to other sites of struggle (Kovach 2009; Lambert 2014; Chilisa 2012). All in all, Indigenous methodologies call for us to guide our ethics by the principles of humbleness, kindness, caring, sharing, respect and service (Archibald 2008; Lambert 2014). At the CUIERIP (Carleton University Institute Ethics for Research for Indigenous Peoples) which I had the opportunity of attending in 2017, John Medicine Horse Kelly, a professor of Journalism and co-director of the Centre for Indigenous Research, Culture, Language and Education at Carleton University, had one core message for researchers present: conduct your work with "a good heart". Using that sincerity and earnestness to do something *good* is your best chance at building honest and solid relationships and succeeding in your projects and endeavours. This is also a message of internalization, of examining our intentions and how we conduct ourselves in our work. With "a good heart" can only mean advancing with humility, with an authentic desire to learn and grow. This message echoes Weber-Pillwax's foundational principles for Indigenous research: "the source of a research project is the heart/mind of the researcher and "checking your heart" is a critical element in the research process. [...] A 'good heart' guarantees a good motive, and good motives benefit everyone involved" (Weber-Pillwax, 2003:49-50 in Wilson 2008:60). Leading with your heart and sincere intentions is the best way to learn from within the Indigenous lived experience.

3.2. Participatory Research

Community-Based (Participatory) Research or Participatory Action Research is the type of qualitative research which most closely aligns with Indigenous epistemology and methodology (Czaykowska-Higgins 2009; Kovach 2009). Participatory Research (PR), a term coined by Kurt Lewin, has the main goal of "produc[ing] research that is relevant to the life circumstances of the communities and the people who reside in them" (Hacker, 2013:4). Its core philosophy of inclusivity looks to engage the beneficiaries of research in the research process itself (Hacker 2013). PR is nested in real-world research. Community members are viewed as the experts in community contexts, norms and issues (Hacker, 2013:14). Their role is to contribute their own knowledge. Researchers are participants as well: their role is to provide a specific set

of skills, access to funding and other networks, and a thorough knowledge of the academic literature. They are able to consolidate and share access to previous findings and discussions in academic papers, conferences and/or research projects. They partner with community members to consider new and emerging questions that have yet to be answered (Hacker, 2013:73).

Most models of PR are designed to outline the parameters of a reciprocal, mutually-beneficial relationship between *outside* researchers and the community of study (Ahlers 2009; Dobrin and Schwartz 2016). Forms of collaborative research in linguistics such as PR have been "motivated by a desire to address the problematic social inequalities behind language shift" (Dobrin and Schwartz, 2016:259) and to empower the 'community' of study as well as to bring about local control and autonomy (Whaley, 2011:340). The training component of PR serves to "build capacity for community members to conduct their own research" (Yamada, 2014:341). In this way, those who are most personally affected by the loss of the language become "empowered to become active knowledge builders" (Yamada, 2014:341). Language research conducted for, with and by the language-community involves the highest level of community collaboration (Czaykowska-Higgins 2009).

Similar to Indigenous methodologies, methods of Participatory Research have the goal of producing relevant research for the communities of study and their residents (Hacker 2013). Their core philosophy of inclusivity looks to engage the beneficiaries of research in the research process itself (Czaykowska-Higgins 2009; Hacker 2013). Leonard and Haynes (2010) add the additional layer of mutual trust and time (effort) between research and community, two components essential to relationship building in Czaykowska-Higgins' (2009) collaborative models. They argue it is impossible to design a collaborative and participatory research project without all parties getting to know each another first.

Figure 4: Collaborative fieldwork (Haynes and Leonard, 2010: 288)

In their collaborative model, both researcher and community expertise are equally valued and equitable contributors to the project. Similarly, both researcher and community need to equally shape research outcomes. The products developed have to be accessible and useful to both community and researchers (Czaykowska-Higgins 2009; Dobrin and Schwartz 2016). Furthermore, the exchange of knowledge is meant to help both parties learn from one another and use this exchange as an opportunity for growth and fulfillment. There are training opportunities provided by the researcher for community members to facilitate community-led research without the involvement of outside institutions or researchers. The community members also "educate linguists about local expectations and norms, teaching them how to live and work in what is often an unfamiliar physical and social environment [if they are indeed outside researchers]" (Dobrin and Schwartz, 2016: 254).

Participatory Research is distinguished from other collaborative and ethical models such as advocacy and empowerment research models by the fact that all forms of knowledge are valued. Language speakers are recognized as experts and the researcher learns from them (Czaykowska-Higgins 2009; Hacker 2013). Just as with Indigenous methodology, it is also focused on change and social action. Indigenous language work is only artificially extricated from its political implications: most Indigenous languages in Canada are considered at the very least endangered and the reality many communities face is that their languages are on the verge of dormancy. Their efforts and resources are necessarily focused on language revitalization and preservation: Participatory Research projects seek to align themselves with these goals (Shulist

2013; Cruz and Woodbury 2014). As such, Participatory Research is also holistic research. It is not only an intellectual activity (Czaykowska-Higgins 2009) but one that also involves one's whole being, spirit, body and heart.

One of the cornerstones of PR is a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), i.e. a formal agreement between the researcher and the community. The MoU clearly outlines each party's expectations regarding various aspects of the research, including ownership of stories, protection of knowledge and mitigation of potential impact from misuse of knowledge. A MoU (Czaykowska-Higgins et al. 2017) should contain a list of points that should be agreed upon before the project starts. These include a description of partners (Hacker 2013), a compilation of mutual goals and a plan and process for how decisions will be made. It should also include terms of both short and long-term agreements (Czaykowska-Higgins et al. 2017), with a start and end date for the project.

Hacker (2013) also outlines three stages of Participatory Research. First of all, to meet ethics standards, Leonard and Haynes (2010:278) argue that collaboration needs to be established in the initial stage of research. From the inception of the project, one should establish community engagement, which includes identifying the community of interest, conducting a needs assessment to understand the issues of potential research, meeting stakeholders and developing relationships, and conducting a literature review to hone in on the research questions and hypotheses (Hacker 2013). The second stage consists of designing the research and outlining roles and responsibilities. This includes discussing methods, assessing feasibility, defining roles and responsibilities for communities and researcher(s), providing education, training sessions and skill development to all participants, as well as conducting the actual study. Finally, the third stage focuses on analysis, interpretation and dissemination: this includes working with community members to interpret data, developing processes for all to participate, determining dissemination roles and identifying action steps based on the evidence found in the project.

Possible PR methods of gathering, analysing and sharing knowledge include qualitative interviews and narrative interviews, including life history, storytelling and diaries. Sharing knowledge can be done by audio-visual presentations, still visuals, graphics, popular performances, i.e. strategies accessible to a larger public.

Given all of this, what is the role of scholarship in PR research? Chevalier and Buckles argue that the "mistrust" of scientific technique in PR has made PR tools "humanistically and

liberally soft" (2013:9). The 'fear' of *epistemê* or 'theory' being too far removed from research grounded in social history has resulted in a tendency to keep the advancement of theory and philosophy in check. As such, Chevalier and Buckles (2013)'s goal is to give a theoretical backbone to PR by "understanding the social construction of reality" (2013:10), i.e. that there are "multiple constructions of reality" (2013:38) and by exploring the phenomenology of knowledge, experience and society. The basis of their theoretical work is that many theories are in fact interwoven and that theory and practice are ongoing conversations or activities, in the plural, "about engaged research practice, including old and new directions in theory that can intermesh and shed light on human history" (Chevalier and Buckles, 2013: 41). They present theories for social intervention grounded in history, as "engaged researchers should tie in with their commitments to changing social history" (2013:39). Prevention is also an important consideration. The need to root PR in theory is part one of the reasons why Indigenous methodologies and epistemologies should not be conflated with qualitative research and participatory action.

3.3. Challenges of collaboration and participant observation

Collaborative work is by no means an easy or quick endeavour: Crippen and Robinson (2013) argue that collaborative work is not always appropriate or feasible, especially in graduate work. We outline some of the challenges for collaboration in 3.3.1, and in 3.3.2, discuss the principles of Participant Observation which still favor building positive relationships and getting to know the needs and goals of the other project participants.

3.3.1. Challenges of collaboration

Firstly, community members must be interested in collaborative work and willingly engage in decision-making. Crippen and Robinson (2013) also suggest that graduate students often feel pressure to *force* collaborative spirit on research participants. Even in this project, there were many examples of attempts to reach out to speakers and organizations that did not move forward due to a host of different circumstances. Furthermore, dissertations and theses must be sole-authored and that might pose some problems of ownership attribution in terms of collaborative research. In a doctoral program, there is the expectation that students determine, at least in part, the topic of research. Although doctoral research can serve the community, there is the expectation that it will also advance academic knowledge within the time frame allotted for the program. Graduate students typically do not have access to large amounts of funds and are

not always willing or ready to make a long-term or lifetime commitment, especially if their doctoral fieldwork is far away from home or in a dangerous place (Crippen and Robinson 2013).

During her graduate work in Konomerume (Suriname), Yamada (2014) speaks to the importance of setting expectations in the relationships you are building with the community or groups with which you are doing collaborative research. Although her project had many positive outcomes, such as successful training opportunities for the Konomerume Kari'nja with whom she worked, she acknowledges having learnt a difficult personal lesson in managing personal relationships. She reveals that the Kari'nja felt some sense of abandonment when she left to hunt for job prospects, a process which can take years for new PhDs. She suggests two alternatives for researchers to avoid setting unrealistic expectations within a cooperative framework. In her case, she believes she should have had a frank discussion with community members about the timeline for her doing a job search following her graduation as well as about the frequency and type of communication. She also acknowledges she should have put in more effort to stay in contact. There is a very real human and emotional element to collaborative work, and participants do end up simply missing each other (Stenzel 2014). It is undoubtedly very difficult to publicly share such personal challenges and difficulties, so it is very important to have researchers like Yamada (2014) who are willing to present their experiences for graduate students and academics to reflect on the many long-term impacts of collaborative research.

Even for seasoned academics, there is often resistance within institutions and funding organizations to acknowledge community-oriented resources and goals in grant, hiring and tenure decisions (Crippen and Robinson 2013). This means that revitalization must be accomplished in addition to "scholarly" work (Shulist and Rice 2019) and "'collaboration' continues to prioritize the needs of academia, while treating community goals as, at best, an add-on" (Leonard and Haynes, 2010:38). This can be very difficult to navigate, and as such, "graduate students are sometimes advised to postpone more involved forms of community engagement until they get their degree or get tenure" (Dobrin and Schwartz, 2016:257).

There are, of course, some contexts where true collaborative work is not a realistic option. However, many researchers in this situation are still committed to ethical research, building relationships within the community of study and meeting their needs and expectations. Scholars such as Dobrin and Schwartz (2016) and Schulist and Rice (2019) argue for the

anthropological method of Participant observer as an alternative to participatory action research or other collaborative frameworks.

3.3.2. Participant observation

Dobrin and Schwartz (2016) argue that the primary goal of collaboration is not necessarily data collection, but rather that it is a "way to integrate positive social relations into their research practices" (2016:256). Shulist and Rice (2019) argue that ethnography and participant observation are among "the most powerful frames for understanding the social dynamics that are relevant in endangered-language situations" (Shulist and Rice, 2019:38). In Linguistics, participant observation refers to the process of removing the observer bias: the researcher tries to fade into the background and place recording devices to capture language in a context as natural and spontaneous as possible, so speakers can interact like the researcher is not there (Dobrin and Schwartz 2016). In anthropology, the participant observation framework "involves researchers immersing themselves in native lifeways in order to gain experiential knowledge of what they are studying" (Dobrin and Schwartz, 2016:261). This framework is designed for researchers as outsiders, just as in Participatory Research, but accounts for fluidity in the nature of the role of the researcher. By getting to know and understand their community of study, they gain somewhat of an inside perspective. It invites researchers to work on having "positive social relations with community interlocutors *across differences* by trying, in so far as possible, to understand what good relationships look like from their consultant's perspectives" (Dobrin and Schwartz, 2016:260). Researchers will have their own understanding, cultural and social values, of best practices and beneficial relationships. However, lived experience and way of thinking are most likely quite varied across communities and ethnography places these interpersonal interactions at the center of its frameworks.

Participant observation, in Dobrin and Schwartz (2016), "ties knowledge production directly to the development of social relationships across difference, [and so it can] help documentary linguists think fruitfully about the social approaches they take in their fieldwork, whether these ultimately come to involve formal collaboration or some other form of reciprocity" (Dobrin and Schwartz, 2016:256). In anthropology, the roles of outsider/insider are not as static as in other disciplines. In Cruz and Woodbury (2014), Cruz speaks of her documentary work on Chatino languages in Mexico. She had grown up on the outskirts of the village where she was born, and when she returned to it for research, she "found herself

occupying a range of positions along a continuum" (2014:284). Ahlers (2009) shares a similar experience working with one of the last speakers of Elem Pomo. As active and licensed learners of the language, researchers learning the language are able to interact with their teachers, the language experts, in solidarity. They are no longer 'the outsider come to study a language' and 'insider who knows the language': the linguist's questions carry a different weight if they are learning the language of study, especially if it is an endangered language. In the words of Ahlers:

> "I am understanding the language in its context at this point in time – what it means to and what purposes it serves for, currently, its speaker, learner, community. Thus, as a participant-observer in the language community, I have the opportunity to discover more clearly the roles that even a severely endangered/moribund language can play in its community of practice" (Ahlers, 2009:237).

Dobrin and Schwartz (2016) both also had positive experiences with the participant observation framework. They share both their work and the ways in which tailoring their approach to the community's needs and preferences led to positive outcomes and more ensuing work and projects. For instance, Dobrin worked in an Arapesh village in Papua New Guinea. Although originally uneasy with taking the lead in language-related activities, community members did not actually see this leadership practice as a "neo colonial imposition", but welcomed it as a form of recognition (Dobrin and Schwartz, 2016: 269). Furthermore, Schwartz shares his experience with training community members by using inFlex for dictionary work with one semi-speaker of Chiwere in particular. Although there are many advantages to this software, this speaker had already tried learning it, but preferred working through Microsoft Word which to him, was more intuitive and easier to use. In this case, Schwartz chose to place the relationship above linguistic best practices on data formatting and continue working within the speaker's preferred medium, rather than try to convince him of the advantages of a system he had already tried and rejected (Dobrin and Schwartz, 2016:269). The development of such positive relationships led to follow-up opportunities that were beneficial to their research path.

In brief, participant observation is not about outlining ideal collaborative best practices (such as Participatory Research) for all documentary linguists to follow. Rather, it offers ways in which researchers can *discover* what exactly constitutes positive relationships and best practices for their host community. It is about adapting to the realities of the research situation and remaining open to various possibilities for working together, "whether it be pursu[ing] formal collaboration; engag[ing] in personal forms of reciprocity; conclud[ing] that a shared

understanding of research goals is not really achievable, or something else as yet unimaginable" (Dobrin and Schwartz, 2016:270).

The following section outlines some of the ways in which principles of Indigenous methodology, Participatory Research and Participant Observation were applied to this particular project, especially in terms of formal collaboration and personal forms of reciprocity, and meeting community needs and preferences regardless whether it perfectly aligns with linguistic best practices or not. This is not to say everything in the project went smoothly, but the goal of this discussion is to simply share my personal experience to contribute to future work. I believe a personal approach is particularly crucial to narrative and storytelling work: this is in essence deeply personal and emotional work for all participants, and consequently, positive interpersonal interactions are key to its success and fulfillment.

3.4. Applying methodology, collaboration and ethnography to graduate work

This project always intended to, at the very least, lay the groundwork for collaborative research. An important part of my work will continue to be to reflect upon and document the process of collaboration and reciprocity undertaken during the project and lay the foundation for its future directions. Linguists need to "pay attention and take time for relationships in linguistic fieldwork situations that involve non-academic community members" (Czaykowska-Higgins 2009). The three methodologies discussed above are centered on relationships in some form or another and are reminders for fieldworkers to value the human connection in their research. This means turning the tables on past practices where data was sometimes collected at the expense of human dignity and connection.

As part of this work, it has been very important to take the time to do the following: 1) discover more about myself as a *Métis* person and the origins of my family; 2) involve myself with my local Michif/Métis community and get to know various community agents, organizations and institutions; and 3) learn how to build positive personal relationships and ties with Michif/Métis communities to work with stories in a positive way.

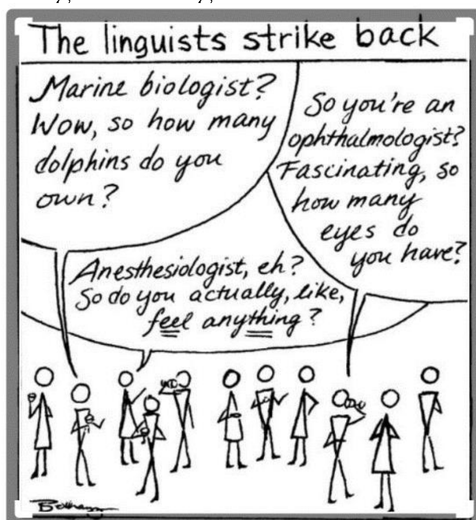
There are multiple ways in which a graduate program presents opportunities for collaborative work and integrating principles of Indigenous methodologies and participant observation. As discussed above, Alhers (2009) highlights the importance of learning the language of study. We will expand on this in the context of languages of the Michif in 3.4.1. In

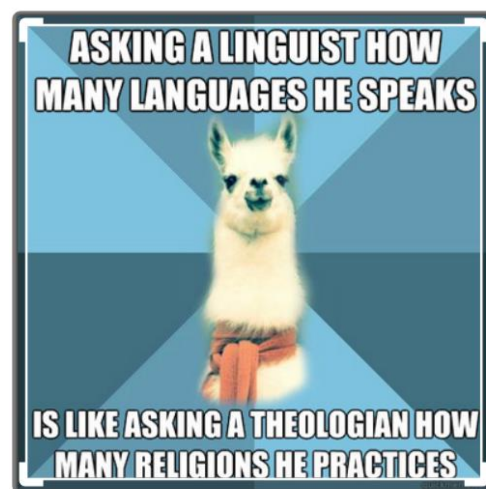
3.4.2, we discuss the design of the project and in 3.4.3, we outline what is involved with working with local Indigenous governments in formal collaborations. Sections 3.4.4. to 3.4.8. deal with what I considered to be crucial elements of community-grounded projects. In 3.4.4, we discuss getting to know host communities, and as an 'inside' researcher, what it means to have a personal stake in the success of the research. In 3.4.5, we will discuss sharing data and in 3.4.6, how data is formatted and how these decisions can be dictated or affected by relationships as well as by the goal of making data more accessible and usable. 3.4.7. outlines in more detail data on the speakers and stories that were recorded. Finally, in 3.4.8, we discuss various outputs of the project, as participatory projects are in nature, *multiple* projects that meet everyone's shared goals.

3.4.1. Learning the language of study

There has been a large push from linguists, in popular culture and in beginner Linguistics courses, to dispel the notion that linguists are all polyglots and study languages to speak them. For example, take the following memes of linguists "striking back":

Figure 5: Linguists strike back memes





https://www.pinterest.ca/pin/522769469237587043/ https://theaspiringpolyglot.tumblr.com/

Although the profession does not require linguists to be fluent in the languages they study, it can be a crucial component of endangered language research. As a researcher, you commit yourself to the revitalization process on another level, by committing yourself to becoming a new speaker. Learning a language is learning a way of thinking, a history and a culture. It is a vital step to

understanding the identity and the perspective of its speakers. Not only does learning the endangered language from elders and speakers help linguists access the language they are studying: it also contributes to building positive relationships in the community by demonstrating a sincere interest in the community's own efforts to save their language. Having a personal stake in the community allows you to more authentically appreciate and understand the history and present reality of Michif/Métis people. This is crucial to properly contextualizing and framing your research project.

Learning the language can be a great way to immerse oneself personally in the community and build connections and relationships. In the case of the Michif/Métis, many communities offer language classes open to the public. For example, in Saskatoon, Métis locals have offered (mixed) Michif classes with local Michif speakers. Attending these classes regularly was quite impactful: it allowed me to meet respected, hard-working speaker elders in my city and learn their language from them. It enabled me to get involved in the community and the Local, to contribute to their activities, and to meet Michif/Métis people who are incredibly hard-working and knowledgeable. As I progressed in my learning, I felt honored to be called upon to help facilitate the design and delivery of these community classes. This included developing an online program during COVID-19 shutdowns and restrictions. It has been a fortuitous learning opportunity to work side by side, discuss with and learn from a very respected Michif speaker.

Although there were no opportunities to learn Michif Fransay through community or university courses, I have had the opportunity to study it and work on the language for many years before starting graduate work. Furthermore, as discussed earlier in Chapter 2, the relationships and connections built during the course of this project also led me to take part in a Master-Apprentice program, as a learner of Northern Michif and northern Plains Cree. This opportunity was all the more special as I was able to involve both my daughters, who also took part in many sessions with our mentor. This particular program was adapted to an online format to meet COVID-19 restrictions, but remained a great space to discuss the languages of northwestern Saskatchewan and gain confidence in language expression and production.

Becoming a learner of the endangered language of study, and being recognized as such by its fluent speakers has been very beneficial to my own progress and journey. Endangered languages are also often not well-documented, and extensive dictionaries, grammars or journal

articles can be non-existent or non-exhaustive. As such, as a learner, the linguist can interact with speakers and help advance the more monotonous aspects of research. When working on translations and transcriptions of (mixed) Michif, I often tried to do as much as I could ahead of time so that the speaker with whom I was working, Verna DeMontigny, could be spared some of the effort of transcribing and verifying recordings. Of course, this practice is completely dependent on the relationship between researcher/learner and the speaker(s). The type of contributions a learner/researcher can make to the elicitation of the language depends on the given situation (i.e. speaker preferences, competency of the learner, dialectal/regional differences, etc.).

Thirdly, I have found that making efforts to learn the language and taking a sincere interest in the community's own revitalization efforts can show that as a researcher, you are working hard on understanding the urgency of transmitting the language to younger generations. Many of the people I have met through this project, some of whom have worked with many researchers and linguists in the past, have often commented on past linguists' and researchers' speaking ability, i.e. how well they had learned Michif during the time of their research, and enthusiasm (or apparent lack thereof) for learning the language. Whether or not their impressions of the researcher's efforts were accurate, they reflected the extent to which these aspects were important to the communities themselves.

Alhers (2009) hits the nail on the head when they discuss their experience learning Elem alongside the last remaining speaker of the language variety. They note that otherwise well-defined outside/inside roles are blurred and researcher and speaker come together in a spirit of solidarity. This is stronger and more defined when researchers themselves make a commitment to learn and interact in the endangered language.

3.4.2. Design of the project

Designing this particular research proposal was a different experience than other research proposals I had previously designed as an undergrad and graduate student. In social sciences, university and program procedures require students to submit and defend a thesis proposal in front of their committee, then file for Research Ethics Board approval before contacting host communities and prospective consultants or participants. As such, it can become challenging to involve community members in the creation of the project and its initial design. Rice (2006) in

Leonard and Haynes (2010) argues that it is not a true collaborative project if the researcher is the one setting all the parameters for research content and framework.

In this project, some parameters were determined in the thesis proposal, such as recruitment methodology, general guidelines for data content, and directions for narrative analysis. However, there was a considerable amount of flexibility to accommodate participants' preferences and goals for the research and data. For instance, speakers could choose whether to record their stories individually, in pairs, or in groups. No parameters for group make-up such as age, gender, or relations to participants were imposed, the main goal being that speakers were in a setting in which they were comfortable expressing themselves in their language. Furthermore, there were no pointed questions to guide the storytelling sessions, unless the speaker specifically preferred to be asked open-ended questions in a conversation or interview with the researcher. Otherwise, speakers were invited to share whatever stories they wanted in the context of the research, which was to document, and analyze narrative structure, as well as contribute to language and culture-learning resources.

Generally, speakers chose to share lived experiences from their youth and their home community. Often, these were habitual events describing a way of life that has since considerably changed, and other times, these narratives were short, funny stories about what could be collectively termed as the good old days. Some also chose certain stories to outline the role which their family played in their community's history, with the intent of documenting and archiving these stories as oral accounts of events not recorded elsewhere in community history books. The content of the stories highlights key components of Michif identity, namely: humor and laughter, spirituality, the land and home, family and community, poverty and hard work, language, sports, games and music.

Knowing neither what type of stories or narratives would be documented, nor the context in which they would be shared, made it impossible to set a pointed research question. It is only once the narratives were transcribed, annotated and studied that the specific topics of research outlined in Chapters 4 and 5 arose. As such, the content of the stories and the manner in which they were shared had a considerable impact on the design of the research questions for this dissertation. Although the speakers themselves were not directly involved at the time of the research proposal and ethics board approval, they unequivocally shaped this dissertation, in both its content and format.

This project was supported by a Vanier Canadian Graduate Scholarship (SSHRC), which allowed me, as the principal investigator, to invest considerably more in the project than is typically possible for graduate students. Crippen and Robinson (2013) note that financial restrictions are one of the largest hurdles graduate students must typically face, not only in general, but especially when attempting to design and conduct a project with collaborative components. There are many additional costs associated with community fieldwork research, such as travel costs, honorariums, etc. Travel, fieldwork and building relationships also takes time, which graduate students do not necessarily have if they need to work and teach to pay tuition and living costs. As such, Crippen and Robinson (2013) argue it is necessary to manage the expectations that academic institutions and community partners put on graduate students, especially if they are not supported by significant grants or funding agencies. They note that it is best to choose not to conduct any collaborative research rather than taking shortcuts and facing the subsequent pitfalls and consequences. We acknowledge that funding from a tri-council agency was instrumental in the design of the project, the carrying out of the fieldwork and the nature of the outputs that were generated over the course of this program.

3.4.3. Formal collaborations: working with Métis governments and organizations

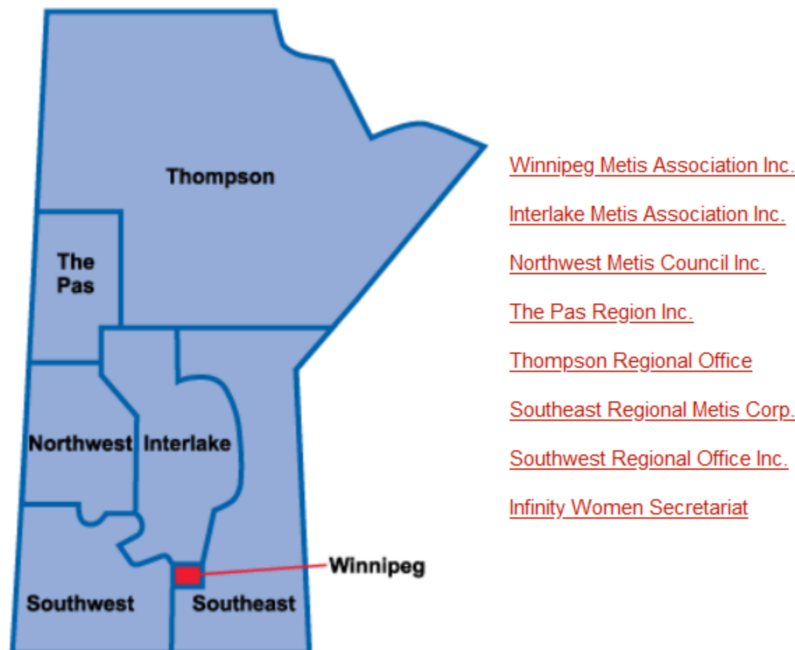
Defining the Michif/Métis community is a very complex task on many fronts and it can be a challenge to discern whom to approach when asking permission to conduct Michif/Métis research across the country. In previous sections, I speak to the importance of involving ourselves in grassroots, bottom-up movements for language revitalization in communities of endangered languages. In this case, it was also necessary to approach the governing bodies that represent the communities and speakers in question.

The homeland of the Michif/Métis people stretches from Ontario to Alberta (and in present day, to British Columbia) and into the northern prairie states of America. Nations across the Canadian portion of this vast territory are governed provincially. Michif/ Métis people can apply for citizenship to provincial governing bodies. These are, from East to West, the Métis Nation – Ontario (MNO), the Manitoba Metis Federation (MMF), the Métis Nation – Saskatchewan (MNS), the Métis Nation – Alberta (MNA), the Metis Nation – British Columbia (MNBC), and the North-West Territories Metis Nation (NWTMN). There are, however, other representative bodies established in some provinces which care for membership, such as the

BCMF (British Columbia Métis Federation), whose mandate is to advance Métis knowledge, promote self-determination and the Michif language. Another example is l'Union nationale métisse Saint-Joseph du Manitoba, which we will discuss below.

In Manitoba, the Manitoba Métis Federation was established in 1967 with the mandate, in general terms, of fighting for the rights of Métis people in Manitoba. The programs and services they provide today, with over 600 staff over seven regions across the province, include child and family services, justice, housing, youth, education, human resources, economic development and natural resources (http://www.mmf.mb.ca/who_are_the_metis.php). The seven regions of the MMF are shown below:

Figure 6: Manitoba Metis Federation Regions Map



The government's objective, as cited in article 1 of their constitution, is to promote the history and culture of the Métis people; promote the education of its members respecting their legal, political, social and other rights; promote the participation of its members; promote political, social and economic interests of its members; and finally, to provide responsible and accountable governance on behalf of the Manitoba Métis community (for complete wording, please consult the MMF Constitution directly).

Since 1981, the MMF has led thirty-two years of court action against the Governments of Canada and Manitoba that seek fulfillment of Canada's commitments to Louis Riel and the

provisional government of 1.4 million acres of land for the children of the Métis inhabitants of the Red River Settlement. Formal negotiations are ongoing to establish what form the compensation will take.

As part of their mandate as the self-governing body for Manitoba Métis, the MMF established a unit called the Tri-Partite Self-Negotiation (TSN) Government, whose mandate included collaborating with researchers and developing a protocol of ethics and research with the Métis people of Manitoba. This ensured some control over the research protocols employed with their citizens and tracked who was involved, as well as how the research was progressing.

Once I obtained permission from the Research Ethics Board at my university, I therefore submitted a research ethics proposal to the Manitoba Métis Federation, briefly outlining the project. Once the project received approval, the unit wrote letters to regional vice-presidents on my behalf, asking for their permission to conduct research in their region. The process also involved semi-annual meetings in which I was invited to share the progress of my work with representatives of the TSN unit.

The funding for this unit was eliminated in the spring of 2019. I was therefore unable to complete my research project in collaboration with staff within the unit with whom I had established good personal relationships. Furthermore, waiting for the approval of the regional VPs can interfere with the researcher's own personal connections within the region. According to their protocol, even if a researcher already has connections to a family or a Local within a given region, they are nonetheless expected to wait for approval from the VP of the appropriate region before proceeding. As such, researchers can be prevented from taking advantage of their own connections.

It must also be noted that the MMF is not the only representative body for the Métis in the province of Manitoba. In 1887, 23 Métis patriots founded the Union nationale métisse Saint-Joseph du Manitoba (UNMSJ) as a response to the events of 1885 in Batoche in Saskatchewan. Incorporated on March 1, 1888, the main purpose of the organization was to "restore Métis pride and thus create meaning for their identity" (Barkwell, 2015:7). Among other projects, they hold multiple events for the community, including but not limited to, annual gatherings, conferences, features at the Festival du Voyageur, storytelling, cooking and other cultural events. In the early twentieth century, the UNMSJ set out "to rehabilitate the concept of the Métis Nation" (Ens and Sawchuk, 2015: 114), by creating a history committee to correct the anti-Métis bias of most

history books, culminating in the publication of Trémaudan's book in 1935 (Ens and Sawchuk 2015; Barkwell 2015). Many founding members of the UNMSJ were also part of Riel's provisional government in the Red River, including André Nault, Ambroise Dydime Lépine, Paul Proulx and Elzéar Lagimodière.

Contrary to the MMF, the UNMSJ is mostly led by dedicated volunteers, and as such, their logistical capacity is not equal to that of the MMF, which is fully staffed with salaried full-time employees. However, they remain an important presence in the Métis community, particularly for the francophone *Métis*. As such, it is extremely important to also reach out to their governing body. Although a much more informal process, I had the opportunity to connect with UNMSJ president and other council members and offer them the opportunity to ask any questions or give advice and recommendations. They were supportive of the project and helped me to connect with some of their active members.

3.4.4. Building a personal stake

As we discussed in 3.1, more Indigenous researchers are entering academia and choosing to work within their nation or home community. As members of the community or group of study, they have a personal stake in the success of their projects and their work. It has been an enriching experience to choose a path of research that is close to my heart. Taking part in community events and initiatives has also been very enjoyable. As I have previously shared, one of the reasons for choosing to work with Michif languages for my doctoral research was to celebrate my Michif lineage and citizenship, as well as celebrate and connect with the Michif/ Métis community at large in a way that I had not been able to do before and share it with my family.

I have enjoyed taking my family to large Michif/Métis gatherings, such as *Back to Batoche*, and to local Métis Days and fall celebrations. Although the geographic dispersion of some of the communities makes it challenging to maintain regular contact[35], the friendships and visits that my family has had with community members have been one of the most memorable and lovely parts of this process.

[35] This is particularly relevant in the fact that part of this project was completed during the COVID-19 pandemic of 2020, where most community events were cancelled or virtual, and social distancing particularly important around elders.

Lambert (2014) also speaks to the importance of personal involvement in the community for collaborative work. Above all, it shows a vulnerability and a more ‘human’ side to researchers. In the past, researchers may have conducted themselves in what they intended to be a professional manner. However, they may just as easily have been perceived as cold, self-serving, and detached. Personal involvement allows time for the researcher to consider how they are presenting themselves to the community in question and if they have taken the time to truly demonstrate their passion and develop more lasting relationships.

Involving oneself in the community increases the following: 1) comfort between researcher and collaborators, so sessions are more likely to be more productive, fruitful and overall, enjoyable!; 2) the researcher’s appreciation of the community, its history, its way of life and being, which is absolutely crucial to contextualizing one’s research; 3) the participants’ understanding and appreciation for the research work.

There are teachings for researchers, either as outside researchers or members of their community, in how to develop relationships within communities. At CUIERIP 2017, one of the parting messages to researchers was to consider the differences in notions of time and relationships and how often the efficient, cut-to-the-chase, get-down-to-business approach favored by many sectors of Western society does not ‘fit’ well with Indigenous epistemology. John Medicine Horse Kelly stressed the importance of not being too rushed when working within Indigenous communities and especially elders, and that everything happens in its own time. There is a lot of value placed on sitting together and visiting before starting to work and giving time to elders to consider one’s request before accepting.

Another important component of entering in relationships and asking elders to share their wisdom is the offering of sacred gifts, usually either tobacco or tea. Miller (2017) speaks to her experience of presenting tobacco and gifts of gratitude. Knowing which honorary offering is appropriate for the given host community is another example of learning what makes a good relationship for the community. I also personally preferred the practice of giving monetary “gifts of gratitude” rather than honoraria whenever possible, as gifts are not taxable and therefore do not hamper elder speakers’ ability to receive various government pensions.

3.4.5. Accessibility of work and data

A form of reciprocity most appreciated in the course of this project was the practice of disseminating data as quickly and as efficiently as possible, without compromising its overall

quality. Miller (2017) speaks of the importance of sharing oral data with speakers/participants immediately following the initial data collection. With modern technology, it is increasingly easy to transfer a digital recording onto a medium which speakers can use, i.e. a CD or a USB stick. There is, of course, some individual differences in terms of access and use of technology among participants. Some are very comfortable with social media, email and digital files, while others do not (often by choice) own a computer. As such, remaining open to preferences and engaging speakers/consultants in a dialogue on the format and medium of data dissemination is about discovering and learning what best meets their needs.

In the case of this project, each participant was given a CD of their recording immediately following recording sessions. With a laptop computer, .wav digital files of the sessions were burned onto blank CDs, and given to speakers at the end of the day for their records and for their own use. Immediately handing files of our sessions allows speakers to enjoy their stories and use them for their own language documentation, preservation, promotion endeavours, or building their own family legacy. This is particularly crucial in narrative work considering speakers always retain the ownership and copyright of their own stories. They simply agree to have their stories shared and spoken of in the outcomes of the research project. I found people appreciative of this practice: in many cases, it is still not commonly done. In fact, it appears that there are still cases in which speakers/participants have found themselves waiting for months to receive a copy of their recordings, if at all.

If possible, it is also important to provide a written transcript of the sessions, especially if the content is relevant to the participants themselves. This process can take many months, perhaps even years, which all the more emphasizes the importance of immediately sharing the raw data. The format of these transcriptions will be discussed further in the next section (c.f. 3.4.6). At the time of verification of the transcriptions, a copy of the corrected version was also shared with participants. This, of course, meant that the transcriptions were still in draft mode and contained errors and mis-transcriptions, but this way, at the very least, access to data was continuous throughout the editing process. Following initial verification, speakers received another draft of the transcriptions with their corrections. This version of the transcriptions was also the basis for initial linguistic analysis. During linguistic analysis, more corrections and adjustments are made. By the end of the process, the hope is that transcriptions also become a resource for participants themselves to use for their own purposes. Transcriptions can be shared

in a variety of mediums, according to speaker preferences. While some would prefer a hard printed copy, others might prefer a digital copy (or both).

Ultimately, making data accessible at every step of the research means that it is easier for participants to follow the progress of your graduate work. Speakers have the opportunity to change, modify, as well as comment on the data collection and transcripts at multiple points in the process. As such, even if the graduate student needs sole authorship of their thesis or dissertation, the data itself becomes a product of ongoing reciprocity and collaboration.

3.4.6. Format of data

In 3.4.5, we discussed the importance of offering options for disseminating recordings and transcriptions. Dobrin and Schwartz (2016) speak of the need to favor speaker preferences and good relationships over linguistic best practices in terms of data formatting. In the case of endangered languages which do not yet have a standard orthography, it is also beneficial to good relationships to incorporate each community/speaker's spelling preferences in the transcriptions of their stories. Even if it can be more tedious for the researcher to change between spelling conventions, it makes the data more *usable* and *accessible* to the participants themselves.

In the case of Michif Fransay, for example, very few publications in the language exist. Lina LeGal has provided translations of Michif Fransay for various programs; Rhéal Cenerini published two plays, i.e. *Li Rvinant* (2011) and *1818* (2020) which represent the particularities of Michif Fransay; Jules Chartrand has provided some translations for publications such as Sherry Dangerfield's *ein waiyage d'enne famille* (2007) in the language; and finally, St. Laurent wisdom keepers Patsy Millar, Lorraine Coutu, Agathe Chartrand and June Bruce (2016) published a dictionary *Michif fransay as spoken in the community of St-Laurent*. Some other resources exist, such as the Michif Fransay *Speak Michif!* resource published by the Louis Riel Institute, but each of these publications/resources employ different spelling conventions. Some (i.e. LeGal and Cenerini) rely more on French-source conventions, such as the use of diacritics (e.g. *é, ô*), double vowel spellings (*oi/ou*), and maintaining *qu* and *c* spellings for /k/ sounds, etc.

