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***eh-ani-pahkaanikiishweyank:***

▽" Δσ<" ðσρζ.γ,^

## Approaching Language Change in Anihshiniimowin

**by**

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## A Thesis

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in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements  
for the Degree of**

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## Abbreviations

<b>C</b>	<b>consonant</b>
<b>Cor</b>	<b>coronal</b>
<b>dir</b>	<b>direct</b>
<b>excl</b>	<b>exclusive (as in 1p)</b>
<b>indef</b>	<b>indefinite (as in imp)</b>
<b>incl</b>	<b>inclusive (as in 21)</b>
<b>L1</b>	<b>first language</b>
<b>L2</b>	<b>second language</b>
<b>MS</b>	<b>modern speaker</b>
<b>na</b>	<b>animate noun</b>
<b>nad</b>	<b>dependent animate noun</b>
<b>ni</b>	<b>inanimate noun</b>
<b>obv</b>	<b>obviative</b>
<b>pl</b>	<b>plural</b>
<b>poss</b>	<b>possessor</b>
<b>prox</b>	<b>proximate</b>
<b>REL</b>	<b>relational</b>
<b>sg</b>	<b>singular</b>
<b>subj</b>	<b>subject</b>
<b>TS</b>	<b>traditional speaker</b>
<b>V</b>	<b>vowel</b>
<b>vai</b>	<b>animate intransitive verb</b>
<b>vii</b>	<b>inanimate intransitive verb</b>
<b>vta</b>	<b>transitive animate verb</b>
<b>vti</b>	<b>transitive inanimate verb</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>first person singular (I/me)</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>second person singular (you)</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>third person singular (she/he)</b>
<b>3'</b>	<b>third person obviative (the other one)</b>
<b>1p</b>	<b>first person exclusive plural (we/us but not you)</b>
<b>21</b>	<b>first person inclusive plural (we/us including you)</b>
<b>2p</b>	<b>second person plural (you)</b>
<b>3p</b>	<b>third person plural (they)</b>
<b>imp</b>	<b>impersonal (indefinite actor)</b>

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members themselves, who are aware of generational differences in their language and consider them to represent loss or decay. While speakers are aware that change has taken place, they are not able to identify what these changes are. Fear of the potential loss of the traditional language provoked many people to share their concerns about the language with me.

## **1.2 Aims**

The purpose of this research is to describe some of the phonological, morphological, and lexical features that distinguish the modern variety of Anihshininiimowin from the traditional variety. With this knowledge, a greater understanding of the universal process of language change is gained. Changes in language often appear to be a sign of weakness or loss of the authenticity of the ancestral language. It is hoped that the contents of this thesis show otherwise, that in fact, change is a sign of the vitality of this language that is adapting to the ever-evolving world around it. At the same time, there is a sincere hope that the information herein will draw attention to those areas that are of concern to language maintenance efforts in the community.

## **1.3 Methodology**

The primary method employed to investigate the differences between elder and middle aged speakers was elicitation. Elicitations focused mainly on areas of Anihshininiimowin where signs of language change have been observed in previous research by J.D. Nichols (personal communication). These preliminary observations were

also used to determine the age categories of participants. Community members in two age groups were asked to participate. The traditional speaker group was represented by those of approximately 60 years of age, while the modern speaker group was represented by those of approximately 30 years of age. No further criteria were employed in the selection process; any community member in these age categories who was available and willing to participate was accepted.

Two people from the elder age group participated regularly in elicitation sessions during which samples of their language were recorded. The group of modern speakers consisted of one speaker who participated throughout and two others who were alternately available. This group also consists of other speakers who occasionally volunteered to share their knowledge of the language by offering a few words or phrases.

A second method used to investigate language change was the comparison of recorded texts. Several conversational texts between speakers of both the traditional and modern varieties were recorded as well as three short monologues by a modern speaker. These texts were transcribed with the assistance of Jerry Sawanas who is originally from the Anihshiniimowin community of Sandy Lake, Ontario.

#### **1.4 The speakers**

The three main speakers who participated in this research are traditional speakers one and two (TS1 and TS2), and modern speaker one (MS1). Modern speakers two and three (MS2 and MS3) also made significant contributions although they were not available for all sessions. Additional speakers were added following the same coding system but do

not appear consistently throughout the data. Some speakers were not available for elicitation but were willing to participate in a recorded conversation. While every effort was made to recruit the same speakers during the four trips to the community, this was not always possible. For example MS3 was introduced when MS2 became unavailable. A brief description of each speaker is given below.

TS1 is a female speaker of approximately 60 years of age. She is originally from a more northern community in the Severn area and, as a result, shows predictable phonological differences in comparison to traditional speakers from the community she now lives in.

TS2 has lived in many different areas throughout his life and is thereby very aware of dialect differences as well as internal word structure. This speaker, a male of approximately 65 years of age, also originates from a more northern community and has predictable regional differences in his language. He has also lived among the Anishinaabe and the Cree but has lived many years in this community speaking Anihshiniimowin. Both traditional speakers one and two are also fluent in English.

TS3 is a female of approximately 55 years of age who participated in a recorded conversational text with TS1 but did not participate in elicitation sessions.

All modern speakers are female and bilingual, although degree of fluency in English varies. The three main participants in elicitation sessions (MS1, MS2, and MS3) have all lived in Wunnumin Lake all of their lives. While it would have been ideal to control for gender in this study, the way in which participants were selected in the community did not allow for it. Typically community members are nominated as potential

participants based on several criteria. Aside from age, these include availability and perceived linguistic ability. People were often recommended based on their reputation for being a skilled speaker.

The approximate ages of modern speaker participants are as follows:

<b>Speaker</b>	<b>Age</b>
MS1	35-40
MS2	30-35
MS3	25-30
MS4	25-30
MS5	25-30
MS6	25-30
MS7	25-30
MS8	25-30