On the other hand, the spelling conventions presented in the St-Laurent dictionary do away with most French-source spelling conventions: *eau* and *haut* are both spelled *o*, any [k] sound is spelled *k*, and any alternative French-source options such as *qu, ch, c* are non-existent. There are no double vowels either, stepping away from mixed Michif and Ojibwe double-vowel spelling conventions (*oo, aa, ii*) or French *ou, ai,* etc. Nasal sounds are spelled V + n and the

French-source [j] is spelled *yl* word-finally[36]. As such, there are a wide array of spelling conventions in use, and so, the transcriptions are done in each speaker's/community's preference.

For the dictionary authors in St. Laurent who have developed their spelling conventions, their transcripts were provided to them adhering as closely as possible to the spelling conventions they use in their resources, including their dictionary. Although this can require a learning curve, two goals can be accomplished: 1) the transcripts are accessible to the speakers/consultants, and 2) the transcripts will transferrable to the speakers' own work and endeavours.

Similarly, in (mixed) Michif, there are alternating spelling conventions in use: many prefer an individual spelling convention based on English phonetics; an English-phonetics rooted system is also used in the Turtle Mountain dictionary; many of the Gabriel Dumont Institute's and the Louis Riel Institute's publications follow spelling conventions preferred by prolific and renowned storyteller publisher and translator Norman Fleury as well as Rita Flamand. They employ a double-vowel system also used similarly in *nakawêmowin* and *anishnabemowin* for long vowels and a few conventions based on English phonetics such as *u* for certain short [a] sounds and *ay/e* for [e]. It also only marks voiced stops such as [d], [g] and [b] when they are phonemic, i.e. in verb prefixes and French-source nouns. In the Cree-sourced verbs, the Standard Roman Orthography (SRO) convention of marking both voiced and voiceless stops and fricatives by the voiceless counterpart (i.e. *t, p, k, s, sh*) is maintained[37]. In Rosen and Souter's (2015) Michif language manual, and in the online Michif dictionary published through the Algonquian Dictionaries Project, the double vowel *ee* is used for [e] and the diacritic ~ marks nasal sounds, such as [ã] and [õ].

It can sometimes be difficult for a researcher and/or graduate student to replicate various spelling conventions, and there can be many errors along the way. However, especially when there is no *one* standard orthography, it is crucial to confirm with speakers/participants, prior to transcribing and verification, whether there is a general convention they prefer and find more accessible.

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[36] Similarly to French spelling *-il(le)* in *paille* [paj] 'straw' or *deuil* [doej] 'grief'.

[37] In Plains Cree, voiced and voiceless stops are in complementary distribution, /t/, /k/ and /p/ being voiced only in /V_V, i.e. between vowels. The same assimilation process is manifested in some speakers of Michif, but not all.

3.4.7. Execution of project

Although the communities of study and the speakers/storytellers of Michif Fransay and (mixed) Michif involved in the project will be outlined and discussed in more depth in Chapters 4 and 5 respectively, this section provides a general overview of the overall recording and verification work. A total of 33 contributors were recorded as part of the project. Seven Michif Fransay speakers/storytellers were from the community of St. Laurent, Manitoba; eight originated from St. Eustache, Manitoba; one second-language learner of Michif was also from St. Adolphe, Manitoba. Four (mixed) Michif speakers /storytellers originate from the community of St. Madeleine and grew up in the Binscarth/Li Kwaen/Fouillard Town, Manitoba area; six storytellers/ speakers originated from the Tokyo/ Crooked Lake area near Yorkton in Saskatchewan. From northwestern Saskatchewan and Alberta, two Northern Michif speakers originated from Beauval (SK), two from Ile-a-la-Crosse (SK), and one from the Edmonton (AB) area. We also recorded two participants (one Métis, one Cree) from Pinehouse, SK.

These interviews were a mixture of individual, group and pair interviews, recorded in 2018, 2019 and 2021. In total, there are approximately 19 hours of recordings. The approximate partition between languages is as follows: Michif Fransay, 5 hours; (mixed) Michif, 11.5 hours[38]; Northern Michif/Cree, 2.5 hours.

Several sessions involved travel to northwestern Saskatchewan (La Ronge-Beauval-Ile-a-la-Crosse-Pinehouse), to the interlake region in Manitoba (St. Laurent), to St. Eustache and Winnipeg (MB), as well as Brandon (MB). Partly because of the COVID-19 restrictions, the Tokyo corpus was recorded not by the principal investigator, but by Michif speakers themselves among members of their extended families. Following initial transcription work, verification sessions were done for data included in this dissertation, i.e. stories recorded in St. Eustache and St. Laurent (see Chapter 4 for further discussion) and in Brandon and Winnipeg for speakers from Ste. Madeleine (see Chapter 5 for further discussion). All speakers from St. Laurent and St. Eustache verified their own narratives and assisted in the translation of unfamiliar terms, and Verna DeMontigny verified and translated the Ste. Madeleine stories.

[38] The corpus recorded in 2021 from the Tokyo/Crooked Lake is not included in any discussion in this dissertation, simply because of timing, but will be the focus of future work and research.

3.4.8. A collaborative project is *multiple projects*

Stenzel (2014) makes the point that "participatory projects are, by their very nature, *multiple* projects in which we work toward negotiating shared goals and hope to leave everybody reasonably satisfied" (2014:302). This narrative project has already had multiple outputs in its first phase and more goals are set for future outputs. Firstly, the dissertation satisfies the requirements of my graduate program and allows me to successfully complete my degree and continue to other work. It discusses narratives from a linguistic perspective, incorporating past research and academic work. However, it is not the only result of the documentary fieldwork. Each set of recordings discussed in the dissertation are also being compiled in individual books complete with transcriptions and English translations, and will be gifted to the speakers and families for their own use and legacy-building. These books are formatted for readers/listeners to follow along as the stories are being told on audio. This will hopefully lead to the stories being used as language learning tools.

As I was learning (mixed) Michif, I began developing learning tools to help me practice the particularly complex morphosyntax of Algonquian languages. One of these resources is a verb-building game: I found it particularly useful for myself as I was practicing sentence building, and, upon sharing it with my co-learners and colleagues, it became apparent that it was beneficial to their learning and understanding of Michif verb structure as well. This resource was the catalyst for the establishment of a not-for-profit corporation through which funding has been sought to finish its development, its printing and distribution. Although this particular project does not directly involve the narrative data, it has been inspired by it. Some of the structures discussed in Chapter 5 are included in the verb game, and its development and verification would not have been possible without the help of Verna DeMontigny and family, who I initially met through this narrative project. The not-for-profit corporation has also grown now to include projects for other languages as well, such as children's resource books in both mixed Michif and Michif Fransay versions.

Other outcomes of this research project not directly related to the data or narratives themselves are direct results of the relationships built as a result of this project. Although some of these have been previously discussed, they include: digitizing old community corpuses at the request of their stewards; developing language learning course programs; participating in a mentor-apprentice program; and contributing to community initiatives such as the application for

honorary degrees. It becomes very humbling and emotionally overwhelming to reflect on the ripples and waves that come from one single project.

The future holds many other goals for this narrative corpus. These will be discussed further in Chapter 6. There is great value for language learning and acquisition in narratives, something which I have experienced first hand as a learner. There are also goals for the corpus to grow as more speakers come forward to share their stories and build a legacy of Michif oral history, culture and folklore *in* the many languages of the Michif people.

3.4. Conclusions

As graduate students, it is increasingly important to consider the implications of our processes in our work, especially in cases where the research involves community-driven or community-based work. At the core of this project was the sincere desire to build lasting, positive relationships and friendships and an earnest willingness to learn from the speakers and elders sharing their stories. I have striven to take to heart John Medicine Horse Kelly's teachings of *leading with a good heart* throughout this entire process. This chapter, in essence, is a reflection on various aspects of the documentary fieldwork that has been completed and on the type of collaborative and reciprocal approaches that have resulted many of the project's successes.

Chapter 4: Co-construction as a process for building a multi-layered oral history

"Every time a story is told, every time one word of an Indigenous language is spoken, we are resisting the destruction of our collective memory." (McLeod, 2007:69)

Although it is argued that *any* interaction is built on some process of co-construction, i.e. how all speech-act participants including addressees actively shape the conversation or story, in group interactions, many key aspects of co-construction and collaborative interaction become crucial to the advancement of the discourse and the narrative. This chapter explores co-constructed storytelling in Michif Fransay[39] speaking communities of St. Eustache and St. Laurent, Manitoba. When several co-tellers work together to build a collective story, the process of co-construction brings forth elements that would not necessarily be included in a series of individual narratives collected and compared against each other. As such, this process of interaction and co-verification becomes very valuable to building a dynamic and enriching oral history. Through a series of reaffirmations, challenges, repetitions, modifications, i.e. the process of *co-construction*, social identities and narratives are built as turn-by-turn and vertical talk unfolds (Jacoby and Ochs 1995; Clancy and McCarthy 2015).

In 4.1, we introduce bridging principles between co-construction and historiography, as well as components of conversational storytelling, and in 4.2, provide some contextual and historical information on the communities of St. Laurent and St. Eustache. In 4.3 to 4.5., we discuss how non-storyworld and evaluative contributions and comments from co-tellers, such as tokens of agreement (4.3), tokens of negation (4.4) and other forms of evaluation (4.5), provide an internal perspective on the extent and impact of common experiences within the family or community.

4.1. Co-construction and historiography

The co-construction of narratives is a dynamic way to build a narrative network. Studying this process is part of a functional and interactional analysis of narratives. These approaches are framed by the understanding that stories are, at their core, a way of engaging people and a way of teaching or transmitting history, cultural knowledge, and language.

[39] Henceforth in this Chapter referred to as Michif to respect and reflect how speakers of Michif Fransay/ Michif French have referred and still refer to their language.

In an interactional analysis of narratives, the emphasis is on the dialogic process between teller and listener. Under this approach, storytelling is a process of *co-construction*, where the teller and listener build meaning together (Riessman 2008; Mandelbaum 2013). Within this project, the narratives recorded as interactions allow us to place the story within a conversation, in its natural context, and to consider the contributions of the listener's responses to narrative building.

In conversation, participants take turns dictated by social conventions and values (Clancy and McCarthy 2015). When one of the participants begins to tell a story, they begin to introduce their story with entrance talk (Jefferson 1984), with which other conversational participants become aware they are leaving the present time and place of the conversation for the distanced time and location of the story world. Particularly in conversation, the storyteller has to ensure that the relevance of their story to the ongoing conversation is clear to the other participants. This can be established as part of the entrance talk, as well as the exit talk, during which the storyteller marks the end of the story and returns to the flow of the conversation.

When conversational storytelling is used to build a narrative of a people and community, the process and its evaluative components inform a functional analysis of the narrative. A functional analysis of a narrative considers the following: how narrators represent and interpret the world, themselves and others; how they construct their social identities; and how to interpret the natural and supernatural worlds around them (Schiffrin 1996; Dyer and Keller-Cohen 2000; Goodwin 2003). Building a narrative network, i.e. establishing relationships and connections between a series of stories, shows what the stories and other elements have in common with and how they differ from the main narrative at the core of the network (Gimenez 2010).

In co-constructed narratives, co-tellers first can confirm or verify the commonalities and parallels in each other's experiences. Through a series of tokens of affirmations, elaborations, and laughter, co-tellers can verify a homogenous common experience (CE). In cases like these, the researcher or historian does not have to deduce whether or not a series of individual accounts from a given community are comparable: the co-tellers themselves provide an insider perspective and confirmation of their common experience (c.f. 4.3.).

Secondly, when storytellers or narrators share their life story, they typically do not often share what *did not* happen to them or what they *did not* live, choosing to focus rather on events, both habitual and punctual, that they *have* experienced. This is so unless they are referring to key

events in their family or community which they did *not* directly experience, but that still affected their life in some way. In group co-constructed narratives, however, co-tellers react to their peers' shared narratives not only with affirmations or encouragements, but also with *negations*, such as *I don't remember that* (*J'men rapel paw*), "I/we didn't do that", "I didn't know this", etc. The other co-tellers react in turn to this negation either by elaborating and trying to prompt a lost memory, confirming their different experiences and/or explaining them. As such, once more, researchers are not left with the arduous task of drawing an outside conclusion on why an individual speaker has left an event or element out of their narrative, which is present in other records from their community. They do not have to guess whether the narrator has forgotten a particular detail or if the story's importance has been exaggerated. In group co-constructed narratives, co-tellers overtly share which aspects of the group narrative applied to their own personal/family life and which did not. These parallel experiences are indicative of the heterogeneous aspects of their community. It gives a much better sense of which experiences or schemas are universally understood in the community and which are not (c.f. 4.4).

Third, through the use of humour and elaborations, the evaluative component of narratives often enables groups to explain and/or justify divergences or variations in their common experience. In many cases, co-tellers share a common experience, but the details of the said experience vary somewhat from co-teller to co-teller. Co-tellers will interpret these variations through their own lens as insiders with intimate and lived knowledge and insights on their family or community. Co-tellers attribute many of the variations to differences such as age, gender, socio-economic factors and location. Generally speaking, in group co-constructed narratives, co-tellers will verify and accept their peers' interpretations/explanations as true, by some form of agreement or appreciation, often appreciative laughter (c.f 4.5.).

Vansina (1985) explores the role of oral tradition in history and the process of building a historiography. He distinguishes between oral histories and oral tradition. Oral histories, on one hand, refer to reminiscences, hearsay, or eyewitness accounts about contemporary events and situations that have occurred within the lifetime of the narrator. Oral tradition, on the other hand, is no longer contemporary. It is passed on from storyteller to storyteller, beyond the narrator's lifetime (Vansina 1985). Eyewitnesses, in oral histories, are direct participants in the narrated events. Not only do they offer their perception, but also their emotions. Vansina (1985) argues that although oral tradition is extremely valuable to historians, is has to be verified by

independent sources and accounts. However, their value is that they provide an *insider* view or perspective, which a historian is unable to generate. A historian's interpretation is an *outsider's* interpretation, outside of the community of study, or the time and space of the event, which they interpret using their own present-day, cultural-specific biases. Any conclusions or explanations as to why certain habitual or punctual events occurred remain hypotheses and an outsider's point of view: "without oral traditions, we would know very little about the past of large parts of the world, and we would not know them from the inside. We also could never build up interpretations from the inside" (Vansina, 1985:197-8). Vansina (1985) argues that this internal perspective is one of the greatest contributions of oral history: "by collecting oral traditions and studying them, by internalizing remembered ethnography, which is also tradition, interpretations become more culture-specific, less anachronistic and ethnocentric" (1985:198).

Although historians such as Vansina (1985) distinguish between oral *history* and oral *tradition,* Hansen (2009) argues that this distinction is artificial for First Nations' historiographies and prefers the encompassing term *oral narratives.* Hansen (2009) states that oral tradition is a collective enterprise: one narrator, most likely, does not have singular authority over a story and the said story must be validated by the group. This is echoed by McLeod (2007) who, speaking of the *nêhiyâwak* and their language *nêhiyawêwin* emphasizes that their culture is multi-layered and complex and "consists of several influences and naturally has changed over time" (McLeod, 2007:95). As such, Cree narrative memory is "an ongoing conversation, a constant play between present, past, and future. Participants in this conversation have spoken many languages and have had a variety of ways of seeing the world. However, the Cree language and traditions are the threads that hold this particular fabric together" (McLeod, 2007: 95). This is a testament of the dynamicity of oral narratives. There is more than one voice, more than one story to be told, more than one meta-narrative. In fact, McLeod argues that Cree narrative memory embodies Bahtkin's notion of dialogism:

> Dialogism is the characteristic epistemological mode of a world dominated by heteroglossia: this means that the societal dialogue involved more than one voice, and there is not one dominant narrative, one meta-narrative. Everything means, is understood, as a part of a greater whole – there is a constant interaction between meanings, all of which have the potential of conditioning others (in McLeod, 2007:99).

He cites the example of *wisâkêcâhk,* or elder brother stories, where old Cree storytellers say they could tell these stories until they were "white in the hair" (McLeod, 2007: 99) and there would

be still more stories left untold. Co-constructed narratives with multiple co-tellers with similar experiences also embody this notion. When many people build an oral narrative together, the heterogeneity and/or homogeneity of each of their experiences becomes very clear.

As such, group narratives can enrich the study of a community. In the case of oral cultures such as the Cree, which McLeod describes as fluid, dynamic and alive, these group settings bring this dynamicity to life. They do so through the process of co-construction, and co-construction with a double audience in this case: the first being the researcher, who listens and is often responsible for recording and disseminating the data; and the second audience being their peer co-tellers, who are present to both listen and react as well as take a turn in the narrative. As such, they work together to build one, coherent narrative for their main audience (i.e. research project) by sharing and *comparing* their own individual experiences with each other (c.f. 4.5). When they speak on behalf of their community, they have the support of their peers confirming the veracity and integrity of their statements. This is echoed as well by Hanson (2009), who explains that slight changes or modifications of a storyteller's historical account faces some type of "peer review", as other members evaluate this perspective. It is often a way for the storyteller to add their own context: "the nuances evident in distinct versions of a specific history represent a broader understanding of the events and the various ways people have internalized them" (Hanson 2009). The linguistic process of co-construction becomes, in essence, a place and a way for co-storytellers to evaluate and verify (i.e. peer review) each other's perspective on their community and its history.

The study of linguistic components of a co-constructed narrative provides a unique opportunity to study the cultural schemas and epistemology of a group and understand in a much more intimate way how they perceive the world, and the extent of the impact of historical events (habitual or punctual) on said group. This is especially the case when the narratives are told *in* the language of the community, rather than in a contact or introduced language. Again, it becomes a question of providing *an insider's* perspective – an internal point of view, close to the heart – where the narrative sessions are told *on community land*, *in the language of the community, within the community collective.* We hope to show the potential for this avenue of research in the future (4.6.-4.7.).

4.2. Introduction of corpus and communities

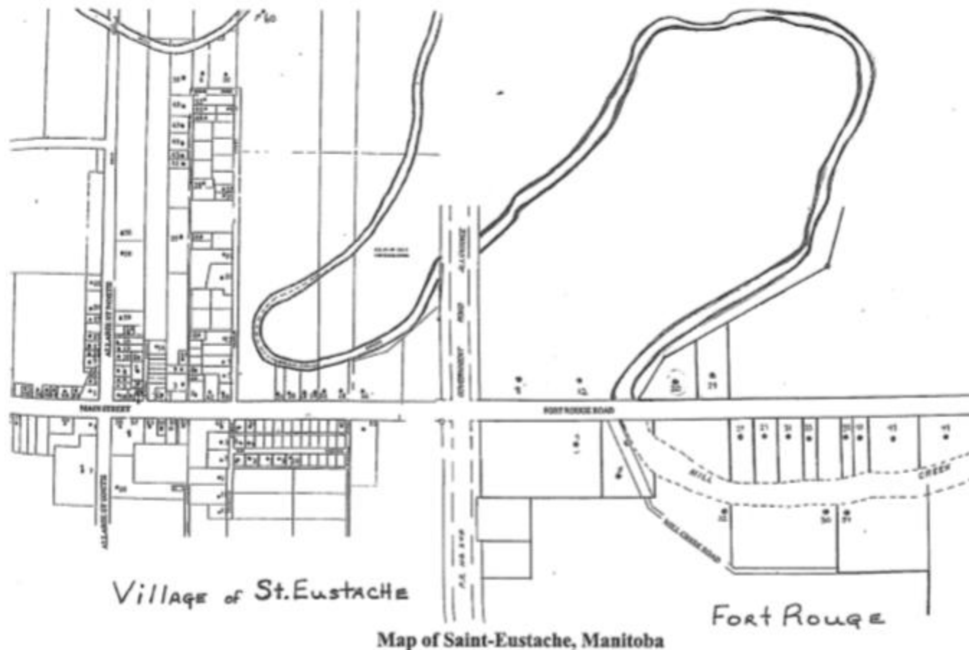
As discussed in Chapter 3, this doctoral research project attempted to follow a collaborative approach as closely as possible within the confines of a graduate program. This included the nature of the data collected, as well as the composition of the story sessions and the identity of participants. Most of the Michif Fransay speakers with whom I met chose to record their stories in groups with their friends, relatives and immediate family, rather than in individual sessions. Speakers in these groups originated from two Manitoba communities where Michif Fransay is still spoken today, i.e. St. Laurent (4.1.1) and St. Eustache (4.1.2).

Three storytelling sessions are part of this discussion: one with six women co-tellers, (five speakers of Michif Fransay and one silent speaker, who understands Michif Fransay, but mainly speaks English) from St. Laurent; one with three sisters (all speaking Michif Fransay) from St. Eustache; and finally with five co-tellers (all speakers of Michif Fransay), friends and relatives, three men and two women, also from St. Eustache. In these three sessions, participants shared stories of various aspects of their upbringing, their families and community, and their experiences as Michif people, speaking their language in their community.

4.2.1. St. Eustache, Manitoba

The community of St. Eustache was first established in the late 1800s by former residents of Baie Saint-Paul. Residents of the settlement were looking to escape the continuous flooding of the Assiniboine River. St-Onge (2008) estimates that the average population of the community is about five hundred, some Michif/Métis, others French Canadians. Although this is no longer really the case, Michif/Métis and French Canadians were divided geographically in the settlement: “impoverished Metis families congregated in what was derisively called Fort Rouge” (St-Onge, 2008: 93). Fort Rouge was situated east of St. Eustache, on “the 'wrong' side of the Coulee du Moulin” (Mill Creek on the map below) (St-Onge, 2008: 93). St. Eustache itself was home to some Métis families, who St-Onge describes as “slightly better off” (2008:93) than their Fort Rouge neighbors and also French-Canadian families. Farmers, or *les habitants*, worked land around St. Eustache but particularly west of the village. Figure 7 shows a historical map of the area, with the distinction between St. Eustache and Fort Rouge:

Figure 7: Historical Map of St. Eustache (St-Onge 2008: 90)



Map of Saint-Eustache, Manitoba

In the late 1870s and early 1880s, a large movement of Métis families left the Red River Valley to settle in the Northwest, including in the vicinity of Qu'Appelle Lake, Fort Ellice and Batoche. Others simply chose to relocate closer in Manitoba, like St. Eustache, St. Laurent and Oak Point. In the early-mid twentieth century, most Métis families settling into the area came from St. François-Xavier.

This is a Michif Fransay community, even though there are some speakers of (mixed) Michif who originated from the general area (such as the neighboring community of St. François Xavier). Like in the case of St. Laurent, speakers remember stories of Cree and Ojibwe speakers in their youth.

Many speakers of St. Eustache who I had the opportunity to meet speak of the divide between Fort Rouge and St. Eustache, and between Michif/Métis and French-Canadian inhabitants. Both groups attended the same community school in which there was often conflict. Small points differentiated the often less-wealthy Michif children from their French-Canadian counterparts, including the contents of their daily lunch. French-Canadians ate bread and butter, and Michif children ate *galette* (bannock). As Clifford McKay mentions in the following excerpt, Michif children were often 'branded' with Philippe Beaudin later specifying that they were often labelled as *les mangeux de galette* ('bannock eaters'). They remember being ashamed of not

having buttered bread and some people in town would boil turnips (*soutchièmes*), mash them up and spread them on their *galette* to make it look like butter.

(30) Galette vs. Li pain (*Bannock vs. bread*)

1. Bernadette : On itait en gêné pour ette Métif.
We were embarrassed to be Michif[40].
2. Philippe : Sh'pense s'tait plusse k'la gêne. S'tait plusse euh.
I think it was more than embarrassment. It was more eh.
3. Evelyn : Si vra oui.
That's true eh.
4. Philippe : La honte.
Shame.
5. Bernadette : I mean/ meme quand qu'on allait a l'ikol. Pi on avait pa rien a prend/ pour amner pour not lunch. Tsais on avait pas li pain. On s'ramnait enne um. La galette.
I mean/ even when we would go to school. We had nothing to bring for lunch. We didn't have bread. So we brought bannock.
6. Philippe : Mmhmm.
7. Bernadette : Ben tot suite sa s'fezait um.
Well right away they would.
8. Ken: Yeah.
9. Clifford: Ah oui.
Oh yeah.
10. Bernadette : On t'ait gêné pour sa.
We were embarrassed for that.
11. Clifford: We were branded. Oui.
We were branded. Yes.
12. Bernadette : "Tsu manges d'la galette!"
"You eat bannock!"
13. Clifford : Oui. Oui.
Yes. Yes.
14. Bernadette : Y faut tsu manges ein.
You have to eat eh. [...]
15. Philippe : Ben y m'rakontait. Y dzit. Y avait tellement honte d'alli a l'ikol. Pi y dzit li Dos blancs, y dzit, y avait di beaux pains blancs. Pi avec dzu beurre jaune ein. Y djit j'a figuri le. J'a faite kwire di soutchiemes. Li z'a mashées uh. Pi. Su ma galette. J'beurrais dzu shoutchieme. (laughter) Sa avait coumme dzu beurre. (laughter) Do you believe it. Huh.
Well he would tell me. He was. He was so ashamed to go to school. He would tell me the dos blancs (the white backs). He says. They had really nice white bread. With yellow butter. So he said 'I figured. I cooked turnips.' He mashed them up. 'On my bannock. I would spread some mashed turnip.' It looked like butter. Do you believe it. Huh.
16. Bernadette: Yeah. Yeah.
17. Philippe: Right.
18. Bernadette: That's right.
19. Philippe : Oh oui.
20. Ken: Yeah.

[40] Translations mine, following verification of transcriptions with speakers.

In spite of this, St. Eustache has been a town always with a strong Michif/Métis presence, with our participants speaking fondly of their families, traditions, celebrations and many other aspects of growing up in the St. Eustache-Fort Rouge area, including hockey and other sports. Indeed, one of the key landmarks of St. Eustache is *li ron* (skating rink). This chapter contains examples of St. Eustache community members recounting playing hockey at the *ron*, using outdoor toilets, the arrival of television in the community, celebrations and traditions during Christmas and New Years, as well as encounters with outside francophone communities.

Today, although some speakers feel like they might have lost some or most of their Michif, there are still many speakers and speaking families in the area. One of the two groups represented in this work consisted of some of the youngest Michif speakers in the area, namely Norma-Jeanne, Norma Lei and Norma nées McKay. Contrary to many people of their generation, they not only grew up speaking Michif, but continued to speak it with each other and often with their partners later in life. The second group consisted of friends and relatives that also continue using the language amongst themselves on a regular basis, including Philippe Beaudin, Ken Beaudin, Clifford McKay, Bernadette Tigg and Evelyn Williams. Even if some of the members of the group felt like they had lost their ancestral language, having left the community of St. Eustache for many years, they still maintained many elements of the language and had a wonderful, intimate connection to it. These knowledge keepers and elders play a key role in the life of Michif culture in the area and many are involved in their Local association. I have a particular fondness for the Local, as a few of my family are members, and it is through them I connected with the language keepers of the community.

The St. Eustache Michif/Métis community is particularly active and vibrant, frequently hosting events such as storytelling, fall suppers, Métis Days, Bike Rallies, Louis Riel day celebrations, etc., with involvement from youth as well as elders in the community.

4.2.2. St-Laurent, Manitoba

The community of St. Laurent, well-known as one of the communities which has best maintained its Michif heritage, is situated 90 kilometers northwest of Winnipeg, on *l'Grand Lac Manitoba.* Interlake regional offices for the Manitoba Métis Federation (MMF) are in St. Laurent and it is the center of much activity, including the meeting place for a group of women elders and wisdom keepers, who have greatly contributed to this project.

> "A Manitoba free-lance writer once dubbed Saint-Laurent 'a village like no other'. There are no streets, no sidewalks, no townsite, no industries. Yet, there are over one thousand people, the majority of them being Metis living in homes sparsely scattered for four kilometres along the new and old highways. In similar manner, I often looked upon the Metis people of my village as unique, because I thought we were the only people in the world who spoke the Michif French language fluently. Of course, that notion was quickly dispelled as, in my travels across Canada, I met other Metis who also spoke the same language." (Lavallée, 1988:2)

Around 1824, Métis from Pembina came to St. Laurent particularly for the fishing on Lake Manitoba. Lavallée (1991:84) presumes that the original Métis families, i.e. the Chartrands, the Lavallées, the Pangmans and the Sayers already spoke Michif Fransay when they arrived in St. Laurent. By 1850, there were twelve Métis families that had settled in the area, a number which kept growing in the later half of the nineteenth century. By the end of the 19th century, there were 32 families in the area. Breton families arrived early in the twentieth century, followed by French Canadian and Mennonite families (Lavallée, 1988: 29). In the community, in the early twentieth century, a former trapper recalls that, in St. Laurent, "a successful Metis man was one who was a good fisherman, trapper and hunter and who, as a result, was able to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing for himself and for his family" (Lavallée, 1988: 59).

As French-Canadian nuns and missionaries moved to the area and opened schools for the Métis and Breton families, they saw Michif as an obstacle for assimilation, and tried in many different ways to eradicate the language from the community. In the 1950s, Lavallée (1991) notes the use of a token system in schools to discourage the use of Michif, where children were allotted ten tokens which they could lose to their peers for being caught speaking their mother tongue. Fortunately for the future of the language, most Métis students did not see the point of learning Canadian French (*canayen*). Breton families, who had arrived in 1907 directly from Brittany (St. Onge 2004; Lavallée 1988; 1991), also tried to assimilate the Métis families to no avail. Lavallée (1988; 1991) notes that the descendants of these Breton immigrants ended up acculturating to the Métis and learned to speak Michif.

There was historically, as well, a division in the St. Laurent area, between the main mission and the community of 'Fort Rouge' situated on "the other side of the tracks of the main mission area and containing, at its most populous, perhaps 100 households" (St-Onge, 2004:173). St-Onge notes that many older villages in Manitoba had such small communities on their outskirts, with a different name to emphasize their separateness. In the late 1800s, the

inhabitants of the St. Laurent outskirts (Fort Rouge) were described as such, as discussed in St-Onge (2004):

> "Most, during the first half of the 20th century, still spoke Cree or Saulteaux to each other and the women still wore the traditional black shawl and smoked corn pipes. Though the origins of Fort Rouge are nebulous, indications are that it was populated at least partly by descendants of the families listed as indigent in the 1867-1868 famine, and partly by hunting and gathering families who had moved into the settlement in the 1880s and 1890s" (St-Onge, 2004: 176).

Fort Rouge Métis were specifically *labelled* as Métis and often experienced serious poverty (St. Onge, 2004: 176), they engaged in many traditional activities in addition to fishing, namely trapping, berry picking, digging for seneca root, and catching frogs (St-Onge, 2004: 179).

In terms of education, students mostly retained their mother tongue in St. Laurent if they stayed in their community for school. Some Michifs interviewed by Lavallée (1988) mention they rarely went to school following their family along the trapline. However, many children were encouraged to attend other institutions and colleges outside of their community, i.e. in St. Boniface, St. Agathe, St. Charles, Otterburne or even the Oblate college in Gravelbourg, Saskatchewan. Many Métis students from St. Laurent would quickly return home, not because of the prejudice or ridicule that they would face over their ethnicity, dress, appearance or actions but "because of their language", and the fact they spoke Michif (Lavallée, 1991:89). And so, Lavallée says, "it is not surprising that this language, Michif French, has become so intertwined with [the St-Laurent Métis]'s image of themselves, with their identity" (1991:89). As a new Michif/ Métis consciousness emerged in the 1960s and 70s and many new political organizations were formed, Lavallée notes that this reinforced the speaking of Michif in his community.

Gathering Michif-centered narratives from St. Laurent is key: St-Onge (2004) notes that there is no written evidence of how Michif people living in St. Laurent perceived themselves between 1850 and 1914, the only written accounts being from missionaries and Breton immigrants who saw St. Laurent through a eurocentric lens. As part of this project, I sat down with a group of women wisdom keepers and elders from the community, who are working arduously to promote, preserve and transmit their community's history, culture and, very importantly, language. Three of this group's elders and grandmothers, Lorraine Coutu, June Bruce and Agathe Chartrand, received their honorary doctorates from the University of

Winnipeg in recognition for their work and dedication to the Michif language and culture in St. Laurent. Their many accomplishments include their self-published dictionary of *Michif fransay as spoken in the community of St. Laurent*, the development of curriculum at St. Laurent schools and of resources for the St. Laurent Headstart program (University of Winnipeg, 2020). These elders, along with Patsy Millar and Doris Mikolayenko, two stalwarts of their group who have regrettably passed away, are renowned nationally and internationally for their dictionary work and have been invited to travel throughout the country to share their language and their knowledge.

Together with their relatives, Joyce Dumont, Suzanne Zeke and Andrea Rose, they share recollections from their parents and grandparents' lives as well as their own upbringing, including traditions and celebrations, seasonal occupations such as frog and snake catching, medicines, their school experience and other recollections. Their stories are often quite filled with laughter at their lived experience in St. Laurent. I have nothing but respect for these ladies and grandmothers. I am humbled by their knowledge and experience and inspired by the example of respect, love and laughter that they represent.

It is a great pleasure and honor to share some excerpts of their stories, as well as those from St. Eustache, in the following sections of this chapter.

4.3. Tokens of agreement and common experiences

Key elements of the co-construction process include instances of 'recipient disruption' (Mandelbaum 2013), i.e. addressees interjecting during the teller's narrative, such as tokens of appreciation and understanding (Jefferson, 1984:227). These, along with tokens of negation (4.4), playful commentary and other instances of derailment and diversion, contribute to a layered narrative in which many voices come together to provide a nuanced, enriched narrative of shared collective memory and experience.

In the type of narrative storytelling that is discussed here, language plays an important role in "constructing cultural beliefs, knowledge, understandings, ideologies, identities, institutions, activities, and events" (Jacoby and Ochs, 1995:174). When co-tellers contribute to each other's narratives with tokens of appreciation or affirmation, we, as listeners or readers, get a sense of universality or homogeneity in an individual's recollections and experiences.

When one co-teller shares a narrative, either a punctual or habitual event, other co-tellers typically respond either with tokens of appreciation and affirmation, or of negation and

derailment. Tokens of appreciation often either have the purpose of confirming the veracity of their co-teller's account, attesting that they themselves have had the same experience, or of encouraging the co-teller to continue telling their part of the story.

There are experiences that are universally shared amongst the members of a group, shown by the fact that every co-teller provides a token of affirmation and appreciation at the introduced narrative. In the following example, the five women of St. Laurent, Agathe, Joyce, Lorraine, Suzanne and June build the narrative of their school experience with the French-Canadian nuns. When Agathe mentions the nuns, it elicits appreciation from at least three other of the co-tellers. Following the entrance talk, everyone contributes something about their experiences at school, which are summarized as being mostly negative because of the nuns' constant berating on the issue of differences in language. As discussed in Lavallée (1988; 1991), co-tellers report that French-Canadian missionaries and nuns often perceived the Michif in the community as "bad French" or speaking "savaj". Tokens of appreciation and agreement are bolded and italicized in the following segment, in which the storytellers share their experience of not being understood by the nuns teaching at school. In this chapter, like in other sections, examples are spelled according to how speakers spell their own language.

(31) Language in school

1. Agathe:	Paw li sewr. *Not the nuns*[41].
2. Joyce:	**Yeah**.
3. Lorraine:	**Oh yeah.** Li sewr **wi**. *Oh yeah. The nuns yea*
4. Suzanne:	**Oh yeah.**
5. Agathe:	On konprenay paw li sewr. Sa parlay asi 'l'bo' fransay. Nozot on parlay not lawngaj. **Yeah**. *We couldn't understand the nuns. They spoke 'good' French. Us, we spoke our language. Yeah.*
6. June:	**Si sa** no djizay. On parlay en savaj. *That's what they told us. We spoke sauvage.*
7. Joyce:	To din ko on parlay anglay. Pi folay paw k'on parl pantot si on/ *If we were to speak English. And we could not speak at all if we/*
8. Agathe:	**Yeah**.
9. Joyce:	On parlay paw. Anglay/ *We didn't speak. English.*
10. June:	Fransay. *French.*
11. Lorraine:	On parlay paw fransay kom fo/ *We didn't speak proper French/*

[41] Translations mine, following verification of transcriptions.

12. Joyce: Folay paw k'on parl. Folay k'on rest trankil.
We were not allowed to speak. We had to stay quiet.
13. Agathe: *Powr saw* on n'a paw apri gro parske y. Sa no montray paw gro parske sa montray su la/
That's why we didn't learn a lot because they/ they didn't teach us a lot because they taught on the/
14. Lorraine : Obindon sa t'donay la strap!
Or else they would give us the strap!
15. Agathe: **Oh yeah.**
16. Joyce: La gran strap nwayr law.
The big black strap there.
17. Lorraine: Oh mwin j'a yu in yard stick. In gro yard stick avek/
Oh me, I got a yard stick. A big yard stick with/
18. Suzanne: **Oh yeah.** D'trwaw pyi. Sontay.
Oh yeah. Three feet long. They were.

This is a common experience between all women, with a slight diversion when it came to the description of the strap (lines 16-18). Each co-teller here provides, at one time or another in the segment, at least one token of appreciation or agreement. Right away, in the initial introduction of the nuns as well as their teaching and assimilationist methods, three of the co-tellers immediately agree with Agathe (lines 1-4). Tokens of appreciation here include *wi* 'yes' and *yeah* and *oh yeah* borrowed from English.

Joyce speaks about having to stay quiet in school (line 12). All co-tellers agree on the assimilationist and prejudiced behaviors of their teachers towards them as Michif children and speakers of Michif, presenting this experience as universal among them. In terms of forms of punishment, Joyce describes the strap as *long* and *black* (line 16), Lorraine introduces an alternate experience. Note the use of stressed pronoun *(oh) mwin* '(oh) me' to introduce a contrast (underlined in the excerpt) to introduce the alternate *yardstick* to the strap, which Suzanne corrobrates, further describing it as a three-foot length stick (line 17-18).

Similarly, community members of St. Eustache are in agreement on the issue of continuous conflicts between Michif and French-Canadian children. Similarly to the testimony from St. Laurent, speakers from St. Eustache speak to feeling silenced in school. Clifford, in the first line of this segment, speaks about Michif children feeling "shy" in school because nuns and priests at the school always sided with the *canayen* (or French-Canadian) children. Tokens of appreciation and agreement are bolded and italicized in the following segment:

(32) Relationship with li Canayens
1. Clifford : La raison qu'on tait gêné s'tait a cause li curi.
The reason we were shy was because of the priests.

2. Ken : **Ah ben sartain**.
Oh yes, for sure.
3. Clifford : Li seur. Y prenait la par. Di canayens. Sa prenait leu par.
The nuns. They took the side of the canayens. They would take their side.
4. Bernadette : **Ben oui**. **Mmhmm. Mmhmm.**
Oh yes. Mmhmm. Mmhmm.
5. Clifford : La on s'battait avec tot la bunch.
Then we would fight with the whole lot.
6. Bernadette : **Oui**.
Yes.
7. Philippe : **Yeah**.
8. Clifford : Pas yenk li zeleve que.
Not only the students that/
9. Evelyn : **Mmhmm**.
10. Ken : **Yeah**. Sa fait apres l'ikol la se/ S'tait. Quasiment.
Yeah. So then, after school that we/ it was. Almost.
11. Philippe : ***Yeah***. Tot li jour.
Yeah. Every day.
12. Ken : On s'battait tot le long jusqu'au magasin. Ah. Tot li jour isitte on s'faisait ashali par li Dos Blancs. Sa prenait leu par. Su' li chmin. Y l'avait personne prende leu par. Tsu li sacrait di voli.
We would fight each other all the way to the store. Ah. Every day. Here we would get teased/harassed by the Dos Blancs. They [teachers at school] *would take their side. On the road, nobody was taking their side. So you would hit them.*
13. Evelyn : **Ah oui oui**.
Oh yes, yes.
14. Bernadette : **Yeah**.
15. Philippe : On s'faisait agasi tot li jour.
We would get teased every day.
16. Ken: Ah oui?
Oh yeah?
17. Evelyn: Oh.
18. Bernadette : **Oui oui**. **Mmhmm**.
Yes yes. Mmhmm.
19. Philippe : **Oh yeah** s'tait coumme sa. **Yeah**.
Oh yeah it was like that. Yeah.

This segment, among others, is consistently and continuously driven by elements of appreciation. In the first few turns of conversation, in which Clifford is the principal storyteller, the four other co-tellers immediately support his narrative with tokens of affirmation such as *ah ben sartain* (line 2), *ben oui, mmhmm* (line 4), *oui* (line 6), and *yeah* (line 7). Ken continues to re-iterate and elaborate on tensions that existed between them and their *canayen* counterparts as school children, to which his fellow co-tellers also continue to agree (line 9-10; line 13-14). This overwhelming agreement up until the exit talk (line 18-19) gives the impression of universality in this experience amongst this group of speakers. This homogeneity was perhaps not even

realized by the group's members as when Philippe shares *on s'faisait agasi tot li jour* 'we were getting teased every day' (line 15), Ken asks *ah oui?* 'oh yeah?' (line 16), the segment's interrogative inflection indicating his surprise, while Bernadette and Philippe re-affirm the reality and veracity of the statement in the exit talk.

One of the groups contributing narratives were three sisters who grew up together and shared many of the same experiences in their childhood. Unlike those of the other groups who are a mix of families, the three sisters know each other's narratives intimately because they have lived them together and have experienced their impact. In adulthood, perhaps unlike other families, these three sisters have maintained a close relationship. This makes for a homogeneous narrative, although they do help each other remember small details in a process of verification. The following is an example of a homogenous narrative, or common experience, where participants remember a beloved tradition that they have passed on to some of their children, i.e. driving down backroads and looking at combines harvesting grain in the fall (33).

(33) Li back roads

1. NL: pi l'aimait sa prenait li ride. Dans li backroad.
And we liked riding around. In the backroads.
2. NJ : **Oh oui.**
Oh yeah.
3. NL : **Yup**. Sa s'tait d'notr/ asteur on fait pu sa on djira.
Yup. That was our/ we don't really do that anymore today.
4. N : Meme pour li/
Even for the/
5. NJ : **Non**. Sh'sais pas la danière fwai j'a iti li backroads.
No. I don't remember last time I went on the backroads.
6. N : Alli pour li backroads. Mon pere nou z'amenai pour watchi li mennonites. Pour ameni nouzotr dans li combine. Mem pour li la/
Going on the backroads. My dad brought us to watch the mennonites. And to bring us on the combine. Even for the/
7. NL : /combine. Souvent on a iti.
/Combine. Often we went.
8. N: Oh my gosh. Stanni j'a iti ameni ma fi. Pour watchi li combine. Ha. "What are we doing mom?" "Go". On faisait sa. S'tait notre temps pour li watchi li combine.
Oh my gosh. This year I went to take my daughter. To watch the combines. Ha. "What are we doing mom?" "Go". We used to do this. It was our time to watch the combines.
9. NJ : **Yeah**.
10. NL: Pi on restait pour enn coupe d'heure itou. *Ah oui ah oui la oui la*.
And we used to stay for a few hours. Oh yeah oh yeah.
11. N : **Mmhmm**.
12. NJ : **Ah oui.** On tait assi là.
Oh yeah. We sat there.

13. NL : **Yeah**. On allait pour li ride *nouzotr aussi*. Prenait chaque not' tour. Mon dad, non. Tait pas inquiet.
Yeah. We went on rides too. We all took turns. My dad, no, he wasn't worried.
14. N : **Mmhmm**.
15. NJ : **Mmhmm**.
16. NL : Tait bon si nouzotr on allait dan l'combine. *Yeah. Mmhmm.*
He was good if we went on the combine. Yeah. Mmhmm.

Even the *non* 'no' (line 5) here is a token of affirmation, as it is agreeing with a preceding negative utterance. A narrative process employed in this excerpt is connecting past events to the present and reflecting in what manner the way of life in the family and community has changed.

Co-tellers also often explicitly share whether or not they were witnesses or non-witnesses of a particular event, using the evidential phrases *j'men rapel* (I remember) and *j'men rapel paw* (I don't remember) (the latter to be discussed in 4.4). In the case of this next example (34), the first co-teller starts off his anecdote with the entrance talk formulation *j'men rapel* 'I remember', which we can recognize as the beginning of a new narrative. A second co-teller re-affirms the experience by using a similar formulation at the conclusion as exit talk:

(34) Evidential *j'm'en rapel* (I remember)

Joyce :	Joyce. (laughter) **J'men rapel** en niver on/ *Joyce. (laughter) I remember in the winter we/*
Lorraine :	**Ah wi**. *Oh yes..*
Joyce :	On navey ayn gros kuv su l'pwayl a bwaw. On feyzay fond la neyj. Pi on folay k'on pren tos shakun notr towr dan l'o. <u>Dan la mem o</u>. (laughter) Ah. *We had to make/ we had a huge bassin on the wood stove. We would melt the snow. And we had to each take our bath/ each our turn in the water. In the same water. (Laughter) Ah.*
June :	<u>Dan la mem o</u>! *In the same water!*
Suzanne:	sa l'ayr propr in. *It looked clean eh.*
Joyce :	Bwaw pi law ah/ *and then I/*
June :	**Oh yeah.**
Lorraine :	**J'men rapel law mwin ito**. *Me too, I remember that.*

Affirmations in this segment are not simply particles of agreement, but also sentence re-iterations or repetitions, such as June repeating her sister's exclamation *dan la mem o* "in the same water!" to emphasize their joint experience growing up in the same family.

This corroborating *j'm'en rappelle* 'I remember' also occurs here, in an excerpt from St. Eustache, where co-tellers confirm the accuracy of the principal co-teller's narrative and to confirm that in some way, they have experienced or been affected by the same event. This particular example refers to the outside bathrooms everyone had and the fact that Eaton's catalogues and papers from mandarin orange boxes were commonly used as toilet paper:

(35) Evidential *j'm'en rappelle* 'I remember'

Philippe :	Au moins s'tait dzu papyi. Dan not temps s'tait l'catalogue! (laughter) *At least it was paper. In our days, it was the catalogue!*
Bernadette :	**Sa si vra oui.** Eaton's catalogue. *That's true, yes. The Eaton's catalogue.*
Evelyn :	Y a pu d'catalogue aujourdjui. *There's no more catalogue nowadays.*
Bernadette :	Non. *No.*
Evelyn :	**Si vra sa. Si vra. Je m'en rappelle.** *That's true, that. That's true. I remember.*

In a co-constructed narrative, when co-tellers use such strategies to agree with the principal co-teller of a particular habitual or punctual event so clearly and emphatically, the audiences get a real sense of the homogeneity of the experience. As we will discuss in 4.5, there are two levels of audience: the first audience, i.e. the other co-tellers, come out of the storytelling session with a sense of consensus, and that their fellow relatives, community members and neighbors agree with their own perspective. The outside audience, for which these narratives are intended, comprised of Michif youth, researchers and historians, and other Michif communities, also feel an undeniable sense of unity between the co-tellers and the universality of their narrative.

4.4. Tokens of negation and differing experiences

Instances of shared consensus discussed in 4.3 particularly stand out when, in other parts of the narratives, the narrative 'disruptions', rather than being tokens of agreement and appreciation, are tokens of negation. These tokens of negation also constitute a valuable contribution of co-constructed narratives, especially in how they can demarcate themselves from individual narratives.

With multiple co-tellers constructing a story, co-tellers can react to others' narratives with statements of negation such as *I never did that* or *I don't remember doing this.* A co-constructed narrative gives its contributors a space to talk and speak about experiences, events and realities they have not experienced, or do not share with their peers. It is also an opportunity for co-tellers to have their memories triggered and be reminded by fellow co-tellers of certain

people and events. They ultimately have the space to confirm whether they did or did not experience something attested in the community.

An example of this is when Lorraine, from St. Laurent, shared her experience trapping songbirds, specifically des *zirondel* 'swallows':

(36) Li zwayzo

1. Lorraine: Kan k'on tay jewn on manjay li zwazo. *I wouldn't do that today though.* On prenay ayn port. Ayn port en bwaw law. Pi tchu l'metay dibot avek dju powto kom saw, tsay. Pi apray saw tsu metay li breadcrumbs en dsowr. Pi tsu rovray l'shawsi la baw dan la mayzon. Pi tsu metay ayn gran kord law par disur l'shawsi juska t'atashay apray la port law. Pi apray saw kan stay plin d'wayzo law. Sa manjay tot li breadcrumbs law.
When we were young, we ate birds. I wouldn't do that today though. We would take a door. A wooden door there. And you put it up with a pole like this. You know. And after that you would put breadcrumbs. Under. And you opened the window there in the house. And you would put a long rope/string over the window and you tied it up to the door there. And after when it was full of birds. They were eating all the breadcrumbs.
2. Joyce: Yeah.
3. Lorraine: On leys la kord kom saw law pi. Tsu li tchway tot. (laughter)
We let the rope go like that and. You killed them all.
4. June: Kel sort d'wayzo.
What kind of bird?
5. Lorraine: Pi apray saw on li plumay law. Pi on li fayzay kwir.
And after that we plucked them. And we cooked them.
6. June : Ah li zirondel.
Ah swallows.
7. Lorraine: Si saw. Li zirondel. Pi. Sa gotay kom la pol on dziray.
That's right. Swallows. And they tasted like chicken, one could say.
8. June: In wayzo spareyl kom ayn pol.
A bird is just like chicken.
9. Lorraine: Sontay bon. Sontay bon!
They were good. They were good!
10. Joyce: **Premyay fway j'entendju saw mawnji li zwayzo.**
It's the first time I heard of eating (song) birds.
11. Lorraine: Perdri.
Partridges.
12. June: **Non mwin j'entendju saw di St. Ambroise saw**. Fayzay saw.
No me, I heard about this in St. Ambroise. They used to do that.
13. Lorraine: Oh yeah. Ah wi?
Oh yeah?
14. Andrea: Yeah. [Mmhmm]
15. Joyce: Pareyl kom.
Just like.
16. Lorraine: Pareyl kom li gornoyl.
Just like frogs.
17. Joyce : **Ji jamay manji ayn gornoyl.**
I've never eaten a frog.

This is an example of a habitual narrative with which not every woman present was familiar. There are comments of negation which include *ji jamay...* 'I never' (line 17), and *non, mwin* 'no, me...' (line 12). Notably, Joyce mentions she had never heard of this practice (line 10). Her sister interjects to say she has heard of it in the neighboring Michif community of St. Ambroise (line 12), implying that although it was not a practice in their family, there is some common knowledge of it happening in other families and elsewhere.

One of the most common small animals that were hunted and caught were frogs. Many of the grandmothers told stories of their adventures hunting and catching them, and even doing so with younger generations. In the next excerpt, Agathe shares her experience collecting not only frogs but also garter snakes to sell (line 1). However, she's the only one of the grandmothers to have done so. Others here share that they didn't know of hunting for snakes growing up (line 2, reiterated in line 5).

(37) Li koleyv

1. Agathe :	J'm'en rapel avek ma mayr on y alay nozot la baw ramawsi li gornoyl avek [name]. Premyay koleyv j'a pogni. Uh! La montay isit. (laughter) Mi apray tsu mey ton pyi su sa tet pi pogne sa ku pi til twist. Til garosh dan in barrel. <Eww.> <Aah.>[42] *I remember with my mom, we went over there to catch frogs. With [name]. First snake I caught. Uh! It climbed up here. (laughter) But after you put your foot on their head and. You hold its tail and you twist it. Then you throw it in the barrel. <Eww.> <Aah.>*
2. Lorraine:	**Sh'savay paw k'sa ramawsay li koleyv.** <Yes. Oh yeah.> *I didn't know they caught garter snakes <Yes. Oh yeah.>*
3. Agathe:	Wi. Bin wi. Di koleyv. Yeah. *Garter snakes. Yeah.*
4. June:	T'avay djis so shak powr ayn koleyv. *You had ten cents each for a snake.*
5. Lorraine:	**Ah. Sh'savay paw**. *Oh. I didn't know.*
6. Joyce:	Pi j'm'en rapel// Agathe// li gornoyl sontay/ *And I remember// Agathe// the frogs were/*
7. Agathe:	//On y alay// *//We went//*
8. Lorraine :	O par la liv. *Oh by the pound.*

June, here as well, knows of the practice, providing the typical price per snake (i.e. ten cents a unit). As such, through interjections and the process of co-construction, we get a better sense of

[42] Interjections clearly heard during the narrative, but even through the process of verification, we were unable to identify to whom they should be attributed.

how widespread was an event. The comments of negation include *sh'savay paw* 'I didn't know' (lines 2, 5). The last construction, with the use of disjointed pronouns (*mwin* 'me', *nozotr* 'us') is often used to give the sense of a varying experience.

There are also instances where co-tellers use *j'm'en rapel paw* 'I don't remember', to indicate that they do not remember witnessing the events recounted by the others. It does not negate or reject the fact that the events in question happened, but brings insight to why certain co-tellers do not bring up certain events., i.e. either they have never lived it themselves or they really do not recall these events (not experienced, or too young to remember, etc.). The following is an example from the St-Laurent grandmothers, talking about some of the medicines they used, including *Pinex* cough syrup. Established 1905, the Pinex Company marketed Pinex syrup as an effective cough syrup, with chloroform and alcohol, as well as oil of pine tar as its main ingredients[43]. In this excerpt, Lorraine fondly remembers Pinex syrup, especially for its good taste (line 1, line 8, line 11). However, as indicated in bold (lines 5 and 7), other co-tellers did not remember the syrup at the time:

(38) Li siro d'Pinex

1. Lorraine :	Obindon le/ kan t'avay in rum law. L'avey l'Pinex avan. Ten rapel tshu li siro d'Pinex? *Or else the/ when you had a cold there. There was Pinex there. You remember Pinex syrup?*
2. Agathe:	Oh wi. Mmhmm. *Oh yes.* Mmhmm.
3. June :	**J'en rapel paw mwa**. *Me, I don't remember.*
4. Lorraine :	T'en rapel? Wi t'ey bon in? Oh j'aymay sa mwa l'Pinex. *You remember? Yeah, it was good eh? Oh, I liked it me the Pinex syrup.*
5. Suzanne :	**Ji m'en rapel paw d'slwi law.** *I don't remember that one.*
6. Agathe :	Yeah.
7. June :	**J'm'en rapel paw.** *I don't remember that.*
8. Lorraine :	T'en rapel paw di tot? La boteyl. Boy y itay bon. *You don't remember at all? The bottle. Oh it was good.*
9. Suzanne :	**Non**. *No.*
10. Agathe :	S'tey t'in siro. *It was a syrup.*
11. Lorraine :	Y avay in bon go. *It had a good taste.*

[43] https://americanhistory.si.edu/collections/search/object/nmah_1298499

The underlying theme of the anecdote is the particularly good taste of Pinex. On their label, Pinex recommends to mix the syrup concentrate with a sugar syrup to make a cough syrup. Interestingly, its remarkably good taste was front and center in their advertising campaign, as shown in this 1926 ad entitled *Children Like It!*:

Figure 8: Pinex advertisement[44]

In (38), Lorraine prompts the memory of others, with the help of Agathe who also remembered the syrup. After asking Suzanne if she remembers it at all, she adds more information *la boteyl*, i.e. that the syrup was in a bottle. After Suzanne continues with *no,* Agathe gives further elaboration, i.e. *s'tey t'in siro* (it was a syrup) with the hopes of jogging her memory. This is an example of a divergent experience, in which co-construction highlights the extent to which the group differs in their experience, and that the use of Pinex was not necessarily memorable or common to every home in the community.

In close familial groups, there are also stories about events in which all the co-tellers were present, and they work together to corroborate details in both durative-descriptive propositions and the mainline story events. In (39), the storytellers remember an amusing anecdote when their eldest sister (one of the co-tellers present) fell through the ice while they were all on a stroll on a frozen ditch.

[44] https://oldmainartifacts.wordpress.com/2013/09/05/pinex-company-ft-wayne-in/

(39) La kouli (STE2) :

1. NJ : On a aiti su la kouli. Mwa Norma pi mon mom. Y Norma Lei.
We went on the coulee. Me Norma and my mom. And Norma Lei.

2. NL : On a disidi pour alli enn marsh koz y faisait bo.
We decided to take a walk because it was nice out.

3. NJ : Koz y faisait beau oui. S'tait ein mwa d'mars I guess.
Because it was nice yeah. It was March I guess.

4. N : **Non. Mwa fevriyi.**
No. It was February.

5. NL : Oh. Konnait li mwa koum fo!
Oh. She knows the month all right!

6. NJ : Oh y konnait wi. So on a aiti su l'kouli. Pi on marchait. Pi on marchait. Plu prosh k'on y illait ivou li calvette.
Oh yeah she knows. So we went on the coulee. And we walked and walked. We got close to a culvert.

7. NL : //calvette.//
//culvert.//

8. NJ : Norma tait l'premiyi pour alli ivou li calvette/
Norma was the first to go towards the culvert/

9. NL : A koz/ al qui voulait waire li/
Because/ she wanted to see the/

10. N : Non! Oui.
No! Yes.

11. NJ : li shishi.
the shishis.

12. N : **Non. Li quenouille.**
No. Cattails.

13. NJ: Li quenouille yeah that's right.
Cattails yeah that's right.

14. N : Ooh.

15. NL : Li shishi dan la kouli sa si toute sa jli!
Shishis in the coulee when it's all frozen!

16. NJ : Oui. Yeah. Quenouille! (laughter)
Yes. Yeah. Cattail!

17. NJ : Pi on marchait apres sa j'entends oh! Sure enough. Norma a l'a kali dans la kouli.
And we were walking then I hear oh! Sure enough. Norma had sunk into the coulee.

18. NL : Yeink enn jawnb [xxx][45]. (laughter) S'tait tchi si drol.
Only one leg [xxx]. It was so funny.

19. NJ : Oh wi. oh.
Oh yes. Oh.

20. N : On avait ouver la dam dad a dji. Pour sa sitait pa jili.
They had opened up the dam, Dad said. That's why it wasn't completely frozen.

21. NL : Ah.

22. NJ : Pouvait pas arreti d'rire pour dimandi si tait kwarek mi.
We couldn't stop laughing to ask if she was ok, but.

23. NL: *Help me*! *Help me*!

24. NJ : (laughter) Rgardait la oh. Norma/
We were looking oh. Norma/

[45] Annotation [xxx] indicates incomprehensible segment of recording.

25. N: Yeah. Nobody was helping me. (laughter)
26. NL :Alors l'a vnu a boute aidi sortchir/
So we managed to help her out/
27. N : **Non! Parsonne m'a aidi**! (laughter)
No! Nobody helped me!
28. NL : Oh non.
Oh no.

The two younger sisters (NL and NJ) are building together the background introductory information for the story and co-tell most of the mainline events, but it is clear throughout the telling that it is their eldest sister, who actually fell through the ice, who most vividly remembers the details of the story. In line 4, she makes a specification on the right month in which the incident occurred; in line 12, she also makes a correction on which plant they had tried to go see when she fell through the ice; and finally in line 27, she makes it very clear that no one helped her out of the freezing water in response to line 26 where her sister mentions helping her out. Her younger sisters, in each instance, accept the interjections as true, and overall, the interjections contribute to the humour and hilarity of the story. The telling of this story is lively, dynamic and infused with the laughter, *joie de vivre* and camaraderie that are so typical of the Michif/ *Métis* culture.

These examples, among many others in the corpus, show how the collective memory is much greater than the individual memory, and how when people come together to tell a story, they are not only bringing to life their shared (or not) experience, but also shaping their language, their history and their identity. They do so from an internal perspective, and so the evaluative component of their narratives speak very much to how co-tellers see and perceive their own community and history.

4.5. Elaborations and evaluative component of co-constructed narratives

The evaluative function of narratives is essential to the narrative experience (Labov and Waletzky 1997). While stories themselves are personal and subjective, evaluative components reflect social/ conventional expectation, as argued by Hyaverinen: “Expectation analysis presumes that oral life stories essentially recount the story of changing, failing or realized expectations (...). While experiences may be thought of as mainly personal and subjective, expectations are always social, local and conventional” (Hyaverinen 2009:456). As such, a narrative is not simply just piecing together pieces of sequential action. Repetitions, especially repetitions of whole utterances, false starts, backtracks, which break down the temporal order of

telling, negatives, contrastives, modals, markers of intensification and/or affirmation such as laughter, as well as other evaluative language and verbs, as Hyaverinen (2009; see also Clancy and McCarthy 2015) argues, all constitute evidence of the evaluation function in narratives. Listeners, or the audience, provide many of these indicators of evaluation to advance the narrative.

In 4.5.1, we will discuss the role of a double audience in the shaping of a co-constructed narrative. In 4.5.2, we will briefly discuss the evaluative function of narratives, and how it shapes a narrative, especially as studied and theorized by Labov (1972). Finally, in 4.5.3, we will consider examples from our corpus where the co-tellers use the evaluative function of narratives and laughter to discuss differences in their experiences and attribute them to age, geography or socio-economic differences.

4.5.1. The "double" audience in co-constructed narratives

Jacoby and Ochs (1995) argue that no participant is a passive robot, but that everyone shares responsibility in "the creation of coherence, identities, meaning and events" (1995:177). They argue that many past researchers (e.g. Haviland 1977; Duranti and Brenneis 1986) in linguistic anthropology "have examined ways in which activities/events are collaboratively built by co-participants, for example, how audiences are co-authors of language activities such as storytelling, oratorical performances, and gossip" (1995:175). Vansina (1985) also states the importance of the public to a performance, and the fact that the public is active, which "interacts with the teller, and the teller provokes this interaction by asking questions, welcoming exclamation [...]. The teller and public are creating the tale together" (1985:34).

In the case of co-constructed narratives, especially those which have active listeners, there are two audiences of sorts, each one influencing the performance and delivery of the narrative. In linguistic research, where there is a researcher present, even as a participant observer, or in any case where the co-tellers have a common intended audience, co-tellers will take into account the presence of this outsider audience. During the session, I did not contribute very much in terms of interjections, but was an active listener and often joined into the laughter. Even if I was present at each of the storytelling sessions and tried to remain a silent participant in the interaction, there is no denying that as an audience, I played an important role in the development of each interaction. I was younger than the participants themselves, from a different generation, and although I am from rural Manitoba, I was from a different community. This

implies that the reality of my upbringing was different from theirs. It's also presumed that I am not personally familiar with members of their communities, or certain prominent local events or customs: as such, my presence sometimes influenced the manner of introduction of certain characters in stories or of customs and traditions.

As a younger Métis from Manitoba, I believe that, in a sense, I represented the group to which each participant wished to transmit their language and way of life. A purpose of the project was to record stories for learners of the language, in other words, for a younger generation of Métis people, and so my daughters (who were also at times present) and I embodied, in a sense, their target audience and the people for whom they were speaking. The narratives in question accurately and holistically construct aspects of Michif identity, institutions, activities, events and ideologies specific to their reality in their communities and as speakers of Michif.

Secondly, the co-tellers act as each other's audience. They are all part of the community, collaborating together by turn-taking to build habitual and punctual stories/episodes within their conversations. They are active listeners during another co-teller's turn. Many aspects of the narrative, including the introduction of characters (depending with whom each co-teller is familiar and un-familiar), also depend on the co-tellers' experiences and circumstances. When characters are introduced in stories, they often need no introduction. It is the same for places, for well-known singular or habitual events within their family and community – there is no need for exposition or setting the stage for these events. Most references to places, events or people are often understood. A community is dynamic and differences in the co-tellers' experiences are often attributed by co-tellers (and often humorously) to whether they are older or younger than their peers (i.e. age factor), lived in another area of town (i.e. geography/location) or were considered a bit more or less well-off (i.e. socio-economic factors).

Vansina (1985) also mentions occupation, as well as class and caste, kinship grouping, social status, technical specialty, marriage relationships, trade patterns and ritual geography as factors that are the cause of variations in knowledge, even in a small community. Vansina (1985) concludes that, as such, oral tradition is irreplaceable because it offers "intimate accounts of populations, or layers of population, that are otherwise apprehended only from outside points of view" (1985:197). When members of a family and community gather together, we are given a

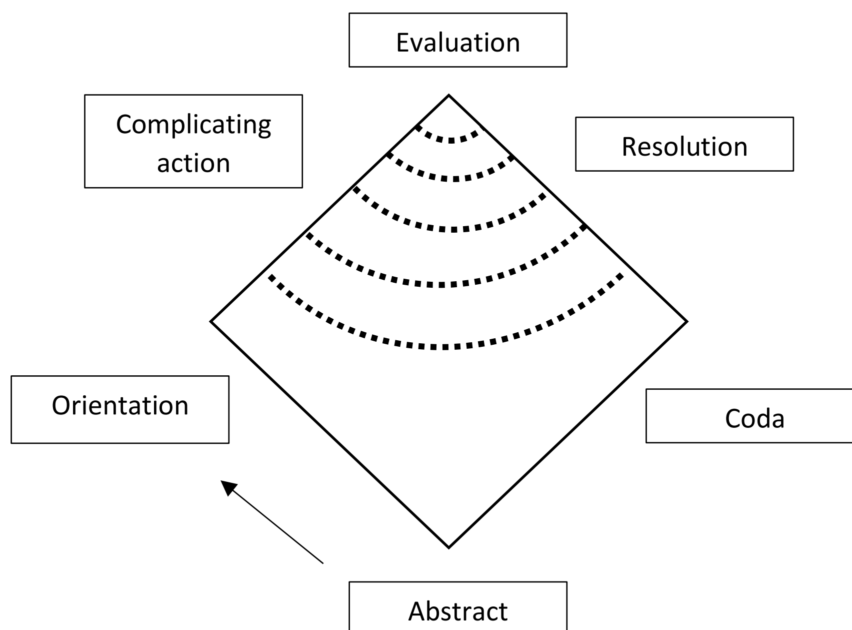
real insider feel for how the storytellers' individual circumstances influence their perspective on a certain habitual or punctual event, as part of the evaluative component of the narratives.

4.5.2. Evaluative function of narratives

Labov and Waletzky (1997) differentiate between narrative clauses (or main line story event clauses in Polanyi 1989), which "report the ordered experience of the interrelated events" of the narrative (Toolan, 2001:146), and free or evaluative clauses (or durative-descriptive and non-storyworld clauses in Polanyi 1989), which refer to "the context of the events, and participants' perspectives" (Toolan, 2001:146). Toolan (2001) further specifies that there are also coordinating clauses (in the narrative sense).

Evaluation, according to Labov's diamond picture (Figure 9), is the peak component of an oral narrative and flows through the entire narrative:

Figure 9: Labov's narrative diamond (Labov, 1972:369)



The notion of evaluation encompasses all the means "used to establish and sustain the point, the contextual significance and tellability, or reportability of a story" (Toolan, 2001:151). The waves emanating from evaluation shows that it permeates and spreads through other aspects of the telling, but it is placed at the summit, or the peak, before the crisis is resolved (resolution) and its aftermath (coda), when we bridge back to the present situation or habitual narrative. In conversational narrative, the relevance of the story is particularly important (Polanyi 1989;

Clancy and McCarthy 2015) as a story interrupts the normal turn-taking conventions of a conversation.

Evaluation that occurs *outside* of the narrative clauses is divided in five sub-types, which are listed below (Toolan, 2001:152). The first type of evaluation is external to the story world, while the other four types are embedded in the thread of the story and its world.

1) Wholly external evaluations: narrators break the thread of storytelling to address the audience, interrupting its flow to share their impression of these distanced events (*it was a crazy experience*, etc.)
2) Evaluation reported as comment told by narrators to themselves at the time of the story events (i.e. remaining in the story world), such as *I said to myself* "*this is incredible!"*.
3) Evaluation reported as comment told by narrator to another character at the time of the events, such as *well I told her...* "*this is it*!"
4) Evaluation as comment coming from another participant: *she told us it was the craziest thing she'd ever seen.*
5) Evaluative action: when the participant had a physical response instead of a verbal one to a particular event, such as *It was a hair-raising experience...*

Evaluation can be embedded within the narrative clauses themselves, i.e. the temporal sequence of events. As introduced in 1.1.1, there is expressive phonology (such as onomatopoeia *bam!*), changes in stress, and intonation and volume. Syntactic evaluative markers include intensifiers, superlatives and adverbials. Comparatives can also be classified as internal evaluators, which in English syntax are heavily expressed in auxiliaries, such as negation (*you never heard*), modality *(we had to make our way...*), and futurity (*I won't do this*). Finally, there are also 'correlatives', which include progressives (be V-*ing* + -*ing*, +*ing*) and double attributes, such as the *cranky old man*. Last of all, there are explicatives, i.e. when one gives a reason for their actions. Other discourse strategies such as repetitions, reported speech and non-verbal indicators such as gestures (often accompanied by words such as *like that* or *like this*) can also function as markers of evaluation.

In the following sections, we will focus primarily on external evaluations from storytellers in the co-constructed narratives, and how they would describe or explain certain experiences, or differences in their experiences.

4.5.3. Diversity of experience in Michif narratives

The following narrative excerpts from St. Eustache and St. Laurent show examples of cases where generally, the speakers shared a global common experience, the details of which varied slightly, depending on social or demographic factors such as age, location, and socio-economic status. Speakers use markers such as disjoint pronouns *mwin/mwe*[46] 'me', *twin/twe* 'you', *nozot* 'we' and *vozot* 'you guys' to demark their diverging experience from the main narrative. In 4.5.3.1, we discuss examples of age differences as a justification or explanation for heterogeneous experiences; in 4.5.3.2, examples of differences in location are provided; and in 4.5.3.3, we focus on differences in socio-economic factors.

4.5.3.1. Age as a factor

In this first example, St. Laurent wisdom keepers and grandmothers are speaking about medicines for different ailments that were used when they were growing up. This particular narrative thread was on the popularity of cod liver oil in the area. In this section's excerpts, the elements of divergence, as well as accompanying external evaluations, are bolded. Key words are identified in boxes beside the excerpt.

(40) Cod liver oil

1. Lorraine:	All the time cod liver oil. Oh yeah. *All the time cod liver oil. Oh yeah*	Little pill
2. Joyce:	Cod liver oil li pchit pilul law. *Cod liver oil, the little pills there.*	
3. Lorraine :	Yeah. Li ron law. *Yeah. The round ones there.*	Round pill
4. June :	Y folay k'on s'mey en ron/ en ran. A l'ikol law. Dan la klas pi. *We had to stand in a line. At school there. In the class and.*	
5. Lorraine :	Yeah.	
6. June :	Pi ta pchit pilul. *And your little pill.*	
7. Lorraine :	Mmhmm.	
8. Suzanne :	**Nozot** tay dan li boteyl/ *Us, it was in a bottle.*	Bottle
9. Agathe:	Dan li boteyl **nozot**/ *In a bottle, us.*	
10. Lorraine:	**Paw nozot**, no sontay li/ *Not us. Us, it was/*	
11. Suzanne :	Y mitay ayn kwiyer. *They put it in a spoon.*	(Bottle) with a spoon
12. Agathe:	Ah bin sa/ *Oh well that/*	

[46] See Chapter 3 for discussion on differences in preferred spelling conventions.

13. Andrea:	Gel.	
14. Joyce :	*Yeah.*	Gel pill
15. June :	Di pchit pilul en gel/ *Little gel pills/*	
16. Lorraine :	Li gel [xxx]/ *The gel [xxx]/*	
17. June :	Yeah. Yeah. Gel. brun. *Yeah.* *Yeah. Yeah. Brown gel. Yeah.*	Brown gel pill
18. Lorraine:	Yeah. Parsk'law nozot en prenay. *Yeah. Because us, we took them.*	
19. Agathe:	**Dan not ten nozot** y n'avay ink li boteyl. Pi. *In our time, us, we only had bottles. And.*	Only bottles, not pills
20. June:	**Vozet vyu vozot!** *You guys are old!*	
21. Suzanne:	Li boteyl wi. *Bottles, yeah.*	
22. June :	Y l'avay la michin dju sel. Folay k'tay/ *There was salt medicine. You had to/*	
23. Suzanne:	Bin wi! (laughter) *Well yeah!*	
24. June :	**(laughter) koz k'on plu jewn.** *Because we're younger.*	
25. Lorraine :	//June a prenay la mem shoz. // *June took the same thing.*	

This is an interesting example where all the wisdom keepers share a common experience (tokens of affirmation are bolded), i.e. having cod liver oil every day. Michif people of St-Laurent were given cod liver oil in school. Every co-teller contributes to this narrative, either by providing tokens of agreement and appreciation, or by elaborating on their own experience. The Indigenous Peoples Atlas (Canadian Geographic 2018b) lists cod liver oil as a medicine directly harvested from animals by the Métis. All five women agree this was part of their daily lives, but their experience varies slightly depending on age, mainly whether or not cod liver oil was administered as liquid in a bottle (line 19, 21) or in pills (lines 2-6; lines 15-18).

Cod liver oil has been a remedy in Europe for many centuries and it was used to battle a range of diseases including rickets or Vitamin D deficiency in children (Griffing 2008). The bottled fresh fish oil was used up until World War II, where it slowly fell out of favor. The capsule eventually replaced it, mostly to avoid the rancidity of both smell and taste of the fish oil. In this narrative excerpt, the common experience of cod liver oil is first introduced by Lorraine as a prevalent element of their daily lives (line 1). Her co-tellers agree and describe cod liver oil as little round brown gel pills (line 2) or in a bottle with a little spoon (line 8, 9, 11).

The little round pill is introduced first (line 2-3) and in line 8, with the use of disjoint pronoun *nozot*, Suzanne introduces the alternate experience of having to take cod liver oil in a bottle. Lorraine, in line 10, confirms her experience was the same as June and Joyce's, also taking pills, saying *paw nozot* 'not us'. The difference in experience is explained by age, Agathe saying, in line 19, *dan not ten nozot* 'in our day, us...', back in the day, there were only bottles. This is followed by a humorous comment in line 20, marked with an exclamation, *vo zet vyeu vozotr!* 'you guys are old!' and good hearted agreement *bin wi!* 'well, yeah!' in line 23.

Age difference affects not only the experience of progressions in medicine, but also advances in technology. For example, in St. Eustache, one of the narrative threads concerned the arrival of television in the community. There is a difference here in which older members of the group, such as Philippe, did not have a television in the home, but younger members, such as Evelyn, did. Many of them remember gathering at the homes which had TV, to enjoy some snacks and television programming. The co-tellers even speak about other community members, youth like them, charging an entry fee their friends to come to their home and watch TV.

(41) The arrival of television

1. Philippe : Ben vrament y avait pas d'TV alors.
   But really, there was no TV then.
2. Ken: (laughter) Yeah.
3. Evelyn: T'avais pas d'TV twai?
   You didn't have a TV, you?
4. Philippe : **Ben j'ai gradui l'ikol en sinkant neuf.**
   Well I graduated school in '59.
5. Evelyn: Oh oui nozot on/ yeah. Yeah.
   Oh yes, us we/ yeah. Yeah.
6. Philippe : Yeink la k'sa coumensait a Saint-Eustache la. [xxx] Trente-cinq.
   It's only then it was starting in St. Eustache there. [xxx] Thirty-five.
7. Evelyn : On avait li tilivizion. Mais on avait pas sh/ on n'avait pas d'fridge.
   We had television. But we didn't have a fridge.

In line 3, Evelyn asks Philippe "*you didn't have a TV, you?*". Philippe's implied answer is negative, but instead of an explicit "*no"*, he answers, as to explain, "*well, I graduated in '59"*. In the following discussion (which part of it is included in the excerpt above), it becomes clear that Philippe explains his varying experience from other co-tellers by his age. Interruption of narrative flow to elaborate or explain on reasons for one's actions or situation is a type of evaluation (Toolan 2001).

An important part of Michif identity and way of life are celebrations and holiday traditions. One of the biggest celebrations was always New Year's, where gatherings and dances lasted until *le jour des rois*, or the Epiphany on January 6th. For Michifs, Christmas was often more of a solemn time, with New Year's really being the time to rejoice and gather. In Michif and French-Canadian tradition, gifts were given to children on New Year's rather than on Christmas. However, as time went on, traditions changed. In this excerpt, Philippe talks about their differences in age and how other might not remember following the old French traditions, specifically in this narrative thread, the memory of not celebrating with a tree (excerpt bolded):

(42) Christmas

1. Philippe : On cilabrait pas li Noël avec ein arbe.
We didn't celebrate Christmas with a tree.
2. Evelyn : Non?
No?
3. Philippe : Santa Clause though. Non on cilabrait la vieille tradition fransaise. Sa fait on recevait diz etrennes. Li jour de l'an. Yeah.
And Santa Clause though. No we celebrate the old French tradition. And so. We received gifts. On New Year's. Yeah.
4. Evelyn : //Ben li jour de l'an?
//New Year's?
5. Philippe : On pendait nos bas la. Pour s'temps la/
We hung our stockings there. At that time/
6. Evelyn : Oh.
7. Philippe : Li jour de l'an//
New Year's//
8. Ken : //Oui. Jour de l'an.
// Yeah. New Year's.
9. Philippe : Yeah.
10. Evelyn : T'a jamais eu ein arbe di Noël?
You never had a Christmas tree?
11. Philippe : **Ken y est tro jeun yeah y s'en rappelle pas**. Heh? Yeink an/
Ken's too young yeah, he doesn't remember. Huh. Only a /
12. Ken : Yeink plus tard.
Only later.
13. Philippe : On n'a pas eu d'arbe di Noël avan seinkant quatte sh'pense.
We didn't get a Christmas tree before '54 I believe.
14. Evelyn : Oh? Oh. //Mais quelle tradition si sa?
Oh? Oh. //But what tradition is this?
15. Bernadette : Mmm ben/ j'm'en rappelle [xxx] nozot. Mmm. Le premier journi di jour di l'an.
Mmm well/ I remember [xxx] us. Mmm. The day of the New Year.
16. Philippe: Française. Tradition française.
French. French tradition.

A recurring theme among many Michifs is that Christmas was not really celebrated, especially compared to New Year's. Often Christmas is described in minimal terms, such as attending only

midnight mass and having a few treats in a stocking such as oranges or nuts. Other traditions such as the Christmas tree seem to have made a later appearance in Michif homes. It is German and anglo-saxon immigrants who brought the Christmas tree tradition to Canada and the United States (Conolly 2014). Christmas trees became popular amongst the English nobility and middle classes when Queen Victoria and Albert, who was of German ancestry, put up a tree at Windsor Castle in 1841. In 1900, the first metal stand for Christmas trees in the home was invented, and Conolly (2014) notes that is only during the 1930s that decorated Christmas trees were customary in the English and Canadian working classes.

Here, Philippe points out that in the case of Christmas, Michifs followed French traditions (line 3, 16) and waited until New Year's to receive most of their presents. Christmas was solemn, not necessarily joyful even, but it was certainly so for New Year's up until King's Day on January 6th. The Christmas réveillon supper was quieter, and often a smaller meal, and so was Christmas day, where gatherings were not as large or festive as New Year's (Warren 2007). French Canadian genealogists point out that the arrival of the Christmas tree in French-Canadian families was the biggest change in Christmas traditions in New-France following British conquest, noting that most French-Canadian families had a Christmas tree by the 1930s as well. Furthermore, Christmas was getting more and more commercialized in the US between 1885 and 1915 and slowly the character of *Santa Claus* became the distributor of gifts on Christmas, rather than the baby Jesus (Warren 2007; The French Canadian Genealogist, n.d). As such, this excerpt from St-Eustache speaks of this shift from a French tradition to a more commercialized celebration with British/German-influenced traditions: interestingly, this shift happened much later than the 1930s attested elsewhere in French-Canadian families. In fact, it happened in some of the speakers' remembered lifetimes: some older participants like Philippe clearly remembering a time before the Christmas tree, while for others, a few years younger, it is not the case (line 10-11). There is, in fact, an explicit mention of 1954 as the first year when Christmas trees came to the narrator's household (line 13). This, with other narrative threads, show that changes were occurring in their community and in their way of life in the speakers' lifetime.

Although Christmas traditions were beginning to change, everyone agrees that New Year's Day remained a very important holiday, filled with celebrations and visits, along with the customary New Year's blessing from the father of the family. After the blessing, families would make their rounds. This tradition was very prevalent in the participants' youth, but *la ronde* 'the

rounds', was a custom only truly celebrated in Fort Rouge and not particularly in St. Eustache (e.g. 43, lines 28-32). In fact, the narrative here is mostly provided by the four co-storytellers who grew up in Fort Rouge.

Although *many* topics are covered in this short narrative excerpt, there is one clear theme associated to New Year's and that is *plentifulness* and *abundance* (italicized below). The listener gets the sense that although each co-tellers remembers something about New Year's, they all remembered the plentifulness and abundance of the holiday. Every topic they elaborate on, whether it be the homes and neighbors they visited, the drink, the candies (*bonbons*) or the girls, everything is talked about with augmentative adverbs such as *tot* 'all', *partou* 'everywhere', *plein* 'full', *toparto* 'everywhere', *tojours* 'always', *beaucoup* 'a lot' and *encore* 'again'.

(43) New Year's

1. Bernadette : Bin tsu rappelle quand on regardait *to*partou li to //Clifford// *tot* li maisons//
Well do you remember when we went everywhere to// Clifford// all the houses//

2. Philippe : *Tot/ yeah/ tot.*
All of them / yeah/ all of them.

[Visiting neighbors]

3. Clifford : //Mon pere y avait *tojour* li vin. Tot/
// My dad always had wine. All the /

[Drinking wine]

4. Philippe : *Tot* le monde la y onvait ein pchi ver.
Everyone there they got a little glass.

5. Bernadette : Mmhmm. Mmhmm.

6. Philippe : Ein shot glass la qu'on appelle la.
A shot glass we called it.

7. Ken : Oui.
Yes.

8. Evelyn : Aah.

9. Philippe : Tsu recevais sa *plein* d'vin.
You got it [the shot glass] full of wine.

10. Ken : Oui. That's it.
Yeah. That's it.

11. Philippe : Yeah. //Evelyn// Faisait l'tour.
Yeah. //Evelyn// They went around.

[Visiting neighbors / Well-wishes]

12. Evelyn : //Mais tait to// Est-ce que tsu faisais l'tour dan li/ li vwazins pour dzir bonne heureuse anni. Bonne heureuse anni//
//but it was all// Did you go around to see the neighbors and wish them a happy new year? Happy New Year.

13. Philippe : //*Parto*. *Parto*. Yeah *parto* qu'on pouvait.
//Everywhere. Everywhere. Yeah, everywhere we could.

14. Evelyn : Yeah. Pour awaire di bonbons obendon tsu buvait dzu vin *encore*.
Yeah. To have candy or else you had wine again.

[Drinking wine / Eating candy]

15. Philippe : Yeah. Dzu vin!
Yeah. Some wine!

16. Bernadette : Oh nouzot on y allait pour li bonbons! (laughter) Yeah. **<u>Parsqu'on itait tro jeun ein.</u>**
Oh us, we went for the candy! (laughter) Yeah. Because we were too young eh.

17. Evelyn : Nozot aussi! Apres l'binidiction y faulait qu'on mange ein psi queque chose avec la galet seche avec de l'eau pi dzu suk.
Us too! (laughter) After the blessing, we had to eat a little something with the dry bannock with water and sugar. Bernadette Mmhmm. Yeah.
18. Bernadette : Mmhmm. Yeah.
19. Philippe : Yeah.
20. Evelyn : On mangeait sa pi on partait. *Tot* la journi. On y allait. Faire not uh/
We ate that then we left. All day. We went to do our uh/

Visiting neighbors

21. Philippe : Yeah.
22. Evelyn : Pi on marshait lwin aussi parsk li maisons sontait loin.
And we walked far too because the houses were far apart.
23. Philippe : Yeah. La ronde.
Yeah. The rounds.
24. Evelyn : Pi on arrivait a maison la avec. *Beaucoup* d'bonbons //Bernadette// ein. Pi uh.
And we'd come home with. Lots of candy eh. And uh.
25. Bernadette: //Mmhmm. Yeah.//

Bringing home candy

26. Bernadette : Mwai on restait dan/ on itait a Fort Rouge.
Me, we lived in Fort Rouge.
27. Philippe : Faire la ronde.
Do the rounds.

Only in Fort Rouge

28. Evelyn : Oui. Oui.
Yes. Yes.
29. Bernadette : On vnait pas uh isitte uh.
We didn't come here [St-Eustache] uh.
30. Evelyn : On on vnait pas isitte non.
No we didn't come here, no.
31. Bernadette : On restait eink a Fort Rouge quand on faisait sa.
We stayed only in Fort Rouge when we did that.
32. Philippe : Uh a katorz keinz an. Ben la sa t'donnait la chance //Bernadette// d'embrasser *tot* li fille ein.
Uh at fourteen eh. Well it gave you the chance. To kiss all the girls eh.

Kissing

33. Bernadette : //Ben oui.// Oh. (laughter) Yeah. (laughter)
//Well yeah.//
34. Evelyn : Oh quelle fille t'a embrassi? (laughter)
Oh which girl did you kiss? (laughter)
35. Bernadette : Y dzizait (laughter). Yeah. Y n'avait *tot* sort oui. (laughter)
He said. (laughter). Yeah. There were all kinds, yeah. (laughter)
36. Ken : Oui y n'avait *tot* sort.
Yeah, there were all kinds.

Although *many* topics are covered in this short narrative excerpt, there is one clear theme associated to New Year's and that is *plentifulness* and *abundance* (italicized above). The listener gets the sense that although each co-teller remembers something about New Year's, they all remembered the plentifulness and abundance of the holiday. Every topic they elaborate on, whether it be the homes and neighbors they visited, the drink, the candies (*bonbons*) or the girls,

everything is talked about with augmentative adverbs such as *tot* ‘all’, *partou* ‘everywhere’, *plein* ‘full’, *toparto* ‘everywhere’, *tojours* ‘always’, *beaucoup* ‘a lot’ and *encore* ‘again’.

First in this excerpt, Bernadette introduces the concept of rounds on New Year’s. The first element of these rounds or visits to neighbors is the wine that was served at every house in a small glass (lines 3-9). Everyone confirms this by tokens of affirmation such as *Mmhmm, yeah, that’s it* and *oui*. The second is the fact that kids also received candy, which they could bring back home – the younger members of the group highlight the candy over the wine or any other custom (lines 14, 17). Evelyn first introduces the possibility of receiving either wine or candy at each home. While Phil mentions wine as the highlight for him, Bernadette shares that she, at the time, was much more enticed by the candy, mentioning herself that she (and Evelyn) were younger than the others (bolded and underlined).

Finally, Philippe alludes to a New Year’s tradition particularly exciting for the young teenage boys, as it was a socially accepted convention to kiss on the cheek during the rounds to wish everyone a happy New Year, a custom particularly appealing when it came to being able to kiss some of the teenage girls (lines 34-38).

There are many returns (lines 1,12-13, 23, 29) to the central, common experience of doing *la ronde* on New Year’s. The term *la ronde* is not introduced right away, but once it is, it is repeated a few times to emphasize that this was the proper term to refer to these visits. Each person enjoyed this celebration, but it seems for different reasons. As such, a co-constructed narrative of New Year’s with multiple co-tellers provides a much more layered and dynamic account of these joyous celebrations.

4.5.3.2. Socio-economic factors

As much as there are many examples of divergences in common experiences due to age, there are also some differences humorously attributed to socio-economic factors. For example, in (44), St. Laurent grandmothers and wisdom keepers are describing how to make ginger tea. Although all the grandmothers wholeheartedly agree to having made ginger tea, some describe making it with water, and others with canned milk. The difference (excepts bolded) is attributed to being able to afford buying (canned) milk:

(44) Milk or water with ginger tea (STL13)

1. Joyce: J'ajet sa fayzay saw pi tatawnj lew fay boylir. Sa pu fayr li ti/ kom li ti avek.
I buy it and I boil it. You can make tea/ like tea with it.

2. Agathe : Oh wi.
Oh yeah.
3. Andrea: Yeah.
4. Joyce: Y mi l'myel di fway in pew (in tchi brin) didan/
And you put honey sometimes, a little bit in it/
5. June: Y bway saw.
And you drink that.
6. Lorraine: Wi.
Yeah.
7. Agathe: Mi kan tay malad bin ti t'en ser. Oh. Tsi bwaw li/ Ginger.
But when you were sick, you made it. Oh you drink ginger.
8. Andrea: Ginger. Yeah.
9. Lorraine: L'ginger. Spice.
L'ginger. Spice.
10. Agathe: Yeah. **s'paw law nozot on l'en ser.** Yeah.
Yeah. That's not how we used it yeah.
11. Lorraine: Yeah. T'la mey dan l'o?
How do you/ you put it in water?
12. Agathe: Fay boylir di l'o pi ti mey li suk in pchi brin pi l'ginger/
You boil some water and you put a bit of sugar, and some ginger/
13. Lorraine : Avek ginger. Ah. Sh'savay paw saw s'apel sin Jean/
With ginger. Ah. I didn't know it was called Saint-Jean
14. Suzanne : On n'aymay[47] saw on s'en ser d'ley **nozot**.
We liked it, we used milk, us.
15. Agathe : **Li rish ah mi sa l'en servay di ley**. **Nozot di l'o.**
The well off, they used milk. Us, water.
16. Joyce: **Vo tay plu rish vozot**.
You were better off, you.
17. Lorraine : Ley.
Milk.
18. Suzanne : Kan di ley. //Lorraine// (laughter) Milanji avek di l'o.
Can of milk //Lorraine// Mixed with water.
19. Lorraine : //Y alay tchiri li vash.//
//S/he milked the cows.//
20. Suzanne: (laughter) travaylay asi for powr. (laughter) Non n'on tchiray paw li vash mwin maym.
We worked hard enough for it. No, I didn't milk cows myself.

Ginger root, known as *sin Jean* in Michif (Saint-Jean), is a medicinal plant used by the Michifs (Turner 2019). This narrative excerpt follows a discussion on the term *sin Jean* for ginger and speaks to the preparation of ginger tea. First Joyce talks about buying ginger root, boiling it into a tea and adding a bit of honey (lines 1, 4). The process of tea preparation, however, is not the same with all the co-tellers. Agathe offers her alternative, i.e. boiling water, adding a bit of sugar

[47] The spelling *n'* in *on n'amay* is not a negation marker, but a convention to explicitly mark the liaison between nasal vowel *on* and vowel initial verb *aymay*.

and then ginger (line 11). Finally, Suzanne talks about using evaporated (canned) milk rather than water (line 13). There is the impression that you were particularly well off if you had cows and fresh milk, for which canned milk mixed with water was a substitute. The disjoint pronouns *nozot* 'us' and *vozot* 'you guys' are used in each of these occasions, demarking a different experience. First off, to talk about a different preparation *si paw law **nozot** on l'en ser* 'we didn't use it that way, *us*'; then, to talk about the milk/ water difference (lines 14-16). With the use of *nozot/ vozot* (us/ you guys), the co-tellers are not negating other people's experience, but only sharing their lived experience and their personal perspective.

4.5.3.3. Location

Co-tellers speak to the different experiences of growing up either in Fort Rouge or in St. Eustache. The co-tellers originally from Fort Rouge speak of having less opportunities, especially because of the distance separating St. Eustache and their home and the fact that most, if not all recreational services, were offered in St. Eustache (excerpts bolded). One of the most notable opportunities for Michif children living in St. Eustache was to play hockey. While co-tellers spoke in other places in the narrative about tensions between Michif children and their *canayen* counterparts, these tensions did not exist on the hockey rink, where all that mattered was whether you were a good player:

(45) Hockey

1 Clifford :	Oui le seul chose j'peux djir. Quand qu'on y allait a l'ikol euh. On tait traités coumme di rwai si on jouait au hockey. *Yeah, the only thing I can say. When we went to school uh. We were treated like kings if we played hockey.*
2 Evelyn:	Oh ho ho!
3 Bernadette:	Mmhmm. Yeah.
4 Clifford :	Oui. Si on tait bon au hockey. Everybody liked us. *Yeah if we were good at playing hockey. Everybody liked us.*
5 Evelyn:	Oh.
6 Clifford:	Yeah. That's the way it was. Yeah. Yeah.
7 Evelyn :	Mais *twai* s'tait pas difficile. **Tsu t'restait ici en/ en/ en //Philippe// Saint-Eustache.** *But for you it wasn't hard. You lived here in //Philippe// St-Eustache.*
8 Philippe	//**Proche**.// Yeah. *//Nearby.//*
9 Evelyn :	**Nozot**. Mwai j'voulais apprende le piano. Pi la j'voulais apprende le 4H club. Pi t'sais tsu quoi. Uh quand s'qui fait nwair coumme sa isitte la. Si lwin a marshi. *Us. Me I wanted to learn piano. And I wanted to be in the 4H club. And you know what. When it was getting dark like here now. It was so far to walk.*
10 Ken :	Mmhmm.

11 Evelyn : Pi la dan l'iver quand j'attends. Le metre.
And in the winter, when I'm waiting for the teacher.
12 Ken : Pi y avait pas d'lumiere.
And there was no light.
13 Clifford: Oh oui.
Oh yes.
14 Ken: Yeah. Y avait pas d'lumiere dan s'temps la.
Yeah. There was no light in those days.
15 Bernadette : Pour alli a l'ikol. Y faulait qu'on marshe tol'temps.
To go to school. We always had to walk.
16 Evelyn : Quand les/
When the/
17 Philippe : Yavait pas d'lumiere dan s'temps la.
There was no light in those days.
18 Ken : Yeah. Y avait pas d'lumiere.
Yeah. There was no light.
19 Bernadette : Y avait li school bus par ezampe. Mais sa nou/
There was the school bus though. But us we/
20 Ken : On avait pas l'drwa.
We weren't allowed.

In this excerpt, Clifford talks about the popularity of hockey in the area. There was a rink (which still exists) in the town of St. Eustache. As discussed in 4.2.1, there were many tensions that existed between the French-Canadians that lived in St. Eustache and the Michifs, many of whom lived in Fort Rouge. However, the co-tellers share that the animosity and tension that might have existed dissipated on the rink (or *li ron* as they called it in St. Eustache) (lines 1-6). This topic leads to a discussion about the fact that many Michifs who might have liked to play hockey or other activities were not able to join in because they lived in Fort Rouge and 1) the distance between St. Eustache was often unmanageable (line 9), especially because 2) there was very poor lighting between the two towns and they would have to walk in the cover of darkness (lines 12-18). Evelyn spoke of wanting to join other activities, such as 4H, or piano lessons, but it was an impossibility because of the hurdles of travelling, as a child, between St. Eustache and Fort Rouge (line 9).

In the case of the McKay family, the difference in location now, i.e. where in town they established with their own families, can sometimes determine their role within family get togethers (stressed pronouns showing different experiences are bolded):

(46) Family get together

1. NL: Li barbecue, on l'aime sa faire. [name] cook. Not' frer.
Barbecues, we like having those. Our brother, he cooks.
2. NJ: **Mwa** ji mange! (Laughter)
Me, I eat! (Laughter)
3. NL: **Mwa** j'prep.
Me. I prep.
4. N : **Mwa** ben,. Mwa j'fais plusse que twa. Oh okay.
Me, well, I do more than you. Oh okay.
5. NJ : Si tsu, a va commensi.
Oh no, there she goes.
6. NL: Si vra itou.
It's true though.
7. N: Oh my god. Pa toltemps, NL. Uh huh. Non non non.
Oh my god. Not all the time, NL. Uh huh. No no no.
8. NL: Oui oui.
Yes yes.
9. N : Non. Mmhmm. Non.
No. Mmhmm. No.
10. NL: Okay. **Mwa j'reste plusse proche. So si pour sa k'j'vas prep**. Plu vite que twa.
Okay. Me I'm the closest. So that's why I go prep. I'm faster than you.
11. N: Pa ma fot ji reste au North End, then.
Not my fault I live in the North End [of St-Eustache] then.
12. NL: (laughter) Si pour sa twu reste la-bas. (laughter)
(*laughter) That's why you live there. (laughter)*

The dynamic between the three sisters is very jovial, dynamic and comfortable. They are teasing each other with what they do to help for family get togethers. NL (line 10) is the one who comes to help with meal preparation because she lives closest to their parents' home.

These stories show layers and multi-dimensional snapshots of life as Michif people in the communities of St. Laurent and St. Eustache. More than that, these little stories come together as pieces of a puzzle to build a large narrative of Michif speakers in these communities, and the Michif Fransay-specific experience, especially in regards to their interactions with *canayens*, or other francophone communities and settlers. Although, as discussed in Chapter 2, there are many substantial corpuses of Michif Fransay, including Létourneau's, Lavallée's and St. Onge and Beaudin's interviews with individuals and pairs, there are little to no corpuses which include group interviews. Not only are these interviews full of life and laughter, *repartee* and interactions, the Michif worldview and way of life are embodied in their interactions. We get a sense of unity from these interviews as the co-tellers come together, and some nuances and richness in detail as they share divergences in their common experiences. The historical narrative that is built from these group interactions allows for richness in detail in a large woven narrative.

4.6. Conclusions

In the previous sections, we discussed the process of co-constructions and how co-tellers engage in particular narrative threads, or *common experiences.* While there are circumstances where the agreement supporting the main narrative are overwhelming, there are other circumstances where there are divergences in the common experience that show important subtleties and nuances in collective memory. The cases in which co-tellers diverged in details and acknowledged variations in the experience, sometimes were explained by factors such as age, geography and socio-economic factors.

Brockheimer and Harré (2001) argue that master narratives, or cultural scripts, permeate and shape habitual narratives and stories in possibly two ways: the first, as a conscious reflection, where narrators affirm or resist "master" narratives; the second, that even if speakers constantly invoke "master" narratives, we are not conscious of their effects and how they structure our intelligible world and seep into every aspect of our everyday talk (Bamberg 2004: 361). Many researchers (Philips 1983; Briggs 1984; Shieffelin 1990, etc. in Jacoby and Ochs 1995) argue that the process of co-authoring, or co-constructing narratives contributes to the maintenance and transformation of participants' social identities, and the institutions and ideologies which surround and inform the narrative. Also maintained in these co-constructed narratives is language, as stories are also opportunities for discussing language use, vocabulary, and language perception.

Co-constructing narratives in the speakers' ancestral language and mother tongue is a key process in the preservation and the maintenance of the language. Many of the exchanges amongst the three groups revolved around the use and meaning of certain words that arose in the narratives, such as the use of *saint-jean* for ginger in St-Laurent. (47) is a short excerpt on the discussion of the term *sin Jean (saint-jean)* as the term used for ginger:

(47) The use of *sin Jean*

Suzanne:	Ginger.
Agathe:	Ginger.
Lorraine:	sin Jean.
Suzanne:	Yeah.
Agathe:	Yeah.
Lorraine :	Oh.
Joyce :	Pourkwa si t'apelle sin Jean [xxx] bin li ginger.
	Why is it called sin Jean, [xxx] *well ginger.*

Agathe:	S'ten fransay sh'poz saw.
	It's French I suppose.
Suzanne :	Si komen sa l'apelay.
	It's what it was called.

This excerpt follows the preceding conversation on making ginger tea, which we've discussed earlier in 4.5.3.2. Here, Suzanne and Agathe confirm to the group that *sin jean* was used for ginger, a term that not everyone was completely familiar with it. The use of such terms in co-constructed narratives brought them to the forefront of the mind, and reinforced their use. Furthermore, attitudes and perceptions towards their language are shared and discussed, and the co-constructive process serves to re-affirm their common identity and experience shared around their mother tongue(s).

4.7. Conclusions

Polanyi (1989) argues that, as outsiders, we often see other cultures as homogenous, but with an inside perspective, we know it is not the case. There is, always, a great level of diversity from one community to another, but also within them and within families. Michif stories, historically and often in the present, were told during work, i.e during freighting trips for men, or while women picked berries, sugared maple, processed pemmican or fish, and beaded. They were and still are also told in get-togethers, for example, while men used to smoke their pipes (Préfontaine and Barkwell 2006). During get-togethers, humorous storytellers have often been the life of the party. During the long freighting trips, it was those funny stories and ghost stories that kept the men's spirits up and helped them celebrate life. On cold winter nights, Préfontaine and Barkwell (2006) note that folks met around a campfire to tell the most outrageous stories possible, the winner sometimes taking home a prize. Campbell (2010) in her introduction to *Road Allowance people*, says "as Metis people, we have so much to celebrate, and our diversity is one of them, the other is our sense of humour" (2010:5).

Of course, Michif narratives had other functions: "they are meant to encourage people to keep their obligations to the Creator, to transmit beliefs and values to children, and to pass on information about the environment and to teach valuable life lessons" (Préfontaine and Barkwell 2006). Humour is at the centre of many of these functions: it celebrates and values life, it entertains, it teaches and works as a retention tool. Humour is, in brief, a culturally relevant pedagogy that helps maintain social order in communities, and it keeps everyone humble and reminds everyone not to take life too seriously (Leddy 2018). It is a form of affection and of

endearment. Finally, it is also, says Danny Knight (InFocus 2019), a way to cope with more serious issues. Don Burnstick, in a 2017 interview with the CBC, re-iterates that sharing, praying, crying and *laughter*, are the four pillars of the healing process. Spielmann (1998) in his discussion of Ojibwe storytelling, also re-iterates that “if you can understand what makes a people laugh, you are closer to understanding and appreciating them” (Spielmann, 1998:112). The narratives shared in St. Eustache and St. Laurent seep in humour and laughter, and many aspects of their daily or routine life are dynamic, full of humour and laughter, which we can hear in many of the episodes they recount. In the three storytelling sessions, there are many instances of laughter, with co-tellers joining in and laughing together simultaneously. Spielmann (1998:113) argues that the process of “laughing together” as well as “current speaker laughter” are crucial components to conversational interaction and structure in Ojibwe.

Spielmann (1998:116-117) identifies two main purposes of “current speaker laughter”, the first that it is a strategy to let listeners know that something funny or humorous is coming up in the ongoing narrative; or second, to initiate a laughing together. It is then up to the other co-conversationalists to either accept or decline this invitation to join in laughter. Speillman notes that lengthened laughing-together occurrences often mark the end of a story and other, shortened instances of laughing-together contribute to the segmentation of the narrative. Similarly, Valentine (1995 in Spielman 1998) claims that “narrator laughter in Severn Ojibwe can be used to highlight informational aspects of the story being told that are important to the dramatic effect the narrator is trying to achieve. [...] She shows how narrator laughter can be an accomplice to episode closure and segments the telling and recap portions of the narration” (Spielmann, 1998:117). As such, laughing-togethers are part of the pre-closing sequence and an extended laughing-together is an operation to leave the floor open “to any speaker to introduce a new topic without violating the cohesion in the ongoing talk” (Valentine 1995 in Spielmann, 1998:122).

Within this project, we have been able to draw similarities between interpretations of the natural world, and the construction of their identity and histories in two different Michif communities and their various families. These are aspects with which learners will engage, especially young learners who have recently reclaimed their Métis identity and who are trying to discover what makes them Métis (Dandeneau et al. 2012). The stories come together in a narrative network, joining other pieces of history to form a core narrative (Gimenez, 2010:206). The narrative network shows what the stories and other elements have in common with the core

narrative, and also how they differ: it can also highlight links between local and social functions that narratives represent, and how meanings and functions of personal narratives reflect social patterns, "which are best captured when local narratives are networked with other narratives produced in local and global contexts" (Gimenez, 2010:207).

Often Michif/Métis people are understood to have a collective experience and a collective memory, and the process of co-construction can serve to contextualize their collective memory. While there are undoubtedly experiences that many Michifs across the homeland share in common, there are also many differences and divergences, some minor or others more life-changing, and co-constructed narratives bring this to light. This particular project has only focused on bringing people together from the same family and community. In further research projects, it would be insightful to bring together Michif speakers from different communities to co-construct a narrative together about the broader Michif experience and identity. For example, Michif people of Fort Rouge and St. Eustache lived alongside French-Canadian families in St. Eustache, while in St. Laurent, most newcomers in the community were Breton families. There was a division (geographical, socio-economic and nationhood/racial) between St. Eustache and Fort Rouge; there was also a division between the north end and south end of town in St. Laurent. Both communities had missionary day schools, and experienced persecution and prejudice, especially aimed at their language and the way they spoke. They have lived and live off the land, and have practiced and lived Michif celebrations, rituals and traditions. An exchange of lived experiences and narratives between, for example, members of St. Eustache, St. Ambroise and St. Laurent would provide insight on how the Michif experience was different or similar between families and communities. The even broader process of bringing Michif speakers across provincial or national borders, for example from St. Louis, St. Laurent and Batoche communities in Saskatchewan together with speakers in Manitoba and Alberta could be a future goal for language documentation of Michif Fransay and the study of co-construction[48]. A gathering of Michif speakers with the purpose of co-constructing a Michif narrative would further serve to build a multi-layered and dynamic oral tradition and history, whose threads interweave to make a tapestry which reflects the multi-dimensionality of a group of people, part

[48] In this context, we have only considered Michif people who speak Michif Fransay. The Michif lived reality and experience further broadens when we include Michif people that speak mixed Michif, and Métis-Cree/Northern Michif, which have much more intimate contact with Cree nations for example.

of a nation, that have been resilient, adaptable, and dispersed across a large landscape, yet speak the same language.

Chapter 5: Complementizers in (mixed) Michif narratives

"[Their] life stor[ies] ha[ve] become a teaching tool for him and now others. [Their] way of making meaning from it can benefit youth because of the many lessons/teachings [they] contain" (Archibald, 2008:114)

One of the main goals of this project was to show how stories are a crucial tool for not only learning about Michif ways of knowing, history, culture, humor, but also for learning and understanding language. For example, the structure of verbs, verb serialization and sentence organization are key to fluency and to understanding language structure. In this chapter, we discuss the distribution of complementizers in narratives, and how it shows that they are markers expressing aspectual and modal features.

As discussed earlier in Chapter 3, one of the projects in which I was involved over the course of my graduate work was the co-teaching and development of (mixed) Michif language community classes. Before the onset of the COVID-19 global pandemic, we had been offering a series of classes to returning students, which meant that we were beginning to discuss more advanced topics such as complex clauses and verb sequencing in the classroom. However, one of our greatest challenges in the course was to effectively teach learners the use and distribution of complementizers which occur in the conjunct verb order.

Michif, which has an Algonquian verb structure, has three main verb orders, i.e. the independent, the conjunct and the imperative orders. The conjunct order, in Algonquian languages in general, appears primarily in dependent clauses (Ellis 1971; Wolfart 1973; Ahenakew 1980). Cook (2008) has described the Cree conjunct verb as "anaphoric" or dependent, in the sense that it may not appear in out-of-the-blue contexts and requires either a previously established context or a main clause to which it is subordinate. Contrarily to the independent order, the conjunct does not have person prefixes, and participant marking is exclusively carried in the verb suffixes (Junker et al. 2015a).

As such, the conjunct order is a crucial component of Michif language structure and clause organization. Givón (2020) notes that chained or conjoined clauses are the most common clause type in natural discourse. We tend to join together "multiple event/state clauses in sequences that maintain thematic continuity, or coherence" (Givón, 2020:147). Conjunct verbs are typically preceded by a complementizer (also refered to as conjunct marker or conjunct preverb), and these particles are often omitted or superficially included in Michif learning materials, as well as only briefly discussed in Michif linguistics literature. This experience

motivated my choice to focus work and research on the occurrence of said complementizers in stories, to explore their role in building coherence and continuity in Michif narratives.

A componential analysis of narratives considers how the story is told by identifying the basic structure of narratives, which includes the study of clause sequence and organization, verb structure and other elements in the teller-listener interaction that combine to create coherence through causality. Here, we define causality as what is acceptable by addressees as justification for particular events or sequences of events and continuity (i.e. the normal progression of events in a story) (Linde 1993; Gimenez 2010). Linde (1993) argues that causality and continuity are the two major coherence principles which form the basis of narrative order. Each language makes use of its available morphological, syntactic and pragmatic tools to achieve coherence, as noted by Linde: "at the most fundamental level, the coherence we are able to achieve is dictated by our language and by the resources it makes available to us" (Linde, 1993: 107). In English, tense marking is an obligatory category for verbs and denotes event sequence: Linde (1993) emphasizes the direct connection between "categories in the language and [...] ways in which texts can be structured" (Linde, 1993:108). In this particular study, we focus on the strands of thematic coherence of temporality and modality, specifically in complex or chained clauses in (mixed) Michif,[49] and particularly through the use of complementizers.

Modality and aspect can be expressed as preverbs in the independent order, invariable (adverbial) particles, and, as we will show in this chapter, license the use and distribution of complementizers[50] in the conjunct order in embedded or chained clauses. Understanding the extent of use of these preverbs in Michif is a key component of sentence and narrative structure, and is one example of the kind of questions that can be explored through the study of stories. There are four possible complementizers (also called preverbs (Wolfart 1973:46; Ahenakew 1980:44; Junker et al. 2015a;) or subordinators (Bakker and Papen 2020)) which can be prefixed to an inflected conjunct verb in Michif, namely *aen*, *kaa*, *chi* and short vowel *ka.*

In 5.1, we will discuss and introduce the conjunct order and the use of complementizers in both Michif and other Algonquian languages, including (southern) Plains Cree. We will also discuss other modals, tense, and aspectual markers in Michif, with both independent and

[49] Henceforth referred to as Michif in this Chapter.
[50] The term *complementizer* for conjunct markers is used for example in Wolvengrey 2011; Rosen 2007.

conjunct verb inflections. In 5.2, we introduce the communities of origin of the storytellers which are central to the narratives shared as part of this corpus. In 5.3, we will discuss the use of complementizer *chi* in narratives as a marker of event and purposive modality, as well as general possibility and irrealis. In 5.4, we will discuss the complementizer *aen* in narratives, which occurs in contexts of both evidential modality and imperfective aspect. Finally, in 5.5, we will discuss the use of *kaa-*, not only as a relative clause marker, but also as a marker of perfective aspect. Most of these meanings attributed here to Michif complementizers have not yet been discussed in literature, and so it is the hope that this study can begin a more in-depth exploration of these important components of Michif language structure.

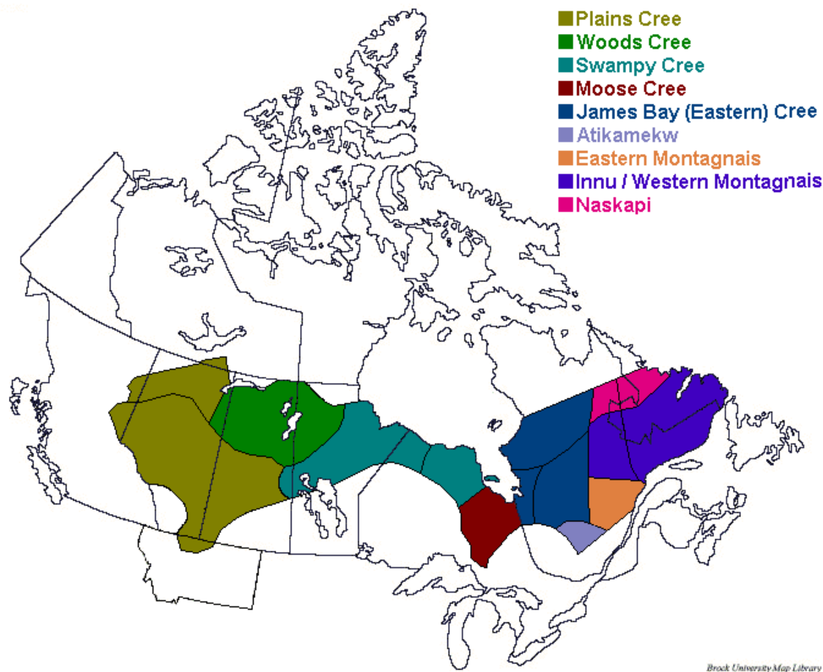
5.1. Background and Algonquian typological survey of complementizers

As Plains Cree is one of the parent languages of Michif, surveying the use of conjunct complementizers in the Cree-Innu-Naskapi continuum is a beneficial exercise in understanding the origin and range of use for these particles. Research on the distribution and use of complementizers is not very extensive in Plains Cree (with the exception of Wolfart 1973), and thus in 5.1.1, we focus on exploring previous research across the entire language continuum. In Cree-Innu-Naskapi, the analysis of conjunct complementizers is focused on tense rather than modality in many previous discussions in the literature and language learning resources. In 5.1.2-5.1.4, we expand our discussion to other Algonquian languages, such as Shawnee, Ojibwe, and Arapaho, whose discussion of complementizers have expanded to aspect and sometimes modality. Finally, in 5.1.5, we discuss previous analyses of Michif conjunct complementizers, as well as the use of the conjunct verb and other modality markers in the language.

5.1.1. Cree-Innu-Naskapi

(Southern) Plains Cree is a Western dialect of Cree which is part of a large Cree-Innu-Naskapi language continuum stretching from Alberta to Labrador. Eastern and Western dialects of Cree are divided by some key differences, one of the most notable being the palatalization of /k/ as /tʃ/ in Eastern dialects. Western dialects include Plains Cree (y-dialect), Swampy Cree (n-dialect), Woods Cree (th-dialect), Moose Cree (l-dialect) and Attikamekw (r-dialect). Eastern varieties of the continuum include James Bay Cree, East Cree, Innu and Naskapi.

Figure 10: Cree-Innu-Naskapi continuum



In this continuum, conjunct verbs are normally, though not always, introduced overtly by a preverbal marker normally called a conjunct marker/ complementizer. In Plains Cree, both simple/unchanged and changed conjunct forms (Wolfart 1973) are attested. Each conjunct mode, namely the indicative, the subjunctive, and the dubitative, can each occur with or without initial change. Changed conjunct forms include systemic initial change, i.e. alternation of the first vowel of a stem. The following are examples of the changed conjunct, contrasted with its independent equivalent and unchanged conjunct (the latter (48a-b iii & 49a-b iii) are author's examples). The initial vowel alternations are bolded and the complementizer in the unchanged conjunct line is italicized.

(48)	a.	i ~ ê initial change alternation (Wolfart 1973:82-3):			
		i.	Independent:	**i**tâpiw	'he/she looks thither or thus'
		ii.	Changed conjunct:	**ê**tâpihki	'wherever one may look'
		iii.	Unchanged conjunct:	*ê*-**i**tâpit	'…he/she is looking thither'
	b.	i.	Independent:	p**i**mohtêw	'he/she walks along'
		ii.	Changed conjunct:	p**ê**mohtêyâhk	'as we walked along'
		iii.	Unchanged conjunct:	*ê*-p**i**mohtêt	'…he/she is walking along'

(49) a. a ~ ê initial change alternation (Wolfart 1983:83):

i.	Independent:	t**a**kohtêw	'he/she arrives walking'
ii.	Changed conjunct:	t**ê**kohtêcik	'when they arrived'
iii.	Unchanged conjunct:	*ê*-t**a**kohtêt	'he/she is arriving by walk'

b.

i.	Independent:	**a**piw	'he/she sits'
ii.	Changed conjunct:	**ê**piyâni	'whenever I sit down'
iii.	Unchanged conjunct:	*ê*-**a**pit	'…he/she is sitting down'

The unchanged conjunct forms are preceded by a complementizer, of which Wolfart considers *ê-* to be the most neutral, while *kâ* is also attested in relative clauses (Wolfart 1973:77). Similarly, Cook (2008) shows that *ê-* can occur in unembedded contexts, in relative clauses and mediated arguments, and that *kâ-* introduces a presuppositional clause, i.e. where the truth of the statement in question is assumed, or taken for granted. Wolfart's (1973) analysis of the future and past conjunct preverbs' origin is that they are ultimately derived from the *changed* form of independent order future and past preverbs. As such, the independent future *kâ-* becomes the conjunct future *kê-*, similar to the short a ~ ê alternation shown in (49a-b) while the independent past *kî-* becomes conjunct past *kâ--* in a î ~ â alternation (Wolfart 1973:83).

In East Cree, *aah-* (~ *ê* in Plains Cree) is identified as a marker of present tense in the conjunct. According to Junker et al. 2015a-b, the complementizer *chiih-* (past) may follow *aah-* to mark past tense and *chaah*[51], on the other hand, marks future. *Kaa* is classified as an indicator of a relative clause, either in present or past, or in past subordinate clauses (Junker et al. 2015a; Junker et al. 2015b). The following table (Table 19) summarizes complementizer use in East Cree:

Table 19: Summary of complementizers in East Cree

Grammatical meaning	Complementizer
Present	*aah*
Past	*aah-chiih*
Future	*chaah*
Relative clause (present or past)	*kaa*

[51] *chiih* and *chaah* are cognates of *kii* and *kaa*, as one of the main phonological differences between eastern and western Cree dialects is palatalization in eastern Cree.

As such, the complementizers are mostly glossed as tense markers in Northern East Cree lessons in the eastcree.org reference grammar (Junker et al. 2015a). The following examples illustrate the use of Northern East Cree conjunct complementizers:

(50) Northern East Cree complementizers (Junker et al. 2015a)

a. 'Present tense' *aah*
... aah nipaat. '... when she is asleep'

b. 'Past tense' *aah + chiih*
... aah chiih nipaat. '... (when) she slept'

c. 'Future tense' *chaa*
Aakutih chaa nipaat. 'This is where she will sleep'

d. 'Relative' *kaa*
Kaa nipaat. 'the one who is asleep/ the one who was asleep'

Furthermore, Junker et al. (2015a) show that complementizer *aah* can precede conjunct indicative neutral forms, in the habitual or iterative forms.

Further typological studies such as the Clarke et al. (1993) comparative study of conjunct complementizers show variation between palatalized dialects and Moose Cree (Moose Cree data from James 1991). In their study of Innu (referred to in their work as Montagnais), they argue that its use of conjunct preverbs is distinct from other palatalized dialects, just as these are distinct from Moose Cree (from James 1991). Clarke et al. provide extensive tables on the use of preverbs in Moose Cree (from James 1991), as well as East Cree (Waskaganish), Naskapi (Western Kawawachikamach) and Montagnais (Seshatshit). They find, particularly, that the usage of preverb *ka:-* in Moose Cree is more restricted than in other dialects. They identify three contexts of use for conjunct order preverbs, each of which follow a distinctive pattern: 1) main clauses (Table 20); 2) relative (focus) clauses (Table 21); and 3) hypothetical/embedded clauses (Table 22).

The following examples illustrate the typical use of conjunct preverbs in main clause questions in Moose Cree according to data from James (1991b in Clarke et al. 1993:34):

(51) Pattern 1: Main Clause Questions

a. Past: ke:kwa:n ka:-wa:pahtaman?
ke:kwa:n ka:-wa:paht-aman?
what COMP-*see*.it-2SG
What did you see?

a. Present: ta:nte: e:-ihta:čik?
ta:nte: e:-ihta:-čik?
where COMP-*be*-3PL
Where are they?

b. Future: ke:kwa:n ma:ka ke:-mi:čiyan?
ke:kwa:n ma:ka ke:- mi:či-yan?
what but COMP.F-*eat something*-2SG
What will you eat?

Clarke et al. discuss how East Cree and Naskapi mainly follow the same pattern of use as Moose Cree, but that it is often not the case for Innu (Sheshatshit):

Table 20: Pattern 1 in Moose Cree, East Cree, Naskapi and Innu (Montagnais) (Clarke et al. 1993:37)

Pattern 1	Moose Cree	East Cree (Waskaganish)	Naskapi (Western Kawawachikamach)	Innu (Sheshatshit)
Do the languages follow the Pattern 1 as follows: ***ka:-*** in past**;** ***ke:/che*** in future**;** ***e:-***/changed conjunct in other contexts				
Main clause declarative	Yes	Yes	yes	changed form in past
Main clause Wh-questions	Yes	Yes	yes	independent in past
Embedded polar question	Yes	Yes	yes/no (sometimes ka: + chi: in past)	*tshe* + *tshi* throughout
conditional clauses	Yes	Yes		changed form in past; subjunctive
clauses of degree *(ispi:hc)*	Yes	Yes	yes	yes
embedded wh-questions	yes (sometimes pattern 2)	Yes	yes	Yes + changed conjunct in past

According to Clarke et al. (1993), in focus or relative constructions in Moose Cree, the complementizer *ke:-* marks future similarly to Pattern 1. On the other hand, in these cases, they identify the conjunct *ka:-* as an indicator of present, which in combination with *ki:-* indicates past tense.

(52) Pattern 2: Focus Constructions in Moose Cree
a. Past: iskwe:w ka:-ki:-takošihk?
iskwe:w ka:-ki:-takoši-hk?
woman COMP-PST-*arrive*-3SG
'It was the woman who came.'

b. Present: ča:n ka:-a:hkosit.
ča:n ka:-a:hkosi-t
John COMP-*be sick*-3SG
'It's John who is sick.'

c. Future: me:ri ke:-so:tawak.
me:ri ke:-so:t-awak
Mary COMP.FUT-*take someone-1SG>3PL*
'It's Mary I'll take them to.' (Clarke et al., 1993: 34)

Clarke et al. (1993), however, note that the use of *ka:-ki:-* for past relative clauses is not productive elsewhere in eastern Cree dialects, either in Waskaganish East Cree, Western Kawawachikamach Naskapi or Sheshatshit Innu:

Table 21: Pattern 2 in Moose Cree, East Cree, Naskapi and Innu (Clarke et al. 1993:39)

Pattern 2:	Moose Cree	East Cree (Waskaganish)	Naskapi (Western Kawawachikamach)	Innu (Sheshatshit)
Do the languages follow Pattern 2 as follows: ***ka:- + ki: /tshi:-*** in past**;** ***ke:/che*** in future**;** ***ka**:-* in present + salience contexts; ***e:-***/changed conjunct in other contexts				
Relative clauses	Yes	*ka:-* for past and present (not *ka:-ki:-* 52)	*ka:* alone for past reference *ka:- .....wa* for present reference	
Focus constructions	Yes		changed conjunct for present *ka:-* alone for past reference	

Finally, the conjunct order also occurs in embedded complement clauses. The preverb *e-* occurs in conjunction with past tense prefix *ki:-* for an anterior, past meaning. On its own, it keeps a present or contemporaneous meaning. Finally, *kiči-* occurs with future or hypothetical clauses:

(53) Pattern 3: Embedded complement clauses in Moose Cree
a. Past: nikishke:lihte:n e:-ki:-takošihk o:ta
ni-kishke:liht-e:n **e:-**ki:-takošihk o:ta
1-*know it*-1sg **COMP-**PST-*arrive*-3SG here
'I know that s/he came here.'

b. Present/contemporaneous:
na:pe:w kiske:lihtamo:pan o:ma **e:-**itiliči anihi atimwa.
na:pe:w kiske:liht-am-o:pan o:ma **e:-**itiliči anihi atimwa.
Man *know it*-3SG-PRET this **COMP-***be like* this dog.obv
'This man knew the dog was like this.'

[52] *Ka:-ki:-* in Moose Cree and East Cree, occurs only when the preverb *iskwa:-* 'finished' is present.

c. Future: ta-milošino:pan kiči-ki:we:yahk
ta-milošino:pan **kiči-**ki:we:-yahk
FUT-be good **COMP-***go home-1PL*
'It would be good for us to go back.'

The use of *kiči-* is also attested in Algonquin, but not in Innu (Sheshatshit), in both probable and hypothetical events:

Table 22: Future or Hypothetical embedded clause in eastern Cree- Innu- Naskapi dialects (Clarke et al. 1993:44)

Embedded clauses	Moose Cree	Rapid Lake Algonquin (from Patotto 1980)	Innu (Sheshatshit)
Likely/probable events	*kiči*	*giǰi*	*tshe*
Hypothetical events	*kiči*	*giǰi*	*tshe+tshi:*
Embedded polar questions	Pattern 1 (see Table 20)	*giǰi* + *gi:- in past*	

As such, in Clarke et al. (1993), the structure of the analysis of preverb occurrence and function is centered on *tense*, rather than aspect or modality. In this sense, Clarke et al. (1993)'s analysis is one that mirrors independent order preverbs which mark for tense. However, an analysis in which the first-occurring conjunct preverb (such as *ka:-* and *e:-*) contributes no tense information and in the absence of another tense marker (i.e. *chii/tshi:/ki:*), the default interpretation of the conjunct clause is the present tense, would be more predictable than if both present and past tense morphemes co-occur to mark past tense.

Ford and Lees (1979) also focus on Cree relative clauses and their structure in their work on Moose Cree. Relative clauses are expressed in the conjunct order and marked by complementizer *kaa-* across dialects. In the case of completed or past relative clauses, they note that the preverb *kii-* follows the relativizer (54a). Without the presence of *kii-*, the relative clause may be understood either as completed or ongoing (54b):

(54) Moose Cree (*l*-dialect) relative clause structure (Ford and Lees, 1979:129-130):
a. Relative clause with past marker *ki:-*
Na:pew **ka:-ki:-**wa:pama:t iskowa
Na:pew **ka:-ki:-**wa:pam-a:t iskowa
Man **COMP-PST**-see-1SG>3SG woman.OBV
'The man who saw the woman'

b. **Ka**:-apisi:sit awa:sis kihci:pataw

Ka:-apisi:sit	awa:sis	kihci:pataw
COMP-be small-3SG	child	run away-3SG

'The child who is small runs away'

They also note the use of complementizer *ka:-* in other types of clauses, such as comparative clauses (55), as well as direct and indirect questions (56-57):

(55) Comparative clauses:
ni:-wa:pamaw na:pew ta:piskoc ki:la **ka**:-isi:-wa:pamat iskow
I see the man as well as you see the woman. (Ford and Lees, 1979:129)

This example of a comparative clause also includes the particle *ta:piskoc* 'like, just as' as a comparative marker. In their examples of direct and indirect questions, *ki:-* is also affixed to *ka:-* when the time of the subordinate clause is to be understood as past or completed prior to the event in the main clause. In (56), the direct question, both main (question phrase *aweni:ka:na* 'who (animate)') and subordinate clauses are understood to be in the *now* or the present:

(56) Direct questions:
Aweni:ka:na ca:n **ka**:-wa:pama:t?
Who does John see? (Ford and Lees, 1979:129)

In indirect questions, the main clause independent verb has a Ø-marker for tense, which implies that it is in the present tense of the narrative. The subordinate clause has *ki:-* affixed to complementizer *ka:-* to mark that the subordinate event is anterior to the main clause:

(57) Indirect questions:
Albert mola kiskelitam kekwa:liw betty **ka:-ki:-**otini:ket
Albert doesn't know what Betty bought. (Ford and Lees, 1979:130)

Ford and Lees (1979) note the occurrence of the conjunct verb occurs in other complex clauses, such as adverbial clauses (58) and complement clauses (59):

(58) Adverbial clauses:
Bob **e:-**pimiskat ci:ma:niliw wa:pamew iskowa nipi:hk
Bob while padding the boat sees the woman in the water. (Ford and Lees, 1979: 129)

(59) Complement clauses:
Ni:-ki:-ihteli:ten ca:n **e:-**kitimit
I think that John is lazy. (Ford and Lees, 1979: 129)

In the case of these adverbial and complement clauses, the marker is not *ka:*, but *e:*, which marks an ongoing (imperfective action) in the adverbial clause, interrupted by a punctual event

(independent verb inflection *wa:pame:w* 'he/she sees'). Ford and Lees (1979) also note the use of *e:* in complement clauses. In (59), we note that this is a reportative statement, where the speaker *reports* their judgements on another. Ford and Lees' (1979) conclusions are that *e:*- and *ka*:- are not mutually substitutable, and that *e:*- is reserved for complement and adverbial clauses.

While Clarke et al. (1993) structure their analysis of the use of conjunct preverbs in Innu-Naskapi around *tense*, Ford and Lees (1979) structure it around *clause type.* Jancewicz and Mackenzie (1998), however, introduce *mood* and *aspect* in their description of preverbs in Western Naskapi in Kawawachikamach (near Schefferville, Quebec).

Jancewicz and Mackenzie (1998) provide the following table of independent and conjunct preverbs, which they split into two categories, with *aa*-, *chii*$_1$*-, kaa-, uuhchi-, (chi)ki-* and *chaa-* as markers of tense and aspect, and *wii-, chii*$_2$- and *(chi)paah-* as modal markers, specifically marking volition, ability, and obligation:

Table 23: Preverbs of tense, aspect and mood in Western Naskapi in independent and conjunct (Jancewicz and MacKenzie 1998):

Tense/Aspect			Mood		
Neutral	Past	Future	Volitional/ Consequential Future	Ability	Obligation
aa-	*chii*$_1$- *kaa-* *uuhchi-*	*(chi)ki-* *chaa-*	*wii-*	*chii*$_2$-	*(chi)paah-*

As shown in Table 23, the conjunct tense markers are *kaa-* 'past' and *chaa-* 'future'. The conjunct future *ke-* in Plains Cree undergoes velar palatalization and long vowel lowering in Western Naskapi to become *chaa-* (Jancewicz and MacKenzie, 1998: 153). Similarly, the independent past *kii-* is realized as *chii-* in eastern palatalized dialects. The future independent *ka-* undergoes short vowel raising to become *ki-* in future marker *chiki-* or *ki-*.

Jancewicz and Mackenzie (1998: 154) conclude that no aspectual distinctions are found in future tense preverbs, either in the independent or conjunct, but that these distinctions do exist in the conjunct past tense. Similarly to Ford and Lees (1979), Jancewicz and Mackenzie note a distinction between complementizer *ka:-*, which appears to "indicate unmarked past tense" (1979:155), and the affixation of past tense *chii-*: in Western Naskapi, the combination *kaa-chii-*

seems to elicit "the reading '*after'*, indicating some kind of sequential aspect, and in some cases 'used to'" (Jancewicz and Mackenzie, 1979:155).

(60) ni-chii-paahtaan **kaa-chii**-nikimuiin
'I heard that you used to sing' (Jancewicz and MacKenzie, 1998:158)

This however, according to the authors, requires further study.

Furthermore, Jancewicz and Mackenzie (1998) note the occurrence of modal preverbs, some of which occur in the conjunct order. For instance *chii$_2$*- marks ability, and occurs in both conjunct and independent verbs. The following (61) is an example of *chii*- in the conjunct:

(61) Ability
a. **Kaa**-nipaat 's/he slept' (Conjunct)
b. **Kaa-chii**-nipaat 's/he was **able** to sleep'

The abilitive *chii*- may combine with the other tense preverbs, not just past marker *ka:*-. It can also combine with future marker *chaa*- and with negation (*aakaa*-) (62):

(62) Ability *chii*- with *chaa*- 'future':
a. **chaa-chii**-nipaat 'she **will** be able to sleep'
(Jancewicz and MacKenzie, 1998:156)
b. **chaa-aakaa-chii**-nipaat 'so that s/he will not sleep'
(Jancewicz and MacKenzie, 1998:158)

Similarly, the modal *wii*-, glossed as 'volitional', can combine with tense markers, such as future *chaa*- and past *kaa*- in the conjunct order:

(63) Volitional with other complementizers/preverbs (Jancewicz and MacKenzie, 1998:157)
a. **aa-wii**-nipaat
'she wants to sleep'
b. awaan **kaa-wii**-miichisut*?*
'who wanted to eat'

Lastly, *paah*- marks obligation in Naskapi, but it can only occur in the independent order. Jancewicz and Mackenzie conclude that the distinction between the independent and conjunct order is becoming blurred in Western Naskapi. What is particularly interesting in the context of our study is that the authors introduce *mood* and *aspect* in their interpretation and analysis of complementizers and preverbs.

5.1.2. Preverbs in Shawnee

Shawnee is an Algonquian language in serious decline and whose bands and remaining speakers predominantly live today in Alabama and Ohio. In his study of Shawnee preverbs,

Costa (2002) describes multiple preverbs which have a modal or aspectual meaning in either the independent or conjunct order.

For instance, the preverb *wahsi-* is apparently used in the conjunct order in subordinate clauses to mean 'so that', or 'in order that'. As such, Costa classifies *wahsi* as a modal marker of purposive. The following example (64) illustrates the purposive function of *wahsi-*:

(64) Caaki-wiyehi howiitamaakooli ni mzipesiili **wahsi**-hileniwici.
Caaki-wiyehi howiitamaakooli ni mzipesiili **wahsi**-hileniwici.
Everything he(OBV) tells him it that panther(OBV) **so that** he becomes a man.
'That panther told him everything so that he could become a man.' (Costa, 2002:138)

The preverb *mehci*- is glossed by Costa (2002) as perfective, translated often as "to finish" in the independent order, but as "after" in dependent clauses, a gloss similar to the combination *kaa-kii-* in Western Naskapi (Jancewicz and MacKenzie 1998):

(65) Yeh-**mehci**-nhθaaci yeh-**mehci**-psinaaci hotaamowelaali.
'After he had **finished** killing and skinning him, he took him away'. (Costa, 2002:144-5)

Furthermore, Costa (2002) notes the use of *wah-* (and conjunct *wih-*) as a marker of future tense. It seems to occur particularly when the future action is hypothetical rather than certain, a pattern of occurrence similar to *kiči~giǰi* in Eastern varieties of Cree, as in (66). Note *wahsi* here as well clearly denotes the purposive:

(66) Natonehwaate kotakali psekθiili, wahsi-poonaki wiyawhθi nohki hahθayeeli nohki wah mhθeeletaki.
If he searches for another deer, he does this so that he may keep the meat and also the hide again, from which he derives benefit. (Costa, 2002:136).

Finally, Costa (2002) also exemplifies the existence of the *pemi-* (unchanged and changed) preverb in Shawnee, which he glosses as an aspectual progressive. This preverb is attested to occur in both dependent and independent clauses, particularly used in "multiclausal sentences to make a verbal action, during which the action of the sentence in the main clause takes place" (Costa, 2002:149). Similarly to some of the Cree dialects discussed above, Shawnee also has aspectual and modal preverbs. In addition to the volitional and ability described in Western Naskapi, we have in Shawnee an instance of the purposive. Even if previous literature in Michif does not discuss aspect as a possible interpretation or meaning for complementizers, cross-

Algonquian material, such as from Shawnee, can provide indirect support for possible interpretations of complementizer use in Michif, whose verbal grammar is largely Algonquian.

5.1.3. Ojibwe

Ojibwe dialects, similarly to Cree, are extensively dispersed across Canada and the north-eastern United States. There is a very comprehensive discussion of preverbs in both the independent and conjunct orders in Nishnabemwin in Valentine (2001)'s reference grammar. We will limit our discussion here to the conjunct complementizers related to those discussed in Michif.

Table 24: Preverbs in Nishnabemwin independent and conjunct orders

	Independent	Plain Conjunct	Changed Conjunct
Tenseless	---	*a-*	*e-*
Present	*nda-, ndi-, ndoo-* *gda-, gdi-, gdoo-* *wda-, wdi-, wdoo-*	---	---
Past	*gii-*	*gii-*	*gaa-*
Future	*wii-* *ga-/da-*	*wii-* *ji-*	*waa-* *ge-*

The preverb *a-/e-* is interpreted here not as a present tense marker, but as the "tenseless subordinating preverb" (Valentine, 2001: 759). The future preverb *wii-* implies volition and desire while *ga-/da-* ~ *ji-* denotes consequence or obligation.

In chained clauses or connected discourse, Valentine notes that in some instances, each clause is marked with past marker *gii-*, while it is not in others: "verbs in past time that are contemporaneous with a main or preceding verb marked for past time, or which function as staging or elaboration of a main verb, often do not show marking for the past tense, but simply inherit their tense from the main verb they are associated with" (Valentine, 2001: 763). We will discuss a similar pattern in Michif in 5.4.

Often when the past tense marker *gii-* occurs within each clause of the connected discourse, it marks relative tense, i.e. referring to an event anterior to another event in the main clause (also past) as a pluperfect (analogous structures also discussed for Michif in 5.4-5.5):

(67) mii go naa zhiwi **gii-gkendmowaad** iidig **gii-zeghaawaad** niwi mansoonyaan.
"**They knew** that **they had scared off** those who had come sneaking around"
(Valentine 2001: 766)

Fairbanks (2012) explores the changed conjunct verb specifically as a marker of completive aspect in Ojibwe. In subordinate clauses, Fairbanks (2012) shows that, in previous accounts,

there had been two main possibilities for the expression of completive aspect. The first of which is the use of the preverb *ishkwaa-* 'stop', but Fairbanks (2012:58) argues that *ishkwaa-* is not always necessary to express completive aspect meaning, but rather can function to change the telicity of a typically atelic verb such as *wiisini* 'eat'' (typically atelic, turned into a telic verb).

(68) gaa-ishkwaa-wiisinid, gaa-ani-izhi-maajaad.
gaa-**ishkwaa**-wiisinid, gaa-ani-izhi-maajaad.
IC.PAST-**stop**-eat.3 IC.PAST-inch- RR-leave.3
'After he ate, he left.' (Fairbanks, 2012:57)

Verbs with a natural endpoint, i.e. telic verbs, such as *ojiim* 'kiss' (peck on cheek or lips) do not require the use of *ishkwaa*-, and consistently include the preverb *gaa-/kaa-*:

(69) Gaa-ojiimaad, gaa-izhi-ginjiba'iwed.
Gaa-ojiimaad, **gaa**-izhi-ginjiba'iwed.
IC.PAST-kiss.3-3' **IC.PAST**-RR-run.away.3
'After she kissed him, she ran away.' (Fairbanks, 2012:64)

One of the goals of this particular paper was to help L2 learners of Ojibwe, who have had a tendency to directly translate English 'after' word for word as *ishkwaa*, even if *ishkwaa* does not have the same function and *gaa/kaa-* is often enough to express completive aspect. A similar pattern is discussed for Michif in 5.5.

Elsewhere, *ge-* in the conjunct order (as well as *wii-*) can mark relative future in narratives, where an event future to a reference point in the past is marked by these preverbs. In subordinate clauses, Valentine discusses the occurrence of *wii-* in clauses denoting an intent or purpose. While *ji-* and *ge-* can also mark futurity, as summarized in Table 24, they are also another plain and unchanged conjunct pair of the independent order modal preverb *da-*. The modal *da-* expresses a range of meanings such as possibility, necessity, desire, and obligation, and is often translated by the English modals *could, should, would* and *might* (Valentine, 2001:782).

5.1.4. Arapaho

In Arapaho, Cowell and Moss (2002) discuss plain conjunct order prefixes, which only occur in subordinate clauses. These prefixes express tense, aspect, *and* mood (Table 25):

Table 25: Arapaho plain conjunct prefixes (from Cowell and Moss, 2002:174)

Preverb	Grammatical meaning
toh	*when, after, (while)* in past or present, background to another (ongoing) action causal or logical link between (serial) actions
tih	*When* in past, background information imperfective aspect no clausal or logical link
hei'	*When* pluperfect or future anterior usage perfective aspect
he :tih	*in order that*
ci:-	Negative

The main distinction between *toh-* and its counterparts *tih-* and *hei'-* seems to be *relevance*. Backgrounded events in subordinate clauses are evaluated. If a backgrounded event is judged to be relevant, the preverb *toh-* marks all aspectual roles. Background actions which occur in the present tense are relevant by default and always occur with *toh-*. However, if the event is judged to be less relevant, *tih-* marks the imperfective aspect and *hei'-* the perfective (Cowell and Moss, 2002:174).

Moss and Wiles (1993:50) give examples of *toh-* in narratives when there is a clear causal/logical link between the main and embedded clause:

(70) With narrative *he'ih-*
he'ih-i:-toukous toh-'esteini:si:ni'
he'ih- i:-toukous toh-'estein-i:si:n-i'
NARR-STAT-shade because-hot-day-II
'He sat in the shade because it was a hot day'
(Moss and Wiles, 1993:88 in Cowell and Moss 2002)

The prefix *tih-* occurs in past imperfective contexts and is also documented in reportative sentences, preceding the reported action, whether or not it is imperfective:

(71) a. Imperfective tense: **Tih**-wowo:ni:nit hi:θe' he'ih-'i:ne'eti:, ni:θ-i:ne'eti
Tih-wowo:ni:ni-t hi:θe' he'ih-'i:ne'eti :, ni:θ-i :ne'eti
When-be captiveAI-3 over there NARR-live AI, with-live AI
'When he was captive there, he lived there with them.' (Moss and Wiles, 1993:84)

b. Reported action: ni:tobe:no: **tih-**ni:bei:'ihok
ni:tobe:-no: **tih-**ni:bei:'i-hok
hear.newsAI-1 **PST**-singAI-3SUBJ
'I hear that he sang.' (Cowell and Moss, 2002:178)

Finally, *hei'*- has a past perfective meaning, such as

(72) Past perfective: hei'-be:t-o:tine:-θi'ci-ne'-i:to:ku:ti:θi'
hei'-be:t-o:tine:-θi' ci'-ne'-i:to:ku:ti:-θi'
when-finish-singAI-3PL again-then-pourAI-3PL
'When they finished singing, they poured it again.'
(Moss and Wiles, 1993:51 in Cowell and Moss 2002)

Additionally to the preverbs above, the prefix *he:t-* is attested in the contexts of future conditional, supposition and probability, or future report.

5.1.5. Michif

If analyses of conjunct complementizers/preverbs in Cree are primarily focused on tense marking, other analyses in Shawnee, Arapaho and Ojibwe show that these preverbs also have an aspectual and/or modal function. As we discussed in Chapter 2, Bakker (1997) argues that the conjunct mode is not as frequently used in the main clause in Michif than in Plains Cree, and that, in fact, its use in main clauses is uncommon. In Michif, the use of the conjunct verb seems to be more restricted than in Cree. In Rosen and Souter (2015), the conjunct is described as most commonly used with open-ended question phrases and within subordinate clauses. Bakker and Papen (2020) add that the conjunct in Michif is used in two contexts, namely subordinate clauses and nominalized or relative clauses, "when a nominal element is focused" (2020:17). We repeat Table 13 here to show Michif verbal morphology, for the conjunct order here:

Table 26: Michif verb morphology (Bakker, 1997 :99)

1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**	**8**
Conjunct marker (CONJ) *aen* *kaa* *chi*	Tense markers *ki:-* *wi:-*	Preverbs	Verb stem	Valency	Subject & Object Agreement	3rd person AGR	COND -i

In the following table, we illustrate the conjunct verb inflection in Michif, preceded by one of the conjunct complementizers *aen*.

Table 27: Examples of Michif conjugated verbs (Rosen, 2007: 62-65)

	Intransitive animate verb *nipaa* '... sleep'	Transitive inanimate verb *waapaht-* 'see it'	Transitive animate verb *waapam-* 'see someone' Direct Mixed & third person	Transitive animate verb *waapam-* 'see so' Conjunct Mixed sets
1sg	aen nipaa*yaan*	aen waapaht*amaan*	aen waapam*ak*	aen waapam*it*
2sg	aen nipaa*yenn*	aen waapaht*amun*	aen waapam*at*	aen waapam*ishk*
3sg	aen nipaa*t*	aen waapaht*aak*	aen waapam*aat*	
1pl.excl	aen nipaa*yaahk*	aen waapaht*amaahk*	aen waapam*aahk*	aen waapam*ikohk*
1pl.incl	aen nipaa*yahk*	aen waapaht*amahk*	aen waapam*ahk*	aen waapam*ikwahk*
2pl	aen nipaa*yek*	aen waapaht*amek*	aen waapam*ek*	aen waapam*ikwek*
3pl	aen nipaa*chik*	aen waapaht*aakik*	aen waapam*achik*	

Rosen (2007) outlines the use of three subordinating markers in Michif that introduce the conjunct verb, namely *aen* (phonological transcription /ɛ̃/); *kaa-* (/ka:/); and *chi* /tʃɪ/. Their syntactic functions are identified in Rosen (2007):

Table 28: Conjunct markers in Michif (Rosen, 2007: 74)

Marker	Bakker's gloss (2004)	Syntactic function
/ɛ̃/	'as'	complementizer (COMP)
/ka:/	'who'	relativizer (REL)
/tʃɪ/	'in order to'	purpose (PURP)

The following dataset illustrates the contrastive use of the markers *kaa-, chi-, aen-* as well as *ka-* (with short vowel) not included in Table 28, with animate intransitive verb *wiiki* 'live'[53] in some contexts of everyday conversation. The particular examples focus on the use of the preverbs in conjunction with *taande* 'where', either as a question or as a relative clause. Note that, with the complementizer *taande*, only verb forms preceded by *kaa-* can be interpreted as a relative. In (b) and (f), the phrase could be interpreted either as a question or a relative clause, but in (c), with the past tense marker *kii-*, it can only be understood as a relative. In the relative clauses, the tense meaning is dependent on the context (b). Short examples such as (73) can help guide our discussion in narratives, but, as we will see, the complementizers' range of function is much more extensive in narratives and clause chaining/embedding.

[53] Many thanks to Verna DeMontigny and Two Sisters Language Resources for sharing this data subset from their Michif verb building game.

(73) *wiiki* 'live'

a. Taande aen wiikiyenn?
taande aen- wiiki -yenn
where COMP- live.AI -2SG.CJ
'Where are you living/ where do you live?'

b. Taande kaa wiikiyenn?/ …taande kaa-wiikiyenn.
taande kaa- wiiki -yenn
where COMP- live.AI -2SG.CJ
'Where did you live?/... where we live/ where we lived'

c. ... taande kaa-kii wiikiyaahk
taande kaa- kii- wiiki -yaahk
where COMP- PST- live.AI -1EXCL.CJ
'...where we (had) lived'

d. Taande chi wiikiyaan?
taande chi wiiki -yaan
where COMP- live.AI -1SG.CJ
'Where should/would I live?'

e. Taande kaa/aen-wii-wiikiyenn?/ ... taande kaa-wii-wiikiyenn
taande kaa/aen- wii- wiiki -yenn?
where COMP/COMP- VOL- live.AI -2SG.CJ
'Where do you want to live? ... where you want to live'

Bakker (1997), Rosen (2007) as well as Gillon and Rosen (2018) have discussed the use of *kaa-* + conjunct verb as a relative clause construction in Michif, such as in (74) and (75):

(74) li garsoon li bike **kaa**-tehtapit.
li garsoon li bike **kaa**-tehtapi-t
DET.M boy DET.M bike **REL**-ride-3CJ
'The boy who's riding a bike.' (Rosen, 2007:75)

(75) *kaa-* as relativizer: bakwataawak li mood **kaa**-kimutichik.
bakwat-aa-wak li mood **kaa**-kimuti-chik
1.hate-TA-3PL DET.M people **COMP**-steal-3PL.CJ
'I hate people who steal.' (Bakker 1997:94)

Rosen (2007) notes that in the case of relative clauses, the complementizer *kaa-* can sometimes be interchangeable with *aen*, with no change in meaning, i.e. *I like coffee that is strong and bitter:*

(76) a. lii koffee for pi **aen**-machi-shpakwak nimiyeuihten.
lii koffee for pi **aen**-machi-shpakwa-k ni-miyeuihten
PL coffee strong and **COMP**-bad-taste-3IN.CJ 1-good.think-1SG>0.IND
'I like hot, bitter coffee (lit. I like hot and that-is-bitter coffee).' (Rosen, 2007:75)

b. lii koffee for pi **kaa**-machi-shpakwak nimiyeuihten.
lii koffee for pi **kaa**-machi-shpakwa-k ni-miyeuihten
PL coffee strong and **COMP**-bad-taste-3IN.CJ 1-good.think-1SG >0.IND
'I like hot, bitter coffee (lit. I like hot and that-is-bitter coffee).' (Rosen, 2007:75)

The complementizer *aen*, similarly to other scholars who have studied its Cree cognate *ê-*, is understood here to be more neutral, i.e. a straight complementizer with no particular or specific meaning.

The complementizer *chi* is described by Rosen (2007) as a purposive. Furthermore, in the only clause combining study of Michif by Bakker and Papen (2020), the authors identify some conjunct order markers, with a "fairly general meaning" (2020:17). Although they gloss *kaa-* and *aen-* simply as *SUB* or subordinator, *chi* is glossed as *future subordinator* (2020:25) and, similarly to Rosen (2007), it is also indentified as an obligatory part of the purposive construction, between the main and subordinate clause.

Bakker (1997) has identified modality as "the locus of so much innovation" (1997: 96) in Michif, as it seems to depart significantly from both of its origin languages, namely French and Cree. The typical modal construction in Michif is first introduced by a modal French phrasal expression or adverb and followed by a Cree phrase in the *conjunct* mode. Modality markers identified in Bakker's data include the following French-source particles (Bakker, 1997:96):

Table 29: Michif modal particles

French original particle	Michif modal particle	Translation
encore 'again'[54]	aankor	I wish
pas moyen 'no way'	paa mwayaen	It is impossible
malgré 'in spite of'	maagre	oblige, coerce
fallait, faut bien 'had to'	fo(ley) baen	it is/was necessary
ça prend 'it takes'	sa praan	it is necessary
ça se pourrait bien 'it could be'	sa s'pooraa baen	it is possible
ça sert à rien 'it's worthless, useless'	sa serr d'aryaen	it is useless
je ne sais pas si 'I don't know if'	si paasii	it is doubtful

Although our corpus does support Rosen's observation that *aen* can interchangeably occur with *kaa* in relative clause cases, and that *aen* by far has the largest scope of use and meaning, the distribution of complementizers in narratives show that they are markers expressing aspectual

[54] Although the French adverb *encore* means 'again', *aankor* has evolved to a different interpretation in Michif, and is used as a main clause modal verb to express 'I wish'.

and modal features. In the sections 5.3 to 5.5, we will discuss each of these complementizers and their contexts of use within the narratives. We will show extensive examples from which these patterns arise. In 5.3. and 5.4.1 we will discuss *chi* and *aen* as markers of modality. In 5.4.2 and 5.5., we discuss *aen* and *kaa* as aspectual markers. Furthermore, in 5.2, we will discuss the corpus itself and its origin, as well as the importance of the speakers' home community, Ste. Madeleine, as a central theme in the narratives.

5.2. Introduction to the corpus

The following discussion is a qualitative analysis of conjunct order verbs in a sequence of short Michif oral narratives. The intention of this project was to study the language through naturalistic data rather than individual elicitations of paradigms. The examples discussed are from narratives told by four Michif speakers who originate from the southwestern region in Manitoba, from the Ste. Madeleine and Binscarth area, Verna DeMontigny (VD), Harvey Pelletier (HP), Mervin Fleury (MF), and George Fleury (GF)[55]. These narratives were told either individually or in pairs, recorded in 2018-19, for a total of approximately three hours of stories. The choice of narrative content was entirely the speakers', although we note that most of the narratives were recorded in the spring-summer season which, if speakers follow traditional story protocols, did not allow for sacred stories or legends to be told, as these are still often reserved for when there is snow on the ground[56].

The corpus contains habitual narratives describing the speakers' and their parents' occupations and chores, their experiences at school or at work, as well as other descriptions of games, activities, and social events. They also contain punctual events, such as humorous anecdotes and misadventures from their youth, key moments in their upbringing and in their community, as well as noteworthy spiritual moments in their lives. All translations are provided by Verna DeMontigny, whose Michif language work has underpinned an incredible amount of scholarly, grass roots, and educational projects. Although full narratives are not provided here, other outcomes include books with audio for families and archiving as a record of the speakers' legacy, and of the Michif people growing up in the Ste. Madeleine-Binscarth area.

[55] Initials are used in annotation of narrative examples in 5.3-5.5, with year in which narrative was recorded.
[56] Personal communication with Verna DeMontigny.

The community of Ste. Madeleine holds a special place in the history of the area. It is a crucial example of Michif/Métis forced displacement across the prairies. Ste. Madeleine was located fifteen kilometers southeast of Binscarth. Michif/Métis people first settled in the area in the late 1870s after the events of 1869-1870 and were joined later by Michifs returning to Manitoba after the 1885 Resistance (Sammons, 2013:152). In 1935, under the Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Act, the land upon which Ste. Madeleine was situated was re-designated as a community pasture. In the expropriation that resulted, inhabitants who were 'up to date' on their taxes were due to receive land in kind. However, as it occurred in the dirty thirties, a period known as the Great Depression, when the Métis were experiencing the worst effects of a depressed economy and drought, almost no resident was current with their property taxes (Fleury 2017).

The Michif/Métis of Ste. Madeleine were not involved in the decision to expropriate and the policy was implemented in an unorganized, unsupported and inhumane way (Fleury 2017). Inhabitants were forced out over the course of the two-year period between 1938 to 1940. Their homes were burnt down, their dogs were shot, their church and school were torn down, and anything else of value was destroyed. Fleury (2017:12) notes that, most disturbingly, some of their own members were hired to force out their neighbors and to build the community pasture fence.

When George Fleury's family was displaced, they and many other Ste. Madeleine families moved down to *Li Kwaen* (The Corner), also called Fouillard Town, which, along with Selby Town, derisively refers to the municipal officials responsible for the destruction of Ste. Madeleine. His family lived for a few years in *Li Kwaen* and then moved closed to Binscarth. In *Li Kwaen,* Fleury recounts repeated visits by RCMP officers who, under the pretext of controlling possession of deer meat, sought to continuously oppress the Métis. The police also killed their dogs, which were their companions and contributed to their livelihood (Fleury 2017).

The history of Ste-Madeleine imbues this corpus. Even if, in all cases, speakers were either very young or not born at all at the time of the displacement, it remains their home community and at the heart of their family history.

To illustrate the individual narratives from which examples in the following sections originate, we include an excerpt from George Fleury's narrative, which begins with the story of leaving Ste-Madeleine.

(77) Leaving Ste. Madeleine (GF, 2019)

George Melvin Fleury dishinihkashoon. Buster moon nickname. Ste Madeleine gii-nihtawaakin 1935.
My name is George Melvin Fleury. Buster's my nickname. I was born in Ste. Madeleine in 1935.

akota gii-wiikin. Just/ just 1939. gii-wiiginaan ekota. apre shipwehteyahk ekota oshchi Ste. Madeleine.
I lived there until 1939. We lived there. After we left from there Ste. Madeleine.

parsk not mezoon-inaan kii-meschikaatew. manaandaaw gii-ayanaan chi wiikiyaahk.
Because our houses were burned down. We had nowhere to live

pe-kiiweyahk anima kaa-kii-waapahtamahk. aen kii-meschikahkik ma/ not mezoon-inaan, kii-meeschitek.
when we came home, we saw after they burned down our houses, it had burned down.

aen shipwehteyahk akota ooshchi. Lot bor d'la rivyer gii-itoohtanaan. Daan li East tehke. Ste Madeleine oshchi.
We left from there. We went across the river, towards the east from Ste Madeleine.

akota ashay li moond ayi, aen kii-ayaahk, aen kii-shiipwehtechik. Ste Madeleine ooshchi.
there were people that were already there, that had left from Ste Madeleine.

ashay ekota kii-waashkeyikewak. akota kii-wiikiwak. Fouillard Town kii-shinihkaahtew ekwa anima la plaas.
Already, there they built homes. There they lived. That place was called Fouillard Town.

nishtanaan ekota gii-wiikinaan. nipaapaa ayi. uh enn mezoon kii-ooshihtaaw.
Us too we lived there. My dad uh he built/made a house.

ekota daan enn mezoon d'log gii-wiikinaan akota poor trwaa zaan si paans. Trwaa zaan.
We lived in a log house there for three years I think. Three years.

tet baen kaatr aan. ekota apre sa gii-shipwepayinaan/ gii-shipwehtanaan. Ste-Madeleine/ Fouillard town ooshchi.
Maybe four years. After that we drove away/ we left there. Ste-Madeleine/ from Fouillard town.

Daan enn otr mezoon gii-doo-wiikinaan daan Binscarth nete. Deu mill d'Binscarth ooshchi.
We went to live in a different house, over there in Binscarth. Two miles from Binscarth.

Enn farmii ekota, enn mezoon gii-ayiwiikonaan chi doo wiikiyaahk.
A farmer there, he loaned us a house to go and live.

ekoshi maaka aen kiishkishiyaan ekanima.
and so that's what I remember.

Members of Ste. Madeleine still return to visit the area today, even if all that remains is the natural environment and the cemetery of the area, for the Ste. Madeleine Métis Days. The physical location of the former community still holds a special place in the lives of many and is remembered by them as *home*. Many of the people whose families come from the Ste. Madeleine – *Li Kwaen* – Binscarth area now live in the communities of Minnedosa and Brandon.

According to the 2016 Census, there are just less than 3000 Michif/ Métis people living in Brandon, a dozen or so who speak Michif (Mazzoli 2019b). The South-West region of the province (which includes Brandon), however, has been the location of some Michif language revitalization and teaching initiatives. For example, the language has been taught at the University of Brandon, as well as within the Brandon School Division. In 2017, a Master-Apprentice program was also organized (Mazzoli 2019:b) for two master-apprentice pairs.

The stories were all initially transcribed by myself, as a learner of Michif, French native speaker and student of Cree (Algonquian) linguistics, using the transcription software ELAN. Following the verification of the stories' translations and transcriptions, all verb instances with their accompanying preverbs and complementizers were identified and glossed for order, tense and person information. The search function of the software was then used to identify instances of complementizers *chi*, *aen* and *kaa*. Complementizer *kaa* is homophous to future tense preverb *kaa-* which occurs in the independent verb order. Complementizer *aen* is also homophonous to masculine indefinite determiner *aen* (as in *aen kootoo* 'a knife'). As such, excluded instances from the study include *aen* preceding a noun and *kaa* followed by a verb in the independent order. The context of occurrence for each instance, including both the main and embedded clause, and often a preceding or following specifying sentence, was extracted from the narrative and compiled in a new, separate file. These instances and their contexts of occurrence were analyzed together to discern any emerging patterns in the compilation of these examples.

In the following discussion, I try to provide numerous examples for each modal and aspectual function of each complementizer. The examples presented in this discussion attempt to accurately reflect the totality of complementizer occurrences in the narratives. In this analysis, the semantic meaning and implications of the main clause verb (mainly in the independent order) is considered as well as the presence of other modal particles in the clause and their meaning. It is the hope that this study of Michif complementizers can lead to further studies, which could

include targeted elicitations, to confirm the modal and aspectual categories here attributed to these particles.

I have learned a great deal about the language while listening, transcribing and translating these stories, witnessing firsthand the power of stories for language learning. I am very grateful for the many many hours Verna DeMontigny has spent with me, mostly over Zoom because of the COVID pandemic travel restrictions, to translate these narratives. I am so grateful to her for being such an integral part of my learning journey. These narratives are part, albeit a small one, of the life stories and the legacy these speakers are building for a new generation of Michif learners. Old, forgotten words surface in narratives, as well as rarer expressions and discourse markers. Learners can hear firsthand not only how Michif sentences are structured, but how they come together to build a sequence of stories. Of the many elements of Michif narrative structure, I chose to study the use of complementizers because of their importance to coherence and time progression.

5.3. Complementizer *chi* in event modality

As discussed in 5.1, Rosen (2007) and Bakker and Papen (2020) classify the complementizer *chi/ shi* as a marker for purposive constructions as well as a future subordinator. Although there are many examples in the narrative of *chi* as a purposive or a general possibility (future) marker (as attested in Rosen (2007) and Bakker and Papen (2020)), a more detailed look at its distribution shows other more specific contexts of occurrence such as (in)ability, indirect orders, requests and obligations. We argue that tokens of the complementizer *chi* in Michif narratives studied here almost exclusively mark event modality in its various subcategories.

Previous literature such as Lyons (1977) and Bybee (1985) identify two main types of modality, namely *deontic* and *epistemic* modality. Palmer (2001) later broadens the characterisation of modality in two broader categories encompassing four types of modality: *event* modality, which includes deontic and dynamic modality and *propositional* modality which includes evidential and epistemic modality (Liu 2013). We adopt Palmer's (2001) four-type distinction in the following two sections (5.3-5.4). In this section, we will discuss the occurrence of *chi* in contexts of event modality, including deontic modality (5.3.1), dynamic modality (5.3.2), purposive (5.3.3), and general possibility (5.3.4). These four subcategories which are included in event modality under Palmer (2001).

5.3.1. Deontic modality and *chi*

Deontic modality, although "agent-oriented" (Bybee, 1985:197) encompasses conditioning factors outside of the subject, i.e. trying to get others to do something. This includes obligations and permissions imposed or bestowed to the subject, as in English examples such as *John may/can come in now* and *John must come in now*. It may also refer to the speaker's commitment to the subject either in the form of a command or a request, as well as directives, wishes, and desires (Palmer 2001).

As the conjunct verb typically occurs in subordinate clauses in Michif, obligations and necessities using *chi* seem to occur in narratives mostly in the following contexts: in direct and indirect (or reported) speech, and often in conjunction with the modal invariable particle *sa praan,* literally translated as 'have to' (i.e. obligation). Invariable modal particles derived from impersonal French nouns such as *sa praan* (FR *ça prend*, indicating obligation) and *foley* (FR *il faulait*, indicating necessity) occupy the position of main clausal verb, requiring a subordinate clause complement and triggering the use of the conjunct verb.

The deontic modal *sa praan* in the main clause seems to be a trigger for the occurrence of *chi*. In (78), it occurs in direct speech, which Rhodes (2001) notes is a device often used by Michif storytellers to give life to narratives and their characters. This mechanism, like the 'historical present', brings us to the present of a past event:

(78) *sa praan* in direct speech:
Maana la mitress d'ikol maana gii-wiihtikonaan *sa praan* ooma **chi-**ayamihta-yenn.

Maana	la	mitress d'ikol	maana	gii-wiiht-iko-naan
Used.to	DET.F	teacher.F	used.to	1.PST-tell-INV-3>1PL

sa	*praan*	ooma	**chi-**ayamihta-yenn.
IS	have to/need	this.INAN	**COMP**-read-2SG.CJ

'The teacher (woman) used to tell us "you have to read this.' (VD, 2018)

The complementizer *chi* and preceding *sa praan* is also attested in the narrative to refer back to past *habitual* obligations. Palmer (2001) notes that past habitual obligation is a common context of use of deontic modal markers with a past tense reference.

(79) *sa praan* as a deontic past modal

Pi *sa praan* kaahkiyiw **chi** wichiiwet, *chi* kwayesh pimaatishi-yenn.

Pi	*sa*	*praan*	kaahkiyiw	**chi**	wichiiwet,
and	*IS*	*have to/need*	all/everyone	**COMP**	help-3SG.CJ

chi	kwayesh	pimaatishi-yenn
COMP	right	live (a life)-2SG.CJ

'And so everyone had to help to live right, to have a good life.' (VD, 2018)

In this example, we have two occurrences of the complementizer *chi*, the second of which we will examine in 5.3.3. when we discuss the purposive. The first occurrence, however, *chi-wiichiwet*, describes the general past obligation at the centre of the principles for living a good life. Everyone had to help out and contribute in order not only to survive, but to thrive in the family.

In some narratives, *chi* also occurs with verbal particle *foley* 'had to', in the sense of necessity or need:

(80) L'ikol **foley chi**-aahkamimoyaahk chi-toohteyaahk.

L'ikol	**foley**	**chi**	aahkamimo-yaahk	chi	toohte-yaahk
The.school	had.to	**COMP**	persevere-1EXCL	COMP	go.to-1EXCL

'We had to keep trying (persevere) to go to school.' (GF, 2019)

(81) **Foley** laa dimaen **shi**-kiwepayichik aen-doo-shopichik.

Foley	laa	dimaen	**shi-**	kiwepayi-chik	aen doo-shopi-chik.
Had.to	DISC	tomorrow	**COMP**	return-3PL	COMP-go-shop-3PL

'They had to go back the next day to go shopping.' (MF1, 2018)

In (80) there is a need and obligation on the children's part to continue to attend school, in spite of the overwhelming distance between their home and school, in order for the family to receive family allowance payments. As such, there was a financial necessity within the family for the children to keep persevering, despite the distance. However, in most cases, whenever the main clause contains the modal *foley*, the complementizer is usually *aen*, which distinguishes obligation (with *chi*) from epistemic necessity (*aen*), discussed further in 5.3.4.

Other main clause verbs can also take a deontic meaning and co-occur with complementizer *chi* in the subordinate clause. For instance, the verb root *wiihtam-* "tell something to someone" does not implicitly order someone to do something. It can be used in contexts for sharing information, such as *I told him about what happened*. However, when its embedded clause is introduced by complementizer *chi*, it formulates an obligation prescribed to one of the participants, as in the following example:

(82) *wiihtam-* as indirect command: gii-wihtamakonaan **chi**-maachiiyaahk lii swiss.

gii-wihtamakonaan	**chi**-maachii-yaahk	lii	swiss
1.PST-tell.INV.3>1EXCL	**COMP**-hunt-1EXCL.CJ	DET.PL	gopher

‘He told us to hunt for gophers.’ (VD, 2018)

Similarly *kwechim-* is the TA root verb for *asking someone something* or to *ask someone a question.* However, in conjunction with complementizer *chi*, as well as *kishpin* ‘if’, it can also mean to ask for a favor or ask permission for a given situation:

(83) *kwechim-* + *chi-*: gii-kwechimik madoon kishpin chi-pe-itoohtechik oota.

gii-kwechim-ik	madoon	kishpin	**chi**	pe-itoohte-chik	oota.
1PST-ask-3>1	please/politeness	if	**COMP**	come here-3PL.CJ	here

She asked me if they can come here. (VD, 2018)

Finally, there are a few occurrences where *chi* does not occur with a modal verb or particle, but can still have a deontic meaning. In fact, (84) is one of the infrequent examples where the conjunct order is in the main, not the subordinate clause:

(84) *chi* in main clause: Pehin moon noonk itwew. **chi** pehitaan kiiya? Kaa-kawokonamat ana li tooroo!

Peh-in	moon	noonk	itwe-w.	**chi**	peh-itaan	kiiya?
wait.IMP-2>1	1SG.POSS.M	uncle	say.3SG	**COMP**	wait-1>2.CJ	you

kaa-kawokonamat	ana	li	tooroo!
COMP-knock.down-2SG>3	DEM2.AN	DET.M	bull

‘Wait for me my uncle”, he said "to wait for you? You're the one that wanted to knock the bull down!’ (MF2, 2018)

In (84), the initial request *wait for me* is reported in the nephew’s direct speech in the imperative, as a command *pehin*. However, in the direct speech attributed to the uncle, the request is repeated in conjunct form *chi pehitaan kiiya?*. Although *chi pehitaan* does not follow a deontic modal verb or particle such as *sa praan*, the context of obligation is quite clear because of the preceding command rendered in direct speech. The use of *chi* also emphasizes the irrealis, or hypothetical/unrealized, nature of the request, as the uncle himself does not believe it’s reasonable. This is an understandable stance, given the context, i.e. that they are trying to get away from the angry bull that is charging them. In this sense, the uncle is rejecting his obligation to wait for his nephew, as it was the latter who, in the narrative, wanted to knock the bull down in the first place!

5.3.2. Dynamic modality and *chi*

Palmer (2001) distinguishes between the two types of subject-oriented modalities: deontic and dynamic modality. Dynamic modality refers to events for which conditional factors are internal, i.e. whether or not the subject is able or willing to act. For example, English ability and willingness modal verbs include *can* and *will*, such as *John can speak French* (ability) and *John will do it for you* (willingness).

As such, the complementizer *chi* can also occur with the verb of ability *kaash(ki)taa-* , meaning 'able to'. This first example illustrates its use in describing the ability to read. Specifically, in this context, the teller remembers learning to read as a child before entering school:

(85) Ability: Gii-kashtaan apishish chi-amishchikeyaan anihi lii pchi livr anihi.

Gii-	*kashtaa-n*	apishish	**chi**-amishchike-yaan	anihi
1.PST-	able-1SG	little	**COMP**-read-1SG.CJ	DEM2.INAN.PL

lii	pchi	livr	anihi.
DET.PL	little	book	DEM2.INAN.PL

'I was able to read a little bit those little books'. (VD, 2018)

The complementizer *chi* implying ability can also co-occur with other verbs such as transitive inanimate *kishkiht-* 'to know', especially in conjunction with complementizer *taanshi* 'how', i.e. *to know how* to do something.

(86) niiya maaka kaa-maachitayaan l'ikol apiishish gii-kishkeyihten taanshi l'aanglay chi-piikishkweyaan.

niiya	maaka	kaa-	machita-yaan	l'-ikol	apiishish	*gii-kishkeyiht-en*
me	but	COMP	start-1SG.CJ	school	a bit	1.PST-know-1SG>0

taanshi	l'aanglay	**chi**	piikishkwe-yaan
how	english	**COMP**	speak-1SG

'But (when) I started school I knew how to speak English a little bit'. (VD, 2018)

Chi can also occur when we are talking about the process of learning or developing a certain ability. Here again, *taanshi* accompanies the verb *kishkinwaham-* 'to teach someone'. In this example, the storyteller refers to how her sisters taught her how to speak English before she started school:

(87) A koz mii seur gii-kish(ki)nwahamaakwak. taanshi chi-pikishkweyaan.

Akoz	mii	seur	*gii-kish(ki)nwaham-aakwak*
Because	1PL.POSS.M	sister	1.PST-teach.someone-3PL>1INV

taanshi	**chi**	piikishkwe-yaan
how	**COMP**	speak-1SG.CJ

‘Because my sisters taught me. How to speak’. (VD, 2018)

There are also occurrences where the ability implied by *chi* can also be described as being difficult, i.e. a particular event impeding one’s ability to accomplish a task, with the invariable particle *mashkawaaw* ‘harder’:

(88) ...shashapipayinaan was harder por niiyanaan mashkawaaw por niiyanaan chi-pimbahtayaahk eh.

...	shashapipayi-naan	*was harder*	por	niiyanaan
	slip-1EXCL		for	1EXCL.DSJ

mashkawaaw	por	niiyanaan	**chi**	pimbahta-yaahk.
hard(er)	for	1EXCL.DSJ	**COMP**	run-1EXCL.CJ

‘We were slipping, it was harder for us to run’ (MF, 2018).

In this particular example, the storyteller speaks of the fact that the environmental conditions made their escape challenging. Normally, they would have been able to run, but conditions outside of their control made it difficult.

In the example below (89), it is also the outside, surrounding environment that prevents the children from attending school. More specifically, it is untenable for them to walk six miles to school every day. The insurmountable nature of this obstacle is introduced by the invariable particles *oshaam waahiyiw* ‘too far’:

(89) toot lii zaanfaan kii-naagiiwak l'ikol. oshaam waahiyiw chi tohteyaahk.

toot	lii	zaanfaan	kii-naagii-wak	l'ikol.
all	DET.PL	children	PST-stop-3PL	school

oshaam	waahiyiw	**chi**	toohte-yaahk.
too	far	**COMP**	go.somewhere-1EXCL.CJ

‘All the kids they stopped school. It was too far for us to go. (GF, 2019)’

To summarize deontic and dynamic modality, as marked by the complementizer *chi*, here is an example from the narratives with a double *chi* construction:

(90) Double chi construction:
Sa praan **chi** kishkishiyaan taanshi **chi**-itweyaan.

Sa	*praan*	**chi**	kishkishi-yaan	taanshi	**chi**-	itwe	-yaan
IS	have to/need	**COMP**	remember-1SG.CJ	how	**COMP**	say	-1SG.CJ

'I had to remember how to say (what I'm going to say)'. (VD, 2018)

The first *chi*, preceded by obligative *sa praan*, refers to conditions for the event outside of the subject's control, more specifically, the teacher's expectations for the class and their homework. This is an example of deontic modality, as we discussed in 5.3.1. The second occurrence of *chi*, however, follows the verb *kishkishi* 'remember' and complementizer *taanshi*, or the phrase *remember how to...* This is an occurrence of *chi* that refers to conditions for the event *internal* to the subject, i.e. dynamic modality. More specifically, it refers to the subject's *ability* (and perhaps in some contexts, *willingness*) to properly remember their homework to present to their teacher. This superposition of both internal and external conditions to the event summarizes nicely the extent in which the use of *chi* can be licensed by deontic and ability modal evironments.

5.3.3. Purposive

A third subcategory of event modality is the purposive, the main meaning which Rosen (2007) associates with *chi.* Bakker and Papen (2020), in their study of clause combining in Michif, also identify *chi* in purposive constructions. This example, in Bakker and Papen (2020:26) is from the Laverdure and Allard 1983 Michif dictionary:

(91) gee-shawpoustawnawn li roond port shi-peestikwayyahk la shawnbr.

Gee-shaap-ust-aanaann	li	roond	port
1.PST-through-go.AI-1PL	the.M	round	gate

shi-piistikwee-yaahk	la	shanbr
SUB.FUT-enter AI-1PL	the.F	room

'we walked through the archway to enter the room.'
(Laverdure and Allard, 1983:25)

In many cases, *chi* occurs in contexts where we do not clearly have a meaning of ability or obligation, but rather *an intention* or a *purpose*, or how a goal is reached, translated as *in order to...*This is another category of event modality identified by Palmer (Palmer, 2001: 130-1; Bakker and Papen, 2020:25).

First, to illustrate the purposive, we repeat example (79) from 5.3.1, where there are two instances of *chi*, each with a different function:

(92) Pi sa praan kaahkiyiw chi wichiiwet, chi kwayesh pimaatishiyenn.

Pi	*sa*	*praan*	kaahkiyiw	**chi**	wichiiwe-t.
and	IS	have to/need	all/everyone	**COMP**	help-3

chi	kwayesh	pimaatishi-yenn.
COMP	right	live (a life)-2SG

'And so everyone had to help to live right. To have a good life'. (VD, 2018)

As we discussed in 5.3.1, the first occurrence is an example of the complement *chi* in a deontic modal clause with habitual obligation, i.e. everyone *had* to help. The second occurrence of *chi* speaks to what is necessary *in order to* achieve the goal of living well, to not only survive but to thrive. As such, the second embedded clause is a purposive clause with the goal of *living a good life*.

The following examples also express a purpose or a manner in which a goal can be reached. This first example refers to an important New Year's tradition amongst Michif people which is the annual blessing. The narrator here speaks of the fact that people came from all around to receive a New Year's blessing bestowed on the family, typically by the father.

(93) Chikowiyak kii-pewaapamikow liblessima chi-mekit.

chikowiyak	kii-	pe-	waapam	-ikow	liblessima
everybody	3.PST-	come-	see.someone	-INV.3'>3	blessing

chi	me-kit
COMP	give.3>3

'Everybody came to see him for him to give a blessing'. (VD, 2018)

Although, in this case, *liblessima* precedes *chi*, it is part of the subordinate clause.

In the following, the storytellers talk about newcomers covering their family's former water well, even if it was always full of fresh cool water:

(94) kii-kinohamwak kota chi ashtaachik l'oot pwii.

kii-kinoh-amwak	kota	**chi**	ashtaa-chik	l'oot	pwii.
3.PST-cover.it-3PL>0	after	**COMP**	put-3PL.CJ	the.other	well

'They covered it up there there to put the other well'. (HP and MF2, 2018)

In the example below (95), the storyteller speaks of his work and of the fact that the farmer for whom he worked also lent his family a home in which to live.

(95) Enn mezoon gii-ayiwiikonaan chi-doo-wiikiyaahk.

Enn	mezoon	gii-	ayiwii-konaan	**chi**	doo-	wiiki-yaahk.
a.F	house	1.PST-	lend-INV.3>1EXCL	**COMP**	go-	live-1EXCL

'He loaned us a house to go and live.' (GF, 2019)

Similarly to some of the examples we have seen here with *chi*, Donaldson (1980, in Palmer 2001: 131) argues that Ngiyambaa (Pama-Nyungan, Australia) has a marker for purpose clauses (the 'purposive'), which is also used as an obligative, as well as in subordinate clauses with verbs expressing *knowing how, remembering*, and *wanting*:

(96) Ngiyambaa purposive

a.

ŋadhu	dhi:rba-nha	guruŋa-giri
I+NOM	know-PRES	swim-PURP

'I know how to swim' (Palmer, 2001:131)

b.

bura:y	wamayma-giri-ŋinda	gara
child+ABS	play-PURP-CARIT	be.PRES

'The child wants to play' (caritative) (Palmer, 2001:131)

Palmer argues that this connection is to be expected as "purpose clauses express what the subject wants or intends" (Palmer 2001:131).

Reaching a goal and the process by which it is achieved are at the heart of the use of *chi*. Event modality involves the obligation, permissions, skills and know-how, as well as drive (purpose) to accomplish a goal or produce a desired effect. One last element of event modality discussed by Palmer (2001) is general possibility, which we discuss in the following section.

5.3.4. General possibility

There were only a few examples in narratives of narrators speculating on general possibility. However, the examples that were found helped transport the audience to the time of the event. They colour the narrative and transmit, as evaluative devices, thoughts and reactions they were having at the time, including fears and questionings. For example, in (97) and (98), storytellers share an outcome that they fear, but consider a real possibility. In (97), the fear is that mice in the ceiling will fall on them.

(97) pa haenk gii-kwanihin ma faas koz goshten enn pchi soorii chi pe-pahkishi nete oshchi.

Pi	haenk	gii-	kwanihi-n	ma	faas	koz	gosht-en
and	only	1.PST-	cover-1/2SG	1.POSS.F	face	because	1;scare.it-1>0

enn	pchi	soorii	**chi**	pe	pahkishi	nete
DET.F	little	mouse	**COMP**	come	fall.COND	LOC3/(over)there

‘And only I covered my face cause I was scared a little mouse was gonna fall from up there.’ (VD, 2018)

This is a justified fear, as it had already materialized earlier in this particular narrative – as such, here, we are talking about a possibility that has already occurred that the narrator does *not* want to see happen again.

The excerpt in (98) follows an allusion to the fact that the boy (incidently the storyteller himself) was being scolded by his uncle for having charged a big bull. The particle *miina* ‘also, too’ in (98) indicates that the boy is afraid of being scolded again, this time for breaking the fresh eggs he was holding in the process of escaping from the bull.

(98) paasi niiya chi-makohit lii zaaf pikotohtaayaan miina eh.

paasi	niiya	**chi**-makohit	lii	zaaf
think.IVBL	1SG.DSJ	**COMP**-scold-3>1SG	DET.PL	egg

pikotohtaa-yaan	miina eh.
break.it(VAIt)-1SG.CJ	too

‘I thought he was going to scold me for breaking the eggs too’. (MF3, 2018)

The following, on the other hand, is an example of general speculation in direct speech (note the use of *itwew* ‘he said’). Although the children here only suspect the presence of the Iroquois while they are walking in the woods, they are convinced of their presence and hope to anticipate their move:

(99) Lii Iroquois. kehtawe. Taande lii Iroquois chi-pe-itoohtechik itwew.

Lii	Iroquois	kehtawe	Taande	lii	Iroquois
DET.PL	Iroquois	all of a sudden	where	DET.PL	Iroquois

chi	pe-	itoohte	-chik	itwe	-w
COMP	come	go.to	-3PL.CJ	say	-3SG

‘The Iroquois. All of a sudden (we thought) where are Iroquois going to come from?’ (MF1, 2018)

This discussion, we hope, shows that the extent of occurrence for conjunct marker *chi* extends beyond the future and purposive functions previously attributed to the complementizer to include other aspects of event modality, such as obligation, ability, and willingness.

5.4. Complementizer *aen* in Propositional modality and Imperfective aspect

In Plains Cree, complementizers *ê-/î-* are typically identified as general complementizers, as is their Michif equivalent *aen/ ee-*, to which Rosen (2007) and Papen and Bakker (2020) also assign a general meaning. Although we do get instances in narratives where *aen* occurs in contexts where we typically see *kaa* or *chi*, such as the purposive and the relative clause, it occurs most prominently in two main contexts: 1) a marker of propositional modality (§5.4.1), i.e. epistemic and evidential modality, including reported measurements of *degree*, and 2), an *imperfective aspect* marker (§5.4.2). As such, it complements the functions of *chi* as an event modality marker (§5.2) and *kaa* as perfective aspectual marker (§5.5).

In 5.4.1, we will discuss instances of the complementizer *aen* as a marker of Propositional modality. In 5.4.2, we will argue that it also expresses imperfective aspect, in complementary use with *kaa-* as a perfective. Finally, in 5.4.3, we will show examples of *aen* in other contexts typically attributed to other, less frequent, complementizers, which may support the argument of generality of *aen*.

5.4.1. Propositional modality

Epistemic modalities (Bybee 1985) or Propositional modalities (Palmer 2001), are defined by Bybee as signalling “the degree of commitment the speaker has to the truth of the proposition” (Bybee, 1985:165-6). Palmer (2001) has identified epistemic modality as a type of propositional modality, which also includes evidentials. There are many examples of occurrence of the complementizer *aen* in contexts of propositional modality. In 5.4.1.1., we will outline some examples in which *aen* occurs in contexts of epistemic modality, in both deductive and assumptive cases. In 5.4.1.2, we will discuss examples of *aen* in contexts of evidential modality, in cases of both direct and indirect evidence.

5.4.1.1. Epistemic modality

First, markers of epistemic modality can express uncertainty, or mark inference, either from observable evidence (*deductive*) or from what is generally known (*assumptive*). The following English examples are from Palmer (2001:89):

(100) Deductive: John must be in his office.
Assumptive: John’ll be in his office.

There are a few examples in the narratives of complementizer *aen* occurring in *deductive* contexts. The following instances are part of a story about two relatives trying to take a shortcut through the pasture of a farmer for whom they were working. They end up getting charged by the bull, which the farmer had let out without their knowledge, and having to escape. Examples (101a-b) are taken from the storyteller’s attempt at explaining why they decided to cross the pasture:

(101) a. well gii-kishehtenaan lii zaanimoo akota **aen-**ayaachik.

well	gii-kisheht-enaan	lii	zaanimoo	akota
Well	1.PST-know.it-1EXCL>0	DET.PL	animal	there

aen-	ayaachik.
COMP	be-3PL.CJ

‘Well we knew there was cattle there.’ (MF3, 2018)

b. ah oota gaa-pahpimohtenaan portaan manaandaaw lii zanimoo aen toohtawayahkok. but son tooroo chikani **aen doo-pakitinat** l'apre-midjii.

oota	gaa-pah-pimohtenaan	portaan	manaandaaw	lii
here	1.FUT-RED-walk.AI-1EXCL	but	NEG	DET.PL

zanimoo	**aen**	tohtawayahkok.	but	son	tooroo
cattle[57]	**COMP**	do.st-3PL>1EXCL		3.POSS.M	bull

chikani	**aen**	doo-	pakitin-at	l'apre-midjii.
I guess	**COMP**	go-	release.TA-3>3’	the afternoon

‘Oh we’ll walk here the cattle wouldn't do nothing to us **but I guess** he let his bull out in the afternoon’. (MF3, 2018)

In (101a), the main protagonists do not have direct or indirect evidence that there are cattle in the field. However, as it is their place of work, they are familiar with the typical workings of the farm and know from deduction that the cattle are going to be in the field. As such, we find *aen* in the subordinate verb construction[58]. In (101b), there are two subordinate clauses, both which have *aen* as the complementizer. The first *aen* occurs in direct speech, in the context of an

[57] Note on glossing: in Michif, *lii zanimaal* are ‘animals’ while *zanimoo* refer specifically to a herd of cattle.
[58] One could also argue *aen* marks imperfective aspect here.

assumption made by the protagonists that the cows are harmless, which is based on his experiential knowledge and work history. The second *aen* occurs where the protagonist *speculates* what might have happened for the bull to be in the pasture as well, since it was outside out of the ordinary. This is accompanied by *chikani*, a speculative particle glossed as *I guess*. As such, examples in narratives show there is a link between the occurrence of *aen* and epistemic modality.

5.4.1.2. Evidentiality

Evidentiality (Aikhenvald 2004; Cook 2008) on the other hand, refers to evidence. There are two types of evidentiality which are concerned with the "speaker's source of information for the proposition being expressed" (Cook, 2008:117). Although I do not argue that *aen* is an evidential, as it does not encode evidential distinctions, the complementizer *aen* does occur in clauses within stories that encode some type of evidentiality, whether it be direct or indirect evidence.

First, direct or *experiential* evidence includes information personally perceived by the speaker (Palmer 2001; Aikhenvald 2004; Cook 2008) or from self-knowledge (Garrett 2001 in Cook 2008). In cases of direct evidence, it is the speaker (storyteller) who is the source of information, such as in (102), where *aen* occurs as the complementizer following the main verb *kishikishi* 'remember', where the speaker remembers a personal experience:

(102) Main verb 'remember'
Lii vash miina gishkishin *aen kii*-ayayaahkok.

Lii	vash	miina	gishkishi-n
DET.PL	cow	also	1;remember-1/2SG

aen-	**kii-**	ayaa-yaahkok
COMP	**PST**	have.so-1EXCL>3PL.CJ

'I also remember we had cows'. (HP, 2018)

The action of *remembering* something such as taking care of cattle involves most of one's senses, and although the action is complete, it has internal structure and composition as part of the exposition for the narrative description.

The conjunct marker *aen* often occurs in narratives in embedded clauses within sentences relating to the five senses. In (103a-b), main clause verbs are *pehtaw*-, i.e. 'to hear someone'.

(103) Auditory evidence

a. Pahpehawak nipehtawaawak a koz mowahew kii-pehtawaawak ***aen*** *piikishkwechik* nete.

Pah-peh-aawak	ni-pehtaw-aawak	a koz	mowahew
RED-wait.TA-1SG>3PL	1-hear.TA-1SG>3PL	because	

kii-	pehtaw-aawak	**aen**	piikishkwe-chik	nete.
1.PST-hear	-1SG>3PL	**COMP**	speak-3PL.CJ	(over)there

'I was waiting for them. I heard them, well, because I can hear them speaking over there'. (VD, 2018)

b. kehtawe awiyak niiya avik difin [name] awa. Difin [name] behtawaanan awiyak aen matwetepwet.

kehtawe	awiyak	niiya	avik	difin	[name]
all of a sudden	someone	1SG.DSJ	with	late (deceased)	[name]

awa,	difin [name]	behtaw-aanan	awiyak	**aen**	matwetepwe-t.
DEM1.AN	late [name]	1;hear.TA-1PL>3	someone	**COMP**	call-3SG.CJ

'All of a sudden, me and that late [name], we heard someone yelling'. (MF2, 2018)

In both cases, the storyteller reports on people, voices, and yells that they were hearing in particular situations.

In the following example (104), the visual evidence verb *waapam* 'see someone' is not the matrix verb, which triggers the use of the conjunct in the subordinate clause. In this case, it's not the fact of seeing someone *doing* something (i.e. needing an embedded clause), but simply the narrator seeing this character in town after he went home.

(104) Visual evidence

... dan la vil apres sa aen waapamak dimahkohihk itwew [name] awa.

dan	la	vil	apres sa	**aen**	waapam-ak
in	DET.F	city	after that	**COMP**	see.TA-3SG>1SG.CJ

jhimah-kohihk	itwe-w	[name]	awa.
1;scold-3>1SG.INV	say.AI -3SG		DEM1.AN

'... I saw him in town after. He scolded me he said "this [name]"'. (MF2, 2018)

Furthermore, the complementizer *aen* occurs in other descriptions of experience, also connected to sensory perception, i.e. to what you *feel, see* and *touch.* In (105), the force with which the narrator's father ran and collided into the house made it literally shake:

(105) Sensory evidence

Miniki kimooshihtaan. aen <u>kishpi</u> shipishchipayitaat la mezon.

miniki	ki-mooshihtaa-n	**aen**	kishpi	shipishchipayitaa-t
really(AUG)	2-feel.AI-1/2SG	**COMP**	very	run into.AI-3SG.CJ

la	mezon
DET.F	house

‘You can really feel it. How hard he ran into the house.’ (VD, 2018)

In its attempt to describe the feeling of the shaking house, the verb *mooshihtaa-* evokes the listener’s sensory imagination. In narratives, we often find such comparisons or statements of degree, where the storyteller embellishes and describes the degree to which an event occurred, evoking visual and auditory images. For example, the particle *iko* in (106) provides an idea to what extent a shirt was ruined as a result of being shot at:

(106) Degree ‘Like this’

Right through la shmiiz anima. iko aen kipashkishakik eh.

Right through	la	shmiiz	anima.	iko	**aen**	kipashkish-akik
	DET.F	shirt	DEM2.INAN	this way	**COMP**	shot.it-3PL>0.CJ

‘Right through that shirt. that's how much they shot it.’ (VD, 2018)

In (107), there is the particle of degree *oshimaen*, which means ‘bigger’, an adverb of comparison between two entities. In this case, the storyteller compares a legendary huge strawberry and a house, which is the point of reference for the size of the strawberry. The narrator’s uncle is telling him of a huge strawberry in the woods, that he’s supposedly seen, telling his nephew that if he ever found it himself, he should not climb onto it for fear of falling off and getting hurt.

(107) Enn gros frez ana itwew "oshimaen la mezon” itwew. “oshimaen la mezon” itwew “aen shkwapekishit”.

Enn	gros	frez	ana	itwew	"Oshimaen	la	mezon”
DET.F	big	strawberry	DEM2.AN	say-3SG	bigger	DET.F	house

itwew.	“oshimaen	la	mezon”	itwew	“**aen**	shkwapekishit”
say-3SG	bigger	DET.F	house	say-3SG	**COMP**	is.long-3SG.CJ

‘A big strawberry, he said. Bigger than the house he said. Bigger than the house, he said, how long it is’. (MF4, 2018)

The verb in the conjunct, with which the complementizer *aen* occurs, is also a verb of degree, or comparison, i.e. *shikwapekishi-*, translated as ‘how long something is’. This is reporting a visual experience, what was seen and reported first-hand.

Evidence can also be indirect and be reported either *second hand*, *third hand* or from folklore, as well as inferred, from either results or reasoning (Garrett 2001; Palmer 2001; Aikhenvald 2004; Cook 2008). In reported evidentiality, rather than the speaker being the source of information, some other participant is (Cook 2008). *Aen* occurs in contexts of indirect evidence, particularly reported evidence in indirect speech. Note the verbs *it-* 'tell someone' in (108a) as well as *achimo-* 'tell stories' and *achimoshtaw-* 'tell someone stories' in the main clauses to trigger the use of complementizer *aen*:

(108) Reported evidence and indirect speech

a. Well manaandaw kii-itikoonaan eka kashkitaat aen waapit.

Well	manaandaw	gii-	it-ikoonaan	eka[59]	kashkitaa-t
Well	NEG	1.PST	say-INV.3SG>1EXCL	NEG.CJ	able-3SG.CJ

aen	waapi-t.
COMP	see-3SG.CJ

'Well she never said anything to us that she couldn't see'. (MF and HP, 2018)

b. Ber awa gii-pe-kiiwepahtaaw pe-achimot nimaamaa kii-pe-achimoshtawew. Aen tipishkamoyit eh.

Bear	awa	gii-	pe-	kiwepahtaa-w	pe-	achimo-t
	DEM1.AN	1.PST	come	run home.AI-3SG	come-	tell.AI-3SG.CJ

ni-	maamaa kii-	pe-	achimoshtaw-ew	**aen**	tipishkamoyi-t
1.POSS-mom	3.PST-come		tell.so.TA-3SG>3'	**COMP**	have.birthday-3SG.CJ

'Bear he came running home to tell my mom of his birthday, that he had a birthday'. (MF, 2018)

Both of these examples are instances where storytellers are relaying what was told by other persons involved in the story, whether they (the storytellers) were present (108a) as first-hand witnesses or not (108b), in which case the events come from second or third-hand reports. Another type of indirect evidence is inferrence, where there is some speculation or gathering of evidence around oneself to draw a certain conclusion (109):

[59] The reader might recognize *kashkitaa-* 'able' as a verb that licenses the use of complementizer *chi*. However, as there is only we see in other instances as well, there is only one slot available for a complementizer, which in this case is filled by negative conjunct particle *eka-*.

(109) Kwanima li swer li chien maachimihkiw lii zoor o baen don lii tramp pi kii-itwewak li moond aen tapashiyamwachik oshchi daan la prizon eh.

Kwanima	li	swer	li	chien	maachi-mihki-w	lii	zoor
that.one	DET.M	night	DET.M	dog	start-bark.AI-3SG	DET.PL	bear

o baen don	lii	tramp	pi	kii-itwe-wak	li	mond	**aen**
or else	DET.PL		and	3.PST-say-3PL	DET.M	people	**COMP**

tapashiyamwachik	oshchi	daan	la	prizon
run away from it.TI-3PL.CJ	from	in	DET.F	jail

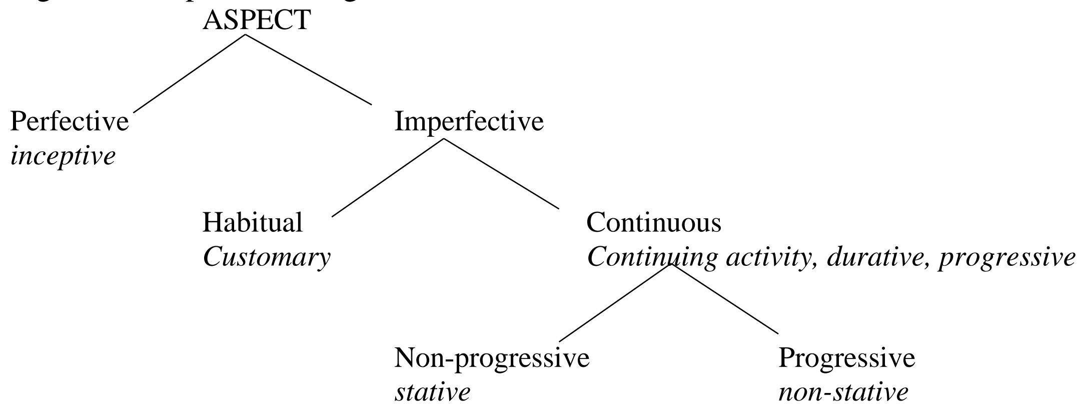
‘That night the dog started to bark. "It's bears or tramps" they said. The people ran away from prison eh’. (MF and HP2, 2018)

Inference relies on speakers’ general knowledge of the world around them, their awareness of their social realities, from which they make reasonings. These examples show the extent to which *aen* describes the world in which the story is being told and enables the storyteller to draw us into it. It does this not only in contexts of propositional modality, but also in the description of durative and continuous states, i.e. the imperfective state, or the ‘present’ in the past.

5.4.2. Imperfective aspect

Aspect is defined as “the way the internal temporal constituency of the situation is viewed” (Bybee, 1985:28), i.e. considering the beginning, duration, completion, and repetition of a verb’s action without referring to its place in time. The main grammatical aspectual distinction is between perfective and imperfective aspects. Most often, this distinction is also understood as *completed* vs. *non-completed*. Other terms for the perfective include *punctual*, *momentaneous*, *unique*, and *limited* (Comrie 1976). On the other hand, the imperfective is often understood as non-limited, continuous, and durative. More specifically, Palmer argues that imperfectivity explicitly references the internal temporal structure of a situation, i.e. “viewing a situation with regard to its internal structure (duration, phasal sequencing)” from within (Comrie, 1976:41). If *aen* is not occurring in contexts of propositional modality, it most often occurs in imperfective aspect contexts. The imperfective aspect subcategories/branches, as presented here, are adapted from Comrie (1976:25), and *aen* is attested in each of these contexts. We leave our discussion of the perfective aspect for 5.5, with the complementizer *kaa*-.

Figure 11: Aspect subcategories



The right-top most branch in the figure is the imperfective. On one hand, the habitual, one of the main subcategories of the imperfective, is restricted to customary or routine actions. We will discuss the occurrence of *aen* in habitual contexts in 5.4.2.1. On the other hand, the continuous, is futher divided into two sub-categories distinguishing the progressive and non-progressive. The progressive is restricted to non-stative verbs, which is discussed with *aen* in 5.4.2.2. Finally, in 5.4.2.3, we present some examples of *aen* in non-progressive contexts, with stative verbs.

5.4.2.1. Complementizer *aen* in habitual contexts

Although the habitual deals with events that are customary, Comrie (1976:27) argues that the "mere repetition", or iterativity, of an event is not enough for it to be imperfective, or more specifically, habitual. A rapid and limited succession of events, such as a series of coughs (Comrie 1976), is not habitual or imperfective. In English, such an event would be expressed as *he coughed five times*, not **he used to cough five times*. Comrie (1976:30) defines habitual situations as protracted situations, i.e. that last for a long time or longer than expected, or that are "iterated a sufficient amount of times over a long period of time" (Comrie, 1976:30).

Comrie exemplifies the habitual in English:

(110) Habitual aspect:
   a. When I visited John, he used to recite poems. (Comrie, 1976: 30)
   b. John used to work there. (Comrie, 1976: 25)

The habitual can also combine with other aspectual values, such as the progressive and non-progressive.

(111) Habitual combined with other aspectual values (Comrie, 1976:30-31)
   a. Progressive: *when I would visit John, he used to be reciting his latest poems.*
   b. Non-progressive: *when I visited John, he used to recite his latest poems*.

The complementizer often occurs with habitual contexts, one of the most striking examples being (112), which contains a series of subordinated verbs in the conjunct, each introduced by *aen*. These instances are translated in the progressive and describe the occupation of the narrative's protagonist, the narrator's father, referred to in the third person:

(112) ...lii farmer aen atoshkawaat. aen stokiiyit (stoke) aen pweyikechik obaendon lii rosh lii paar oshitayaak. Pi aen ohpahiket (trapping) aan iver o baen don lii piiche aen nakotet gii-wiikichihaaw nipaapaa.

...lii	farmer	**aen**	atoshkaw-aat.	**aen**	stokiiyi-t
DET.PL		**COMP**	work for SO.TA-3>3.CJ	**COMP**	stook.AI-3SG.CJ

aen	pweyike-chik	obaendon	lii	rosh	lii	paar
COMP	thrash.AI-3PL.CJ	or else	DET.PL	rock	DET.PL	fence

oshitaa-yaak.	Pi	**aen**	ohpahike-t	aan	iver	obaendon
make.AI-1EXCL.CJ	and	**COMP**	trap.AI-3SG.CJ	in	winter	or else

lii	piiche	**aen**	nakote-t	gii-wiikichihaaw	ni-paapaa.
DET.PL	post	**COMP**	chop.AI-3SG.CJ	1.PST-help SO.TA-1SG>3SG	1.POSS-dad

'...working for farmers, he was stooking, thrashing, picking stones or making fences. And trapping in the winter or chopping posts, I helped my dad with that.' (MF1, 2018)

These events i.e. *working, stooking, thrashing* and *picking stones*, are all recurring and continuing events in the protagonist's work for his employer. *Trapping* and *chopping posts* are some of the father's other occupations, with which the storyteller remembers helping.

Example (113), on the other hand, is an example translated in English in the non-progressive. Here *aen-achimot* is translated as *when he tells,* implying that, similarly to the Comrie example in (110a), the narrator on these occasions was there when the story started, rather than interrupting it already in progress. The habitual marker in Michif, as well as Plains Cree, is *maana*, meaning *used to* or *habitually*:

(113) toultan maana nipahpihaaw **aen achimot** anima.

toultan	maana	ni-pahpih-aaw	**aen**	achimo-t
all the time	used.to	1-laugh at SO.TA-1SG>3SG	**COMP**	tell story-3SG.CJ

anima
DEM2.INAN

'All the time I laugh at him when he tells this story'. (VD, 2018)

In (114), there are two instances of conjunct marker *aen* : the first one *aen nakohtamowat* '... to cut (cords of) firewood' is particularly interesting as it combines the habitual aspect and *sa praan*, the deontic modal of obligation. Although *chi* typically occurs with *sa praan* to indicate obligation, in this case, *aen* emphasizes the habitual element of the context. As both *chi* and *aen* are in competition for the same complementizer slot, the occurrence of one or the other triggers a meaning difference which emphasizes different elements of TAM, as relevant to the context at hand. In the example below, the narrator begins with one statement on the regularity, or habituality, of cutting cords of firewood for someone, in which *aen* occurs in the subordinate clause:

(114) Sa praan maaka li bwa di kord di bwa **aen** nakohtamowat eh. Apre sa kaa-nakohtamowat ayi. Aen san livr di farinn kii-miyik poor deu kord o baen doon deu kord si pans kaa-nakohtamowat. Aen gaa maana kii-ayawew **aen** ayawataayit li bwa maana eh.

Sa praan	maaka	li	bwa	di	kord	di	bwa	**aen**
IS takes/needs.IVRB	but	DET.M	wood	of	cord	of	wood	**COMP**

nakoht-amowat.	Apre sa	kaa-nakoht-amowat	ayi. Aen	san	livr
cut.TI-3SG>0.CJ	after that	COMP-cut-TI.3SG>0.CJ	a	hundred	pound

di	farinn	kii-miyik	poor	deu kord	obaendoon
of	flour	3.PST-give.TA-3SG>3.INV	for	two cord	or else

deu kord	si pans kaa-nakoht-amowat.	Aen	gaa	*maana*
two cord	IS IVBLCOMP-cut it.TI-3SG>3.CJ	a.M	guy	*used to*

kii-ayaw-ew	**aen**	ayawataa-yit	li	bwa	*maana* eh.
3.PST-have-3SG>3'	**COMP**	haul.AI-3'.CJ	DET.M	wood	*used to*

'But he had to cut cords of firewood for him eh. After he cut for him. He gave him a hundred pounds of flour in exchange for two cords. Two cords of firewood I think he cut for him. He used to have a guy that hauled the wood.' (MF and HP2, 2018)

The second instance of *aen* in this excerpt co-occurs with two mentions of *maana* 'used to' (italicized in text) in the main and subordinate clause, emphasizing the iterative and customary element of *aen ayawatayit* '…he/she was hauling it'. In other words, there was a man always helping to haul the chopped wood, at every instance. This is an example of the perfective imperfective, which "takes a situation which would in itself be described in the perfective form

(perfective), and then superimposes upon this imperfectivity" (or one of its subtypes, habituality) (Comrie, 1976:32). It is in conjunction with the habitual particle *maana* that *aen* occurs in (114), , as opposed to the single event reference in (114).

In these cases, imperfectivity dominates over perfectivity. Comrie (1976:32) gives the following example of the perfective imperfective in Georgian. The instances of perfective imperfective are bolded.

(115) i kacebma metad daigvianes! **camoiʒaxoda** xolme xširad salome, **gamovidoda**, **miidebda** šublze xels da **gaixedavda** gzaze
'those men are verily late! Salome used often to cry, go outside, put her hands to her eyes, and look towards the road.' (Comrie, 1976:32)

This is the opposite process to the Imperfective Aorist, in which *perfectivity* dominates over *imperfectivity*. Indeed, when the storyteller refers to the specifics of a particular occastion of chopping wood in (114) (relevant portion of the excerpt repeated here), the conjunct structure includes the perfective complementizer *kaa-*, which we will discuss in the next section:

Apre sa	**kaa**-nakohtamowat ayi.	aen	san	livr
after that	**COMP**-cut-TI.3SG>0.CJ	a	hundred	pound

di	farinn	kii-miyik	poor	deu kord	obaendoon
of	flour	3.PST-give.TA-3SG>3.INV	for	two cord	or else

deu kord	si pans	**kaa-**nakohtamowat.
two cord	IS IVBL	**COMP**-cut it.TI-3SG>3.CJ

'After **he cut** for him. He gave him a hundred pounds of flour in exchange for two cords. Two cords of firewood I think **he cut** for him.' (MF and HP2, 2018)

In (116) and (117), we could possibly interpret the relationship between the main clause and its embedded clause as *purposive*, i.e. that, in (116), the sisters wrote on the walls *in order to* teach their sister and (117) that the family went into town *in order to* shop. However, as *chi* and *aen* occupy the same slot and are in competition, there is, in both of the following examples, the presence of the particle *maana* 'used to' to indicate the habitual, positioned after the main verb. I argue that it is the use of *maana* that triggers the use of the imperfective complementizer *aen* over *chi*.

(116) doo-oshipehikeyawak maana daan lii muraaiy **aen** kishkinamawichik.

doo-	oshipehikeya-wak	*maana*	daan	lii	muraaiy.
go-	write-3PL	used to	in	DET.PL	wall

aen	kishkinamaw-ichik
COMP	teach SO.TA-3PL>1SG.CJ

‘They used to write on the wall to teach me.’ (VD, 2018)

(117) Kii-itoohtewak mana **aen** naachikechik.

kii-	itoohte-wak	*maana*	**aen**	naachike-chik
3.PST-	go to.AI-3PL	used to	**COMP**	shop for food.AI-3PL.CJ

‘They used to go into town to go shop for food.’ (VD, 2018)

The habitual is not always expressed with the particle *maana*, but it can be implied in the context as well:

(118) ekwana mon noonk ana ayi, kii-lihitch-hikiyiw **aen** doo-atoshket**.**

ekwana	mon	noonk	ana	kii-lihitch-hikiyi-w
That.one.AN	1POSS.M	uncle	DEM2.AN	3.PST-hitch-hike.AI-3SG

aen	doo-	atoshke-t
COMP	go-	work.AI-3SG.CJ

‘That one my uncle. he hitch-hiked to go work.’ (MF2, 2018)

In this case, the context indicates that the narrator does not refer to a singular/ punctual event, but that his uncle regularly hitch-hiked, without having to use the particle *maana.* His narrative continues to describe the many instances in which his uncle hitch-hiked to different jobs (and other activities), as there were not many cars in his home community of The Corner.

5.4.2.2. Complementizer *aen* in progressive contexts

The progressive is related to continuousness, defined as “imperfectivity not determined by habituality” (Comrie, 1976:34). He exemplifies the progressive as shown in (119):

(119) English progressive:
When I visit John, he’ll be reciting his latest poem. (Comrie, 1976: 30)

Many languages do not formally distinguish between progressive and non-progressive continuous contexts (Comrie 1976): in the case of Michif, in both progressive and non-progressive continuous subordinate clauses, the verbs are inflected in the conjunct order and co-occur with the complementizer *aen*.

Example (120) emphasizes the progressive aspect of the act of crying with the use of the conjunct and complementizer *aen* in the main clause. As these are oral narratives, there are many repetitions in the narrative thread. For example, in (120), the storyteller uses habitual *maana* with

the independent verb *waapam-* 'to see someone' and *matoo-* 'cry' to describe the habitual nature of the grieving process at the grave.

(120) akoshi maana waapamanaanik lii faam maana you know maatoowak. aen-mokaataachik anihi.

akoshi	*maana* waapam-anaan-ik	lii	faam	*maana*
and so	used to 1;see SO.TA-1EXCL-3PL.OBJ	DET.PL	woman	used to

you know	maatoo-wak.	**aen-**	mokaataa-chik	anihi.
	cry-3PL	**COMP**	grieve-3PL.CJ	DEM2.INAN.PL

'And so we **used to see** the women you know they used to cry. They're grieving for that one.' (VD, 2018)

In (120), the first occurrence of *matoo-* is in the independent with *maana,* translated as "they used to cry". This is reprised in the conjunct order in its *transitive animate* form, translated as *crying for someone*, with progressive suffix *-ing*. This is one of the infrequent cases where a main clause is in the conjunct order in Michif. The occurrence of the conjunct in this case does have an anaphoric dependency with the preceding clause, specifying why the women are crying.

In the next occurrence, perfective *kaa-* and imperfective *aen-* are contrasted in two embedded subordinate clauses. The first, a complex verb meaning *having fun telling stories* is marked with the complementizer *kaa-*, which is glossed with the perfective *had*. The second, *paahpiyaahk* is glossed as "laugh-ing" in the progressive:

(121) pi gii-wanihkaan maaka taanshi kaa-achimohchikitayaahk **aen paahpiyaahk.**

pi	gii-	wanihkaa-n	maaka	taanshi
and	1.PST-	forget-1/2SG	but	how

kaa-	achimohchi-kita-yaahk	**aen**	paahpi-yaahk
COMP	tell stories.AI-REC-1EXCL.CJ	**COMP**	laugh-1EXCL.CJ

'And I forgot but how much fun we had (while) laughing (telling stories)' (VD, 2018)

In (121), the laughter is indicated as ongoing throughout the entirety of family get-togethers and as a succession of stories are being told during their (the narrator and her brother's) visits.

A translation to progressive inflection *-ing* from Michif to English is not always the indication of the imperfective aspect. In (122), the ongoing action *pimohte-* 'walk', is interrupted by a punctual, iterative event *kaa-tepwashit* 'someone was calling me'. Comrie (1976:42) notes that *he was coughing* (cough being a prime example of a punctual verb) could not refer to a single cough, but a series of coughs. Comrie notes that often the iterative of punctual events is

considered perfective, as is the case here with the succession of calls, which is marked with the perfective complementizer *kaa-*:

(122) enn fwa **aen pimohteyaan** kehtaawe awiyak kaa-tepwashit.

Enn	fwa	**aen**	pimohte-yaan	kehtaawe	awiyak
one	time	**COMP**	walk.AI-1SG.CJ	all of a sudden	someone

kaa	tepwashi-t.
COMP	call.AI-3SG.CJ

'One time when I was walking all of a sudden someone was calling me.' (MF1, 2018)

The storyteller continues the narrative by describing how he kept turning around and around, wondering who was calling him, implying that he heard his name being called out many times.

We end this discussion with one last example of a progressive subordinate clause. In this instance, a punctual event "I see *someone*" or *waapamaaw* interrupts an ongoing process, i.e. the action of a bull running and charging towards the protagonists:

(123) aan aryer tapiyaan waapamaaw li tooroo **aen pe-takohchihk**.

aan aryer	tapi-yaan	waapam-aaw	li	tooroo
behind	look.AI-1SG.CJ	1;bull.TA-1SG>3SG	DET.M	bull

aen	pe-	takohch-ihk
COMP	come-	arrive -3SG.CJ

'When I looked behind I saw that bull coming.' (MF3, 2018)

The process of referring to an action in progress, i.e. placing the listeners in the present of the narrative, makes this story particularly vivid and triggers an emotional response from the addressee.

5.4.2.3. Complementizer *aen* in non-progressive contexts

Complementizer *aen* also occurs with continuous stative verbs, which refer to a protracted, or prolonged situation. Stative verbs relate to verbs expressing thoughts, opinions, feelings, and emotions, as well as perception and senses (which incidently are also related to evidence and propositional modality, the other context of occurrence for *aen*), in addition to possession. In this example, there is a reference to someone's age at the time of an event:

(124) Pi l'ikool kaa-maachitayaan naandaw ver sis aan ara set aan **aen shpitishiyaan**.

pi	l'ikool	kaa-	maachitaa-yaan	naandaw	ver
and	school	COMP	start.AI-1SG.CJ	about	approximately

sis	aan	araa	set	aan	**aen**	shpitishi-yaan
six	years	near	seven	years	**COMP**	be[number]years old.AI-1SG.CJ

'And I started school around six years old, I was close to seven years old'. (MF1, 2018)

The two verbs in this sentence (124) are in the conjunct order, with no independent in the main clause. The dynamic event, or rather its inception (*started, going to* school), happens during the ongoing state of being almost seven years old.

Another instance of a non-progressive stative verb is the state of living or residing as in (125), where the first embedded clause refers back to the narrator's cousin living in the location in question, and the second, to the narrator's extended state of having a cousin.

(125) mahpo gii-kishkehten ekota **aen wiikit** ana aen koozaen akoti **aen ayaawak**.

mahpo	gii-	kishkeht-en	ekota	**aen**	wiiki-t
no	1.PST	know.TI-1SG>0	there	**COMP**	live.AI-3SG.CJ

ana	aen	koozaen	akoti	**aen**	ayaaw-ak
DEM2.AN	a.M	cousin.M	there	**COMP**	have.TA-1SG>3.CJ

'I didn't know he lived there that one. A cousin I had there'. (MF1, 2018)

In (126), the general imperfective *aen* gives a real prolonged feel to the fact that the dust is hanging after the car drives away. The adverb *just* is added in the English translation for the same effect, as in *the dust is just hanging...*

(126) [name] maachi-itwew wiiya ashpani la bokan. La ter **aen kachimatek**. shipwetaapashiw eh.

[name]	machi-	itwe-w	wiiya	ashpani	la	bokan.
	start-	say-3SG	3SG.DSJ	away/off	DET.F	smoke

La	ter	**aen**	kachimate-k.	shipwetaapashi-w	eh.
DET.F	dust	**COMP**	hang.II-0	leave.drive-3SG	

'[name] swore. And he's gone in smoke. The dust is just hanging. He drove away'.
(MF and HP2, 2018)

In the past three sections of discussion, we have shown that the complementizer *aen* is used consistently in narratives in contexts in which the focus is the imperfective aspect. Even if the

context implies other information on tense and mode, such as the purposive meaning, the imperfective aspect takes precedence. The imperfective can be an effective narrative strategy: Comrie (1976:37) notes that in some contexts, the progressive seems to add greater emotive effect, such as *she's always buying far more vegetables than they can possibly eat* vs. the straightforward *she always buys far more vegetables than they can possibly eat*. This would be a useful strategy for telling and building dynamic and gripping narratives.

5.4.3. Complementizer *aen* in interaction with tense marking

Typically, as discussed in 5.1, independent order verbs are marked for tense with a portmanteau prefix carrying both tense and person information.

Table 30: Person/tense independent prefixes

Person	Past	Future	Volitional/ near future	Present
1sg; 1excl.	*gii-*	*gaa-*	*nwii-*	*ni-*
2; 2pl; 21 3; 3pl	*kii-*	*kaa-*	*kwii-* *wii-*	*ki-* *Ø-*

As we have discussed in Chapter 2, Plains Cree person and tense prefixes have fused in Michif. The first person prefix *ni-* is dropped in past and future, the only evidence of its underlying presence being the progressive assimilation of voiceless stop /k/ in tense prefixes. There is no such assimilation of *kii-* with second persons, whose person suffix is also with the voiceless *ki-*, nor third persons, which have the Ø person morpheme.

While the tense marker *kaa-* does not occur in our corpus in conjunct verbs, both *wii-* and *kii-* in their unassimilated and unvoiced forms can be found in the conjunct in certain contexts with complementizer *aen*, which we will discuss in 5.4.3.1 and 5.4.3.2 respectively.

5.4.3.1. aen +wii

There is one occurrence in the narratives where *aen* co-occurs with volitional *wii-*, in the first and second slots respectively. The preverb *doo* 'go to' is also in the third prefix slot. The meaning of *aen-wii* in this context seems to be prospective, where an event is just about to occur (in the narrative past).

(127) kiiyechish maana kiiyekach nipaapaa **aen wii-doo-naataat** lii polis chi-natonawayit.

kiiyechish	maana	keekaach	ni-paapaa	**aen**	**wii-**
barely	used to	almost	1POSS-dad	COMP	FUT-

doo-	naat-aat	lii	polis	chi-	natonaw-ayit ...
go-	look.TI-3SG>0	DET.PL	police	COMP	look for so.TA-3'>3

'Barely my dad **was just about** to call the police to look for him (when he arrived home)'. (VD, 2018)

Just as the event is about to occur, the situation is resolved, without the first event needing to be completed. Unfortunately, occurrences of *wii-* within a subordinate clause in these narratives were very sparse, unlike the past marker *kii-* which we discuss in the following next section.

5.4.3.2. *aen + kii-*

Much more commonly than *wii-* in stories, we find past prefix *kii-* co-occurring with *aen*. Typically, if there is no tense information in the subordinate clause, i.e. if *aen* does not occur with a tense marker such as *kii-*, subordinate clause tense interpretation relies on tense marking in main clause. Comrie (1976:72) notes that the imperfective typically expresses, in the past, "an aspectual value that is more typical of the present". Especially in traditional Indo-European linguistics, the imperfective can be referred to as the 'present in the past' (Comrie 1976). As such, the use of *aen* in stories could be a similar strategy to that of using the historical present, which Michif storytellers also do frequently, especially when reporting direct speech with the use of *itwew* 'he/she says', rather than *kii-itwew* 'he/she said'. The fact that both propositional modality and imperfective aspect are the most frequent contexts of occurrence for the complementizer *aen* brings instances of *reporting* and *evidence*, either visual, auditory or sensory in a more vivid past. This gives propositional modality a more present aspectual value as well and increases emotional impact (Comrie 1976).

More often than not, *aen* occurs without a tense marker: in those cases, where there is no additional tense information in the subordinate clause, tense marking in the main clause independent order applies to the entire utterance. For example, if the main clause has Ø-marking for tense, i.e. it is in the present, the subordinate clause event is also understood to be in the present:

(128) *aen* with main clause present tense

a. miyeuyihten kiyapich **aen** wiichiwiyaan**.**

miyeuyiht-en	kiyapich	**aen**	wiichiwi-yaan
like.TI-1/2SG	still	**COMP**	help people.AI-1SG.CJ

'I'm happy I'm still helping.' (GF, 2019)

b. nimiyeuihten ekota **aen** ayaayaan niiya.

ni-miyeuiht-en	ekota	**aen**	ayaa-yaan	niiya.
1-like.TI-1/2SG	there	**COMP**	be.AI-1SG.CJ	1SG.DSJ

'I like to be there, me'. (GF, 2019)

These examples are from the end of a narrative thread, when the storyteller, George Fleury, is concluding his story and summarizing how these events still positively affect his present life. Fleury is speaking about the inception of the Manitoba Métis Federation and his role in the process. He speaks fondly of his lasting involvement in the government and is happy to still be contributing. As such, *aen wiichiwiyaan* '(that) I'm helping' and *aen ayaayaan* '(that) I'm here' refer to events and processes still ongoing, as much as his fondness (*nimiyeuhiten* 'I like it...') for these processes.

There are cases where *kii-* occurs with *aen* in the conjunct, and acts a relative case marker in the subordinate clause. I posit here that it occurs to set the subordinate clause in a time past or prior to the events referred to in the main clause. The narrator's closing statements below are examples of when the tense in the main clause event and the embedded event are not the same. At the time of the storytelling, George Fleury speaks of past events for which he is presently happy and grateful. In these cases (129a-b), while the main clause has Ø tense marking, or is in the present, *aen* co-occurs with *kii*:

(129) Present + *aen-kii-*

a. akoshi nimiyeuhten ayi **aen kii-maachitayaan** niiya nishta.

akoshi	ni-miyeuht-en	ayi	**aen**	**kii-**	maachitaa-yaan	niiya	nishta
and so	1-like.TI-1/2SG	uh	**COMP**	**PST**	start.AI-1SG.CJ	1SG.DSJ	1SG.too

'And so now I'm happy I started it, me too'. (GF, 2019)

b. ekoshi anoosh ekwa ooma nimiyeuihten **aen kii-otinamaan** lii course chi ayamischikeyaan.

ekoshi	anoosh	ekwa	ooma	ni-miyeuiht-en
and so	today	and	this	1-like.TI-1/2SG

aen	**kii-**	otin-amaan	lii	course	chi	ayamischike-yaan.
COMP	**PST-**	take.TI-1SG>0.CJ	DET.PL	course	COMP	read.AI-1SG.CJ

'And so today now, I glad I took the courses to read'. (GF, 2019)

In (129b), the first embedded clause *aen-kii-* carries the tense for its secondary embedded clause, in the purposive *chi*. In the present, the storyteller is no longer taking courses and has long since learned how to read. However, he is still very grateful for the experience and its outcomes.

The same meaning of *anteriorness* occurs when the main clause already has the tense *kii*. In this case, the combination of *aen kii-* in the subordinate conjunct order clause seems to imply an anterior past or pluperfect as shown in (130):

(130) Deu anihi lii lyev kii-kishishwew. Nipaapaa **aen kii-nipaahaat**.

deu	anihi	lii	lyev	kii-	kishish-wew
two	DET2.PL	DET.PL	rabbit	3PST-	cook so.TA-3>3'

ni-paapaa	**aen**	**kii-**	nipaah-aat.
1POSS-dad	**COMP**	**PST**	kill.TA-3SG>3'.CJ

'She was cooking two rabbits. That my dad killed.' (VD, 2018)

In (130), the main clause is marked in the past tense with prefix *kii-*, implying that the process of *cooking* the rabbits is past and completed. The subordinate clause *aen-kii-nipaahaat* 'that my dad killed' is also marked with past tense. In this utterance, it is logical that the narrator's father killed the rabbits *before* the mother cooked them, and that this process was already completed by then. As such the subordinate clause marks an event anterior to the main verb (but still related).

This is opposed to contexts in which the past tense marker *kii-* (or assimilated *gii-*) occurs only in the main clause:

(131) **gii-**maachi-kiishkehitamohaaw li moond aen Federation **aen** ayaayaahk.

gii-	maachi-	kiishkehitamoh-aaw	li	moond,
1.PST	start	make so. know(it)-1SG>3	DET.M	world

aen	Federation	**aen**	ayaa-yaahk.
a.M	federation	**COMP**	have.AI-1PL.CJ

'I started to make it known to the people that we had a Federation.' (GF, 2019)

In these cases, the Federation was already created and still ongoing at the time that the narrator, Mr. Fleury, was raising awareness about the new Métis government.

The relative past marker *kii-* also occurs in the conjunct with perfective and relative marker *kaa-*, which we will discuss further in 5.5.

5.5. Complementizer *kaa*

While the imperfective aspect focuses on the internal structure of an event, whether it be its length or its habituality, the perfective does not give direct expression to the internal structure of a situation. Comrie (1976:17) argues that the very core of the definition of a perfective is that it reduces an event "to a single point". More accurately, it reduces a given situation to "a blob, rather than to a point: a blob is a three-dimensional object, and can therefore have internal complexity, although it is nonetheless a single object with clearly circumscribed limits" (Comrie 1976:18).

Narrative examples show that while in the conjunct, *aen* is most frequently used as a marker for imperfective aspect, *kaa-* gives a perfective aspectual meaning. Similarly to *aen* which seemed to have two contexts of occurrence, propositional modality and imperfective aspect, *kaa-* too is mostly recognized by Michif linguists as a relative clause marker (Bakker 1997; Rosen 2007; Bakker and Papen 2020). In 5.5.1, we will discuss this most commonly attested context for *kaa-*, the relative clause. In 5.5.2, we will show that it is not its sole context of occurrence and that it also marks the Perfective aspect, with relative tense marking.

5.5.1. Relative clauses

Bakker (1997), Rosen (2007) and Bakker and Papen (2020) provide many examples of *kaa-* as a relative clause marker in Michif, although Papen and Bakker (2020) gloss it as a general subordinator[60]. The relative clauses in the following examples focus on locations. In (132), *kaa-ishinihkaahtek* 'be called' is a VII verb that focuses on the name of the storytellers' birthplace, i.e. *Li Kwaen*:

(132) Locative relative clause

Nete	niiya	gii-	nihtawaki-n	uh	daan	Li kwaen
over there	1SG.DSJ	1.PST-	born.AI-1/2SG		in	The Corner

anima	**kaa-**	ishinihkaahte-k.
DEM2.INAN	**COMP-**	be called-0.CJ

'I was born over there in The Corner, this (place) was called.' (VD, 2018)

[60] As opposed to *chi*, which they explicitly gloss as future subordinator, with a purposive function.

A location is not necessarily a place, or a proper name, but sometimes an object, or common noun in (133), where the narrator describes the outside box in which the coffin was placed, since this is no longer a common practice in burials.

(133) Pi la bwet anima dahorr. **kaa-**shawatayenn li saarkeiy.

Pi	la	bwet	anima	dahorr.	**kaa-**	shawatayenn	li
and	DET.F	box	DEM2.INAN	outside	**COMP**	put.TI-2SG.CJ	DET.M

saarkeiy
coffin

'And the outside box, *where* you put the coffin in.' (VD, 2018)

In (133), the translation contains *where*: in English, a relative clause is typically introduced by a relative pronoun, such as *which* or *that*. In Michif relative clauses, it is typically not the case, i.e. there is no explicit *taande* 'where' complementizer. It is the conjunct marker *kaa-* that plays the role of connector between the "adjective" clause and its referent.

It is the same type of construction for object relative clauses:

(134) Object relative clause

Kaa-taashitaakik Dick and Jane.

kaa-	taashit-	-aakik	Dick and Jane
COMP-	talk.of/about.TA-3PL.CJ		

'(Those books) that talk about Dick and Jane.' (VD, 2018)

Examples (135) to (136) are instances of *cleft constructions*. In (135), there is the use of disjoint pronoun *wiiya* 'him/her', as in *it was him...* with the second instance of *kaa-*:

(135) Oh ashpani kayaash **kaa-**waapamaak ana. koozaen [name] kii-ishinihkaashow ana, wiiya ana kaa-tepawashit chikaani.

Oh	ashpani	kayaash	**kaa-**	waapamaak	ana.
	ago	long	**COMP**	see SO.TA-1SG>3SG.CJ	DEM2.AN

koozaen [name]	kii-ishinihkaashow	ana,	wiiya
cousin.M	3.PST-be called.AI-3SG	DEM2.AN	3SG.DSJ

ana	**kaa-**	tepwashi-t	chikaani.
DEM2.AN	**COMP-**	call out.AI-3SG.CJ	I guess

'Oh it's been a long time since I saw him that one, my cousin he was called/named (name), that was him that was calling me.' (MF1, 2018)

Relatives are clauses often outside of the storyworld, meant to contextualize places, characters or other situations for the listener, who may or may not be familiar with the story. If they are, it can be a memory prompt. In either case, it can bring us back to a point in the story such as (136), "it's New Year's I was talking about":

(136) maaka Zhoor di l'aan anima. kaa-tashtamaan anima.

maaka	Zhoor	di l'aan anima.	**kaa-**	tashtamaan	anima
but	New Year's	DEM2.SG.IN	**COMP**	talk about.TI-1SG>0.CJ	DEM2.AN

'But it was New Year's (celebration) that I was talking about.' (VD, 2018)

Once *kii-* is added to relativizer *kaa-*, the meaning is always understood to be completed and past. Take the following examples:

(137) Relativizer kaa + kii-

a. Mon frer ota **kaa-kii-ayaat** ana you know.

Mon	frer	ota	**kaa-**	**kii-**	ayaat	ana	you know.
1POSS.M		brother	here	**COMP-**	**PST-**	be.AI-3SG.CJ	DEM2.AN

'My brother that was here, you know.' (VD, 2018)

b. akoshi gii-pe-kiwepayinaan aan chim di zhvoo ayish daan la vill **kaa-kii-itoohteyahk**.

akoshi	gii-	pe-	kiiwepayi-naan	aan	chim	di	zhvoo
and so	1.PST	come-	drive home.AI-1EXCL	in	team	of	horse

ayish	daan	la	vill	**kaa-**	**kii-**	tohte-yaahk.
uh	in	DET.F	city	**COMP-**	**PST-**	go to.AI-1EXCL.CJ

'And so we drove home. We went to town with our team of horses. (it's with our team of horses we had gone into to town).' (MF1, 2018)

c. Set mil oshchi **kaa-kii-wiikiyaak** daan li Kwaen, dan li community anima.

Set	mil	oshchi	**kaa-**	**kii-**	wiiki-yaak	daan	li Kwaen,
seven	mile	from	**COMP-**	**PST-**	live.AI-1EXCL.CJ	in	The Corner

dan	li	*community*	anima.
in	DET.M		DEM2.INAN

'Seven miles where we lived from the Corner, that community there (where the store is).' (MF1, 2018)

In the case of (137a), the narrator's brother had finished his visit and had already left. In (137b), the narrator specifies that it is with a team of horses that they returned home. This detail is added

after he mentions coming home, bringing us back to earlier in the narrative's sequence of events. In (137c), the narrator and his family no longer live in The Corner.

So it seems from these story examples that in cases of the relativizer *kaa-*, the use of *kii-* marks completed or past tense for the relative clause in which the noun is the object of focus. Like *aen-*, when no tense markers such as *kii-* and *wii-* co-occur with *kaa-,* we have relative present tense:

(138) Perfective aspect

a. Akoshi gii-miyihkawin enn otr plaas chi doo-atoshkeyaan, akoshi moo kihchi-waapamaaw kihtwam aen doo-tohteyaan ekota aen itoohteyaan kwashkwepischit etikwen. akoshi li darrnyi fwa **kaa-waapamak** mon koozaen ana.

Akoshi	**gii**-miyihkawin	enn	otr	plaas	chi	doo-	atoshke-yaan,
And so	1PST-give.TA.3l>1SG	DET.F	other	place	COMP	go-	work-1SG.CJ

akoshi	moo	kihchi-	waapamaaw	kihtwam	aen	doo-tohteyaan
and so	not	never	see.TA-1SG>3SG	again	COMP	go-go.to-1SG.CJ

ekota	aen	itoohteyaan	kwashkwepischit	etikwen.	akoshi
There	comp	go somewhere-1SG.CJ	move.AI-3SG.CJ	I guess	and so

li	darrnyi	fwa	**kaa**-waapamak	mon	koozaen	ana
DET.M	last	time	**COMP**-see.TA-1SG>3SG.CJ	1POSS.M	cousin.M	DEM2.AN

'And so they gave me another place to go to work eh and so I never saw him again. When I went there he moved I guess. And so that's the last time I saw that cousin (of mine).' (MF1, 2018)

b. [...] Gii-pehten noo kaa-kii-pimachisit. akoshi.

Gii-	pehten	noo	**kaa-**	**kii-**	pimachisi-t	akoshi.
1PST-	hear.TI-1SG	not	COMP	PST	live.AI-3SG.CJ	and so

'I heard he passed away so.' (MF1, 2018)

Prefixing relative past marker *kii-* (or not) in the subordinate or relative clause helps establish the timeline of the narrative. The past tense is initially established in the independent verb *gii-miyihkawin* 'they gave me'. The ensuing chained clauses are unmarked for tense and are therefore all assumed to sequentially follow the initial event. The focus clause *la darrnyi fwa kaa-waapamak...* follows this sequence as well, meaning *from that point on...* (and still relevant today) *I didn't see my cousin anymore.* Later on, the storyteller adds (138b). There the conjunct clause, which on this occasion is not a relative but a subordinate, is not sequential to the independent verb. Rather, it presumably occurs much earlier. In this next section, we will discuss

instances such as these where *kaa-* does not occur in relative clauses, but rather conveys the *perfective aspect* in subordinate clauses.

5.4.2. Perfective aspect

The perfective aspect, contrary to the imperfective, lacks explicit reference to the internal construction of the situation. The situation or event in question has a beginning, middle and end, but these parts are presented "as a single whole" (Comrie, 1976:21). Comrie (1976), as such, does not favor the term 'completed' as an equivalent of 'perfective', as it puts too much emphasis on the ending of the event, instead of its entirety. In Michif stories, the complementizer *kaa-* occurs often in conjunction, in a subordinate clause, with an independent order verb in the main clause. In these cases, *kaa-* is usually translated as *when*, a similar phenomenon as noted by Ford and Lees for Cree (5.1.1.). Although *kaa-* is mainly used in the context of a completed action, with no internal structure, the tense inside its clause is relative. The subordinate clause can either refer to an event anterior to (139-141), posterior to (143-145) or simultaneous to the main clause event.

For instance, in examples (139)-(141), the subordinate clause marked by *kaa-* refers to a completed event anteriorly to the main clause event. In most of these instances, there is a direct causal (or logical) link between the embedded clause event and the main clause:

(139) nipaapaa kii-peshpichiwak ishpii...Ste-Madeleine **kaa-meshchishikaatek**.

ni-paapaa	kii-	peshpichi-wak	**ishpi**	Ste-Madeleine
1.POSS-dad	PST	move.AI-3PL	when	Ste. Madeleine

kaa-	meshchishikaahte-k
COMP-	burn down.AI-0.CJ

'They moved when Ste. Madeleine burned down.' (VD, 2018)

The main verb here *kii-pespichiwuk*, i.e. *they moved* contains the preverb *kii-* as a past marker. The subordinate clause *kaa-meschishikatek*, i.e. *when it was burned down (Ste. Madeleine)*, is a completed event that is *directly* linked to the displacement of many Michif families from their home community of Ste Madeleine. In this case, the event in the subordinate clause occurred prior to the main event.

In (140), false start *kaa-pechiteyaahk* and reprise *kaa-pee-kiiweyaan* '(when) I came home' is the pre-cursor, and the triggering event, in fact, for the storyteller going to work on the track or railroad.

(140) Yeah akoshi kii-pe-kiiwaan apres sa oota **kaa-pe-kiiweyaan** oota gii-pa-atooshkaan eh daan la track.

Yeah	akoshi	gii-	pe-	kiiwaa-n	apres sa	oota	**kaa-**	pe-
	and so	1.PST-	come	go home.AI-1/2SG	after that	here	**COMP-**	come-

kiiwe-yaan	oota	gii-	pa-	atooshkaa-n	daan	la	track.
go home.AI-1SG.CJ	here	1.PST-	go.about-work.AI-1/2S		in	DET.F	railroad

'Yeah and so when I came home after, when we came here/ when I went back home here I went working on the railroad eh.' (MF1, 2018)

As such, the event of coming home occurs before the narrator's going to work on the railroad. Similarly, in (141), there is no explicit subordinator *when* or *while*. This is similar to Ford and Lees' (1979) discussion on the presence of particle *after* only to give telic meaning, but that otherwise, it is not required for the meaning of after. Similarly, these examples show that the Michif particle *ishpi* 'when' is not explicitly required in most contexts expressing *when*. Example (141) is also an instance of a prior event in the subordinate clause and the cause for the main event. In this case, the narrator explains he had to put down the eggs because he had to go under the fence:

(141) Jesus Christ noo zaaf patootinenaan pikotoohtaayahk noo zaaf eh. But en disour li paar **kaa-ishpayihaahk** foley pakinamaak anihi.

Jesus Christ	noo	zaaf	patootin-enaan	pikotoohtaa-yaahk
	1POSS.PL	egg	drop.TI-1EXCL	break go.AI-1EXCL.CJ

noo	zaaf	but	en disour	li	paar	**kaa-**	ishpayihahk
1POSS.PL	egg		under	DET.M	fence	**COMP**	happen

foley	pakinam-aak	anihi
IS.had.to	put down.TA-1SG>3	DEM2.PL

'Jesus Christ, we dropped and broke our eggs. **When** I went under the fence, I had to put them down (and I dropped them).' (MF3, 2018)

The causal link is not always obvious: in (142) *he didn't tell you* or *moo kiiya chi-mooshtak* is in the recent past, referring to a previous story session before lunch. The subordinate *kaa-tashohikashot*, this time with explicit adverb *ishpi*, referred to a past event not included in the preceding narrative, and there is no causal link between the two clauses:

(142) Moo kiiya achimooshtak ishpi **kaa-tashohikaashot** saa son dwaa atikwen.

Moo	kiiya	achimoosht-ak			ishpi	
NEG	2SG.DSJ	tell.TA-3SG>2SG			when	
kaa-	tashohikaasho-t		sa	son	dwaa	etikwen
COMP	catch/trap.AI-3SG.CJ		that	3.POSS.M	finger	I guess

‘He didn’t tell you when he caught/trapped his finger I guess.’ (VD, 2018)

The perfective *kaa-* cannot be understood as a pluperfective either, as it does not always refer to a prior or anterior completed event. In many other cases, such as (143), the subordinate clause event occurs during or after the main clause event, rather than before:

(143) niiya maaka **kaa-machitayaan** l'ikol apiishish gii-kishkeyihten taanshi laanglay chi-piikishkweyaan.

niiya	maaka	**kaa-**	machitaa-yaan	l'ikol	apishiish
1SG.DSJ	but	**COMP**	start.AI-1SG.CJ	school	a little bit

gii-kishkeyiht-en	taanshi	l’aanglay	chi-	pikishkwe-yaan.
1.PST-know.TI-1/2SG>0	how	English	COMP	speak.AI-1SG.CJ

‘But (when) I started school I knew how to speak English a little bit.’ (VD, 2018)

In (143), the main clause verb is *gii-kishkihten*, with the first-person past marker *gii-*. The fact of knowing English here overlaps or is simultaneous to the event of starting school, because, in this case, the storyteller’s sisters had already been teaching her English to prepare her for her education. As such, the state of knowing English was already established before *kaa-machitayaan l’ikol* ‘when I started school’.

In (144), there is a causal link, but the cause is in the main clause, and not in the subordinate, like it was the case in preceding examples. The fact of the injured back precedes, and presumably motivates, the decision to retire, rather than the other way around, i.e. it is not the action of retiring that caused the injury:

(144) **kaa**-retire-iyaan moo doo gii-wishakinen apishish eh.

Kaa-	retire	-iyaan	moo	doo	gii-	wishakin-en	apishish
COMP-	retire.AI-1SG.C		1.POSS.M	back	1.PST-	hurt.TI-1/2SG>0	a bit

‘When I retired I hurt my back a bit eh.’ (MF1, 2018)

This is similar to (145) where there is a logical link between the main and subordinate clause, but the main clause *noo kii-kashkitaaw piikishkwet* (wasn’t able to speak) is true prior to the second event in the subordinate clause *kaa-peshpichit* ‘moved’.

(145) koz nimaamaa noo kii-kashkitaaw l'aangley pikishkwet paatosh oota Brandon **kaa**-peshpichit.

koz	ni-maamaa	noo	kii-	kashkitaa-w	l'aangley
because	1.POSS-mom	NEG	3.PST-	able.AI-3SG	English

pikishkwe-t	paatosh	oota	Brandon	**kaa-**	peshpichi-t.
speak.AI-3SG.CJ	until	here		**COMP-**	move.AI-3SG.CJ

'Because my mom wasn't able to speak English until she moved to Brandon.' (MF1, 2018)

The main clause refers to a descriptive state (i.e. one's language use), which logically changes when the protagonist moves from a rural to an urban centre, where English is the dominant language of use.

As such, there are two possible timelines for the perfective *kaa-*. It can either be a prior event to the main clause, often directly connected in some causal or logical manner to the main clause (Figure 12), or a posterior event following the main clause, often as the outcome of a triggering event in the main clause (Figure 13). The main clause can either refer to a state or a punctual event.

Figure 12: *kaa* subordinate clause as prior event

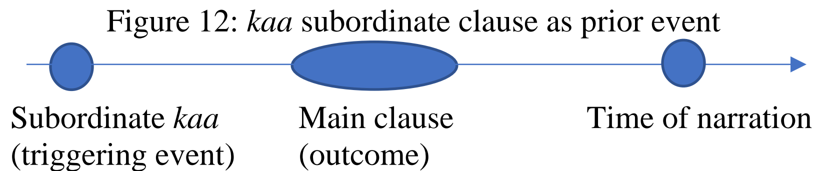
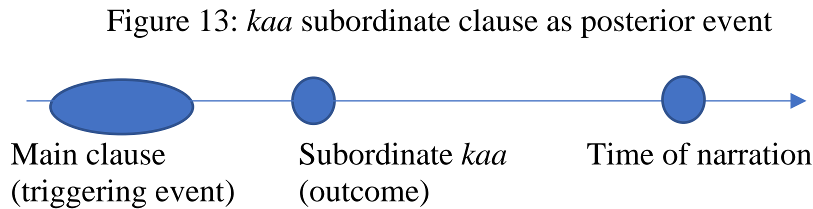


Figure 13: *kaa* subordinate clause as posterior event



The preceding examples are instances when the events in the main and subordinate clauses do not overlap in the sense that the prior event comes to some kind of endpoint by the time the subsequent event ensues. However, events may also overlap in some manner. As the subordinate clause with *kaa-* is perfective and viewed as a whole with no internal structure, this event can be part of another event's internal structure. Main clause events are marked for aspect with modal and aspectual preverbs (such as the inceptive or completive). Without preverbs, the main clauses can be translated as imperfective, with internal structure, just as they could be perfective,

depending on the context or the nature of the verb. There are also some examples with two dependent/conjunct verbs in the same sentence, in the main and subordinate clause. These are more infrequent in Michif than other Algonquian languages, the latter where the occurrence of conjunct verbs is not typical to main clauses.

In the following cases of two conjunct verbs co-occurring in a complex clause without the independent, one of the conjunct verbs is preceded by complementizer *aen*, and the other, with complementizer *kaa-*. In these cases, the conjunct verb with *aen* is in imperfective aspect and the verb with complementizer *kaa-* is translated or interpreted as an event interrupting the ongoing event with *aen* (repeated from (124)):

(146) Pi l'ikool **kaa-maachitayaan** naandaw ver sis aan ara set aan aen shpitishiyaan.

pi	l'ikool	**kaa-**	maachitaa-yaan	naandaw	ver
and	school	**COMP**	start.AI-1SG.CJ	about	approximately

sis	aan	araa	set	aan	**aen**	shpitishi-yaan
six	years	near	seven	years	**COMP**	be [number] years old.AI-1SG.CJ

'And I started school around six years old, I was close to seven years old.' (MF1, 2018)

The interrupting event in (147) is even marked by the particle *kehtaawe* 'all of a sudden', repeated from (122), where *kaa-* is iterative and refers to a succession of calls, which cause the narrator to turn around and around, looking for the person who is calling him:

(147) Enn fwa aen pimohteyaan kehtawe awiyak **kaa-tepwashit**.

enn	fwa	aen	pimohte-yaan	kehtawe	awiyak
a.F	time	COMP	walk.AI-1SG.CJ	all of a sudden	someone

kaa-	tepwashi-t
COMP-	call.AI-3SG.CJ

'One time when I was walking all of a sudden someone was calling me.' (MF1, 2018)

Typically, the ongoing, or durative event is not expressed with a conjunct order, but with the independent order, as in (148):

(148) Maaka nete **kaa-itoohteyenn** daan la simetier waashakenipawawak ayi daan li trou anima maana anima.

Maaka	nete	**kaa-**	itoohte-yenn	daan	la	simetier
but	over there	**COMP-**	go to.AI-2SG.CJ	in	DET.F	cemetery

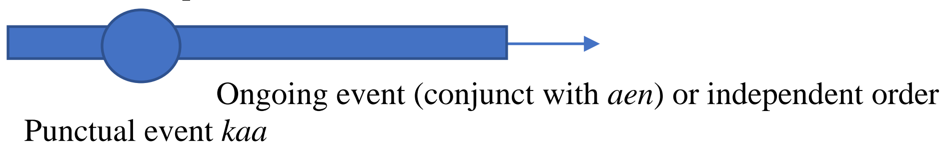
waashake-nipawi-wak	ayi	daan	li	trou	anima.
circle-stand.AI-3PL	uh	in	DET.M	hole	DEM2.INAN

‘But when you went over there in the cemetery they stand around in a circle (around the body) around the hole.’ (VD, 2018)

This timeline can be illustrated as follows. The ongoing event with internal structure can be represented as an elongated rectangle along the arrow of time. It contains a perfective event with no internal structure marked by *kaa-*:

Figure 14: *kaa* with two dependent orders

With two dependent orders:



There are also instances of simultaneous completed past events, where one event is in the main clause, and the other, in the subordinate clause, in the conjunct verb. When there are two simultaneous past, completed, events which are related to one another, the event in focus is in the independent order and in the main clause.

(149) kwanima kitashiihtenaan apishish oota miidji **kaa-miichishoyahk** oota midjii.

Kwanima	ki-	tashiiht-enaan	apishish	oota	midjii
That.one	2-	talk.TI-1INCL>0	a bit	here	noon

kaa-	miichisho-yahk	oota	midjii
COMP-	eat.AI-1INCL.CJ	here	noon

‘We talked a little bit about that at noon while we ate.’ (VD, 2018)

In (149), the focus is on the topic previously discussed during lunch. The time of discussion, i.e. *when we were eating*, is then peripheral to *kitashiihtenaan* ‘we (incl) talk about’.

In (150), the focus of the narrative is which languages were spoken during which activities or at which time of day. As such, the verbs *to speak* and *bring the language home* are in the independent order, in the main clause, while the places in which the languages were

spoken (English while working and Michif once arrived back home) are in the peripheral, subordinate clause.

(150) **kaa-atoshkechik** poor lii farmer l'aangley kii-piikishkwewak wiiyawaaw komm mii frer. but noo wihkat kii-pe-kiiwetahtawak la laang. Toul'tan yaenk li Michif kihtwaam **kaa-takoshinichik** li swer.

kaa- atoshke-chik pour lii farmer l'aangley
COMP AI-3PL.CJ for DET.PL farmer English

kii- piikishkwe-wak wiiyawaaw komm mii frer.
3.PST- speak.AI-3PL 3PL.DSJ like 1POSS.PL brother

but noo wihkat kii- pe- kiiwetaht-awak
never 3PST- come- bring home.TA-3PL>3

la laang. Toul'tan yaenk li Michif
DET.F language all the time only DET.M Michif

kihtwaam **kaa-** takoshini-chik li swer.
again **COMP-** arrive.AI-3PL.CJ DET.M evening

'When they worked for the farmers they spoke English, them, like my brothers. But they never brought the language (English) home, it was only Michif again when they got home at night.' (MF1, 2018)

Finally, the conjunct marker *kaa-* co-occurs with *taanshi* in narratives. In some of these cases, *taanshi* is not explicitly translated as *how* but as *what* in a complementizer position linking the main and subordinate clause. No matter its interpretation, its occurrence triggers the use of the conjunct order as open question markers (*who*, *what*, *where*, etc.) do interrogatives. In (151), *taanshi* is glossed as 'how' and in (152), as 'what':

(151) Pi gii-wanihkaan maaka taanshi **kaa-achimohchikitayaahk** aen paahpiyaahk.

Pi gii- wanihkaa-n maaka taanshi
and 1.PST- forgot-1/2SG but how

kaa- achimohchikitaa-yaahk aen pahpi-yaahk
COMP tell story.have fun-1PL.CJ COMP laugh-1PL.CJ

'And I forgot how much fun we had (telling stories) and laughing.' (VD, 2018)

Furthermore, *taanshi* can also combine with *etikwen* to mean 'I don't know what' to introduce a subordinate clause, such as (152):

(152) Mon frer awa **taanshi etikwen kaa-takamikishit**.

Mon	frer	awa	taanshi	etikwen	**kaa**-tahkamikishi-t.
1.POSS	brother	DEM1.AN	how	I guess	**COMP-**busy at doing things-3SG.CJ

'My brother here. I don't know what he did.' (VD, 2018)

Similarly to *aen-kii-*, there are cases where *kaa-kii-* occurs with *taanshi* when the subordinate clause event occurred and was completed prior to the main clause past, giving it an anterior past meaning:

(153) Lii fam maana kii-achimochik chi-kookwekwe wishtawaaw taanshi kaa-kii-pe-ishpayichik maana.

Lii	fam	maana	kii-	achimo-chik	chikookwekwe	wishtawaaw
DET.PL	woman	used to	3.PST-	tell story.AI-3PL.CJ	everything	them.too.DSJ

taanshi	**kaa-**	**kii-**	pe-	ishpayi-chik	maana.
how/what	**COMP-**	**PST-**	come-	happen-3PL.CJ	used to

'The women used to tell stories of everything them too. Of what used to happen to them.' (VD, 2018)

The presence of *kii-*, however, is not always necessary:

(154) Pi kii-doo-aachimoowak taanshi kaa-takamikishiyin.

Pi	kii-	doo-	aachimo-wak	**taanshi**	**kaa-**	tahkamikishi-yin
and	3.PST-	go-	tell.AI-3PL	**what**	**COMP-**	do wrong.AI-2SG.CJ

'They went and told what you did wrong.' (VD, 2018)

There is one instance in the corpus of the combination *kaa-wii* with the conjunct order:

(155) li swer **kaa-wii-niipayaahk** maana gii-pehtawanaan awiyak aen pakatahtamot akoti niiyanaan.

Li	swer	**kaa-**	**wii-**	niipa-yaahk	maana
Det.M	night	**COMP-**	**VOL-**	sleep.AI-1PL.CJ	used to

gii-	pehtaw-anaan	awiyak	aen	pakatahtamo-t	akoti.
1.PST-	hear.TA-1PL>3SG	someone	COMP-	breathing.AI-3SG.CJ	there

'At night, when we're going to bed, we used to hear someone breathing beside us.' (GF, 2019)

Similar to *aen-wii* (§5.4), *kaa-wii-* refers to an inceptive, where the protagonists are just about to start an event, i.e. going to bed.

5.6. Conclusions

Examples from Michif narratives have shown that the conjunct complementizers *aen, kaa* and *chi* are markers of aspect and modality. The complementizer *aen* occurs mainly in contexts of propositional modality and imperfective aspect. Although it does mark relative clauses in some occurrences, most instances of relative clauses overwhelmingly occur with the relative marker *kaa*. However, *kaa* is not only a relative clause marker, but also occurs in contexts of perfective aspect. Finally, the context of occurrence for complementizer *chi* extends beyond the purposive to other sub-categories of event modality such as deontic and dynamic modality including obligation and necessity. These morphosyntactic and pragmatic contexts are summarized in Table 31.

Table 31: Morphosyntactic meanings of Michif conjunct markers in narratives

Conjunct markers		Morphosyntactic/ pragmatic context
chi/ shi	/tʃɪ/ ~ /ʃɪ/	Event modality : - Deontic - Dynamic - Purposive - General possibility
aen	/ɛ̃/	Propositional modality : - Epistemic - Evidentiality Imperfective aspect
kaa	/ka:/	Relativizer Perfective aspect

The following sentence from George Fleury's narrative is a perfect example of the extensive use of all three conjunct markers. First, the complementizer *chi* occurs in conjunction with a modal expressing (in)ability; second, *kaa-* marks perfective aspect; and finally *aen* expresses imperfective aspect:

(156) paa moyaen **chi** li-studii-yenn. li swer **kaa**-takoshiniyenn apre si mil **aen** pimohteyenn.

paa	moyaen	chi	li-	studii	-yenn	li	swer
no	way	COMP	the.M	study	-2SG.CJ	DET.M	night

kaa-	takoshini	-yenn	apre	si	mil	aen	pimohte	-yenn
COMP-	arrive.AI	-2SG.CJ	after	six	miles	COMP	walk.AI	-2SG.CJ

No way yo*u could study at night when you arrived home after walking six miles.* (GF, 2019)

Conjunct markers help create cohesion and connections between a series of actions, states and events, and also establish causality and correlation within a sequence of events. The use of the imperfective *aen-* and the perfective *kaa-* with past marker *kii-* and future *wii-* bears resemblance to the relative tense marking in Classical Arabic (Comrie 1976). Comrie has shown that Arabic has a morphological opposition between two "verb tense-aspects", namely the imperfect and perfect. In Arabic,

> "in addition to aspectual values, the imperfect has the meaning component of relative non-past, while the perfect has the time reference meaning component of relative past. In neutral contexts i.e. where no reference point is given explicitly by the context, the reference point is taken to be the present moment, thus giving the impression of absolute non-past meaning for the imperfect but past meaning for the perfect". (Comrie, 1976:81)

In Michif, if the reference point changes in any way, the *relative* nature of the tense-aspect surfaces. As such, the imperfect can be understood as in the past, by the presence of a past adverbial marker. This seems particularly interesting and relevant to the case of *kaa-* in Michif (as well as *aen*). Some of the conclusions discussed in 5.3 and 5.4. regarding the co-occurrence of complementizers *aen* and *kaa* and tense markers in the conjunct are outlined in Table 32.

Table 32: Interaction between complementizers and tense markers

Conjunct markers	**Conjunct tense markers**	**Combined meaning**
aen	*Ø-*	ongoing action with present-tense value
	kii-	imperfective anterior past
	wii-	prospective, volitional
kaa	*Ø-*	1. relative clause marker, present or past value 2. completed action (simultaneous, anterior or posterior to main verb)
	kii-	anterior past meaning with completed, perfective value

Embedded clauses, including their complementizers, carry the tense marked in the main clause and independent order. For example, with *aen*, if there is Ø-tense marking, the embedded clause is implied to be ongoing in the present (or have a present-tense value). On one hand, if there is a past marker *kii-* in the conjunct, the imperfective is anterior to the main verb's position in the timeline. The main verb will carry its own tense marker, whether it be a null marker for present

(and historical present), or *kii-* 'past' and *kaa-* 'future'. On the other hand, the marker *wii-* in conjunction with *aen* marks a prospective or volitional meaning.

In relative clauses, the complementizer *kaa* introduces a relative clause with either a past or present meaning. Both relative tenses here can be rearranged or forced with the explicit tense marking in the embedded clause such as *kii-*. Similarly, *kii-* in subordinate clauses can confirm a meaning anterior past to the action of the main verb. Therefore, conjunct markers work hand in hand with preverbs and particles to build relationships between chained and embedded clauses and build a system of coherence and cohesion.

In future research, it would be interesting to explore the nuance in meaning between *chi* and a fourth complementizer, namely short vowel *ka-*, whose use in Michif has not been discussed in literature. It is illustrated in the following example:

(157) Taande ka wiikiyenn?

taande	ka-	wiiki	-yenn
where	COMP-	live.AI	-2SG.CJ

'Where would you live?' (VD)

As such, both *chi* and short vowel *ka* seem to have some overlap in meaning, as they can both translate as *would* and speculate on general possibility. Ahenakew (1980:44) notes that the translation of *ka-* in Cree is particularly awkward unless it is in context:

(158) namôya nikâskitân **ka-**nipâyân.

namôya	ni-	kâskitâ	-n	**ka-**	nipâ	-yân
NEG	1SG-	able.AI	-1SG.IND	COMP-	sleep.AI	-1SG.CJ

'I can't sleep.' (Ahenakew, 1980: 44)

The general gloss Ahenakew (1980) provides for *ka-* is 'for [participant] to...' such as *ka-nipâyân* 'for me to sleep'. Although short vowel *ka* is not a topic of this overall discussion, it is certainly of interest for future research, in order to explore how its distribution and context of use plays into aspect and modality in Michif.

Chapter 6: Discussion

"Blood of my blood, sons (and dauhters) of my race, who are today gathered under my roof, follow in the footsteps of your ancestors, remain obedient to the faith, preserve the customs left by your ancestors, ***and above all, keep your language****"* Métis New Year's Blessing from Louis Schmidt (Payment, 2009: 69).

The preceding chapters have attempted to overview the process of working with stories in languages of the Michif/Métis. After recording a range of stories, this dissertation focuses on two separate aspects of narrative structure, in two different subsets of the corpus. In Chapter 4, we discussed Michif Fransay narratives through an interactional lens, while in Chapter 5, we considered the role of conjunct complementizers in the coherence and cohesion of mixed Michif stories. These findings are summarized in 6.1. Furthermore, the process of research, especially following principles of participatory action research and Indigenous methodology, can bear many parallels to the process of storytelling itself. In 6.2, we review the preceding chapters by examining similarities between both processes and how some research should be approached in the same way as storytelling. In 6.3, we look ahead to future directions for the project, particularly in the area of language revitalization.

6.1. Discussion of findings

As many of the narratives in Michif Fransay were told in group settings, the discussion in Chapter 4 centered around an interactional analysis of the narratives, most specifically on the importance of co-construction to oral history. With multiple co-tellers, there are two audiences which impact the direction of the narrative. First, all co-tellers have one common audience, i.e. the researcher listening to and recording the storytelling, as well as the other intended audiences for the ensemble of the recordings. The second group of addressees are the other co-tellers themselves, as they participate in conversational turn-taking to talk about each other's reminiscences about their childhoods, upbringings, and community. Although the presence of the outsider (the researcher) affects the framing of the stories, the co-tellers, through tokens of affirmation, negation and evaluative statements, provide valuable input for verifying the facts of the narratives and the commonalities or divergences in their experiences.

In terms of building an oral history, co-construction with multiple co-tellers provides dynamicity and nuances not necessarily available in individual narratives. First of all, we, as the outside audience, get a clearer sense of whether or not an individual experience is shared and common throughout the community. This information is provided to the outside audience by the

co-tellers' tokens of affirmation which not only encourage the speaking co-teller to continue in their story, but often affirm that they know of this event/experience and/or they have experienced it themselves. Whereas, in individually told narratives, it is not evidently clear why a certain fact or community event might not be mentioned, co-construction processes, such as evaluative comments and tokens of negation, provide indications as to whether co-tellers have forgotten, omitted, or have no real previous knowledge of said events. As such, co-constructed processes highlight divergences in co-tellers' experiences in their home community. These divergences are often explained by the co-tellers themselves through evaluative comments related to age, location, or socio-economic factors. The evaluative components of the narratives are particularly valuable as they provide an *insider perspective* on the community's and the speaker's history, unattainable through means of research other than oral history. As such, the Chapter 4 discussion of co-construction as an internal perspective and a type of peer review verification process in oral history constitutes one of the first of its kind.

Secondly, in Chapter 5, the discussion focused on a componential analysis of mixed Michif narratives. It examined complementizers in the conjunct verb order, as a crucial element of building narrative coherence and cohesion. The conjunct verb, which in mixed Michif typically occurs in subordinate clauses, relative clauses and open questions, is ordinarily preceded by a complementizer. In Chapter 5, we considered the distribution and contexts of occurrence of three of these complementizers in narratives to determine their role in narrative structure and their grammatical function. Firstly, the complementizer *chi* occurs in contexts of event modality, i.e. subject-oriented clauses. Along with modal particles, it indicates obligation, ability, permission, purpose, general possibility, all elements of dynamic and deontic modality.

The complementizer *aen*, on the other hand, seems to have two main functions. Its first context of occurrence is in clauses of propositional modality, including cases of direct and indirect evidence. *aen* occurs in cases of direct evidence including sensory evidence as well as personal knowledge, and indirect evidence, hearsay, and second or third-hand knowledge. Its second context of occurrence is to mark the imperfective aspect. The complementizer *aen* occurs often in narratives with the habitual particle *maana* 'used to', with stative verbs, and other durative/continuous contexts such as the habitual, non-progressive and progressive. The particle *aen* does not carry any meaning of tense, tense being typically determined in the main clause independent verb or by the context. If the conjunct does carry a tense marker, such as in the

combination *aen-kii-* (*aen + past*), it specifies anteriority of the progressive action to the main clause verb, as a pluperfect.

Finally, the complementizer *kaa* not only acts as a relativizer, introducing relative clauses, but also introduces perfective aspect. There is evidence from narratives that the perfective *kaa* is indeed not linked to tense: a conjunct with *kaa-* can mark an action that occurs prior, posteriorly or simultaneously to the main clause, or to the other verbs in the clause. The common denominator in these contexts of occurrence is that, in every case, the conjunct with *kaa* marks a completed action with no internal structure. Similarly to *aen*, when *kaa* occurs with past tense *kii-*, either in relative or perfective clauses, it specifically marks an anterior past.

The discussion in Chapter 5 looks to expand the discussion on the function of Michif complementizers by looking at their spontaneous use in oral stories and providing many examples to illustrate the consistency in their patterns of occurrence. It shows the value of research with stories, as the study of narratives reveals many functions of the complementizers not yet discussed in previous literature. The findings, furthermore, show the evolution of Michif from its parent language, i.e. Plains Cree, as the use of the conjunct and its complementizers is an aspect of Michif grammar which behaves differently than in Cree.

6.2. Research as storytelling

All research, and particularly Indigenous research which focuses on aspects as personal as stories, should be considered a process similar to storytelling itself. Going from a learner position in the face of a new research question to disseminating research findings follows many of the protocols of storytelling and the transmission of stories. The following discussion highlights these parallels, starting with the beginnings of research design all the way to its dissemination, using this research project as an example.

To consider research as a process similar to storytelling, we must first start by contextualizing the work in the same way that storytellers contextualize their stories. Storytellers identify themselves and give context for the time, place, and reason for the instance of storytelling. They also refer back to the source of the story and where they have lived, learned and/or received the story. I have attempted to do the same in my prologue: I introduced myself, my passions, and the motivations for this research project. In order to contextualize my work, I also situated myself within the Michif/Métis Nation, through my family history, both ancient and recent. Once the researcher is situated, the research itself is situated and contextualized within

storywork and narrative analysis (see Chapter 1) and within previous research on languages of the Michif people (Chapter 2).

In Chapter 2, I provide context for the stories, in terms of both time and place, by discussing the present day situation of languages unique to the Michif/ Métis. I discuss their genesis, as well as their sociopolitical reality. Furthermore, in Chapters 4 and 5, the stories are contextualized by discussing how storytellers and their stories are anchored in their homeland. This, along with an overview of previous research on language structure and grammar, contextualizes my research project. The history of the Michif/ Métis people, as a post-contact Indigenous people who played an integral role in the birth of the country, has generated considerable interest from many historians and ethnographers. Similarly, their unique ways of speaking have been at the centre of many linguistic studies, especially as contact languages (Bakker 1997; Bakker and Papen 1997; Meakins 2013; Sammons 2019; Gillon and Rosen 2018; Rosen et al. 2020). For example, mixed Michif's phonology, nominal systems and grammatical structure has long been studied, and whether or not these systems are truly mixed. Michif (French), on the other hand, has long been compared to French-Canadian and ways in which their phonology and grammatical structure diverge have long been discussed by a few linguists (Papen 1984; 1993; 2003; 2004; 2005; 2010; 2012a; 2012b; Papen and Marchand 2006; Rosen and Lacasse 2014).

Just as storytelling follows certain protocols, so does research. In research with and by Indigenous peoples, the researcher who takes on the role of addressee or listener also becomes the learner. Storytellers have a teaching or a goal in mind when they begin to speak. The role of the listener is to internalize these stories and critically reflect on what teachings they were meant to convey. Stories and their teachings are then passed on, from storyteller to listener, to storyteller to listener and so on, through generations of storytellers and listeners turned storytellers. This forms an oral tradition, a chain of storytellers who remain humble they pass along knowledge they have received as a gift from those who came before them.

In Indigenous research, it is crucial for the researcher to first assume the role of the learner and to recognize their elder and Indigenous consultants or co-researchers as experts and teachers. Once you have listened and internalized the knowledge passed on to you, you continue with humility to share what you have learned, while always following appropriate protocols. As we discussed in Chapter 3, following the principles and protocols of participatory action research

and Indigenous methodology is central to respecting the relationship between yourself as the researcher, your teachers and experts, or storytellers, and the knowledge you have shared. Part of the process is learning what constitutes a positive relationship for the community of study, and to do so, many researchers turn to ethnography and participant relationships. These principles are also central to the process in which you expand this relationship to include new learners and new listeners, through the dissemination of the collective work and projects.

Once listeners have internalized the stories they hear from storytellers and/or elders, often over the course of many sessions or ceremonies, they may often become storytellers themselves, passing on what they know and remember from their elders to the next generation. In the process of research as storytelling, once the researcher has become the learner during the process of fieldwork, data collection and analysis, their role morphs into one of teacher for the next generation of students and for their peers. Always with a good heart and a sense of humility, we share what we have learned and reflected upon for others to internalize.

After *many* sessions of listening, transcribing, translating, coding, rereading and reflecting on the stories that were shared, and after discussing them with their owners (the storytellers themselves), many themes, possible outcomes and purposes emerge. It is now up to researchers to share what they have learned and tell their story. We have considered how some data could inform previous research on Michif languages in terms of language structure, grammar, and sociolinguistic questions of attitudes, perceptions, and ethnolinguistics (as discussed in Chapter 2). Secondly, in the functional analysis of narratives, we pass on the story of what it means to be Michif and speak a language of the Michif/Métis, and the way of life in Michif communities. In Chapter 4, we discuss stories from St. Eustache and St. Laurent and what the co-tellers share about growing up in these Michif communities. We also discuss how the interaction between multiple storytellers can give life to the dynamicity of storytelling and building an oral tradition and history. The process of co-construction, in this sense, is also a process of verification: co-tellers work together to provide the listeners with a historical narrative as accurate and nuanced as possible. This work, we hope, can lead the way to more storywork with multiple co-tellers in group settings, especially in building a recent oral history for communities with an oral tradition.

Lastly, we have reflected on both the content and the format of these stories. A componential analysis of narratives is crucial to understanding the structure of the language

itself, especially in regards to building cohesion and coherence in a sequence of events, which in turn is central to the success of any communicative interaction between speaker and addressee and to fluency in a language. In Chapter 5, we discuss a key element of (mixed) Michif narrative structure, conjunct complementizers, and what their contexts of occurrence in narratives can teach us about their meaning and morphosyntactic function. Through the sequence of stories, we can establish consistent patterns in the use of complementizers *aen, chi* and *kaa*. As markers of aspect and modality, these complementizers are central to the coherence and organization of a Michif narrative. We discuss their interaction with modal verbs, particles, and prefixes of tense to express propositional and evidential modality, as well as perfective and imperfective aspects.

Just as storytelling is often open-ended and discontinuous, so is this project. It is impossible to transmit and discuss the entirety of knowledge and linguistic questions held in these stories and their structure in one dissertation. As such, this project must be considered a starting point, one contribution amidst more to come in the future, as more pieces of the research come together in a story that continues to evolve and grow.

We hope we have shown just *how much* we learn through stories. We often think of what stories can teach us about our traditional way of life and the way our ancestors and elders lived and experienced life including what they knew about the natural and spiritual worlds around them. Stories can help us heal, through the powerful reclamation of lost/ forgotten/ stolen knowledge and history, but also through emotion, whether it be laughter, tears, or awe. They bring together generations and give a sense of togetherness, shared experience, and learning. If this can all be learned and internalized from the content of the stories, there is also much to learn about *how* the stories are told. This is the value of telling family stories, in the family's language or mother tongue. The listener does not only internalize the content of the stories, but also the language in which it is told: the protocols, the turns of phrase as well as conventions and their communicative purpose; discourse markers, narrative strategies used for building humour, suspense, laughter or effect; language structure to build coherent and cohesive stories. Stories can be a powerful language learning tool. Understanding their narrative structure, we believe, can contribute to building language learning resources.

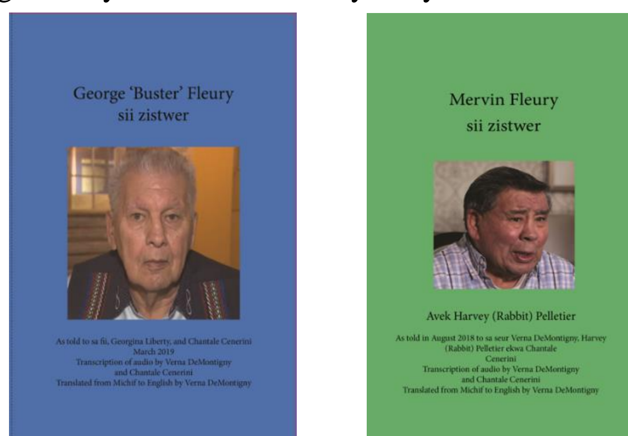
6.3. Future research

There were three long-term goals for this storytelling documentation project: 1) to contribute to the description of Michif languages; 2) build a legacy for families of Michif speakers; 3) build

language learning resources, based on the narratives, that are intuitive to Michif/Métis learners and that reflect an appropriate elevel of cultural knowledge. There is value to placing language in spontaneous interactions, such as conversations and storytelling, to language learning and applied linguistics. As we discussed in 3.4.8, community-based projects with collaborative components often have multiple outputs. In Chapter 3, we discussed some of the areas of future work that could serve to disseminate the corpus and body of the stories recorded as part of this project.

One of the first additional uses to which this research can be put is to share the stories with the speakers and their families as well as to archive them for prosperity. In the case of mixed Michif, some of the speakers who were recorded have moved on in their journey back to the spirit world. As such, it was crucial for me, before going on to any furhter work, to share their stories with their families. Although there are many oral recordings of Michif languages, most of which have been archived, they are not typically easily accessible to the public, with transcriptions and transliterations/translations for accessibility. Figure 15 are the front covers of the books created for two speakers, George Fleury and Mervin Fleury. Both books contain each speaker's respective corpus of stories and line by line translations to English. Each book is accompanied by a CD sleeve with the original audio separated in tracks. Each page is marked with a time stamp and track number. These enable family members and friends learning their ancestral language to follow the voice of their relative, elder or friend.

Figure 15: George Fleury and Mervin Fleury storybooks



Another avenue of future work is firstly, to create similar resources for the remaining corpuses which have been transcribed and verified as part of this research. The plan is to disseminate similar edited resources to the larger public, in either a print or online format. These resources

would be geared to educators and the general public interested in learning the language and as well as the academic community interested in pursuing research in Michif discourse and morphosyntax.

There are indeed many more aspects of mixed Michif and Michif Fransay discourse and morphosyntax that could be studied through the narratives gathered in this project. In the case of mixed Michif, this includes but is not limited to, the use of invariable modal and aspectual particles in relation to the complementizers *chi, aen* and *kaa*, as well as discourse particles. Furthermore, there are many complex verbs which have surfaced in the narratives that could be included to expand already existing online dictionaries of Michif (michif.org; atlas-michif.org).

In the case of Michif Fransay, a structural study to properly understand the complexity of the verbal system, verb serialization and evidentiality could be undertaken. The study on the process of co-construction led to a discussion of the insider perspectives co-tellers provide on their shared and lived experiences. To deepen the question of insider perspectives and worldview, there is the possibility of turning to other cognitive questions such as conceptual metaphors, idioms and other figures of speech found in narratives.

Finally, the third goal listed above is to bring linguistic knowledge and language learning together by using storytelling as a language learning resource. One of the projects that most inspired this work was presented by Ignace and Ignace at the International Conference for Language Documentation and Conservation in 2017. They shared their progress on an upcoming story app(lication) currently in development by the First Nations Centre in British Columbia for the Shuswap nation and the Secwepemctsin language (Klassen 2016; Ignace and Ignace 2017). The goal of the app, which has yet to be released, is many-fold: firstly, it is an opportunity to rewrite and retranslate Secwepemc oral history in Secwepemctsin, as all existing written records of epic stories had previously been in English. For the app, the reconstruction of the Tlli7sa story was made by elders from fragments recorded by many different researchers. Secondly, another goal for the app is language learning: lessons and exercises surrounding the story concern more complex aspects of the language, such as grammar and discourse notes. These lessons address the community's need for resources for advanced language learners trying to achieve fluency (Ignace and Ignace 2017). The epic story is broken down into 18 storybook episodes, with exercises and grammar notes, transcriptions, audio and full morpheme breakdowns. This project is an inspiring example of many different people in various roles coming together: elders, youth,

educators from the community and linguists. It is also an example of a language learning tool primarily focused and designed for speakers and the language community. At the same time, it is also beneficial to linguists and language researchers. In fact, Ignace and Ignace (2017) reported that the stories allowed them to gain insight on Secwepemctsin evidentiality, tense and verb serialization, as well as the discovery of new lexical items and meanings. It is my hope to see a series of resources similar to this concept focusing on local Michif communities and their languages.

Ultimately, the goal of this work was to design it in a way to meet communities' needs and desires and celebrate both the diversity and cohesion of the Métis nation. This work is also meant to honor my ancestors and my home, the Prairies, which are Michif/ Métis homeland and the traditional territory and the home of Indigenous Plains peoples. The stories of this land are best understood in its ancestral languages and I think it is important for everyone who calls this place home to take the time to understand and recognize that this land's history is rooted in the Indigenous worldview and experience of life. *Ekoshi*. *Si tot*.

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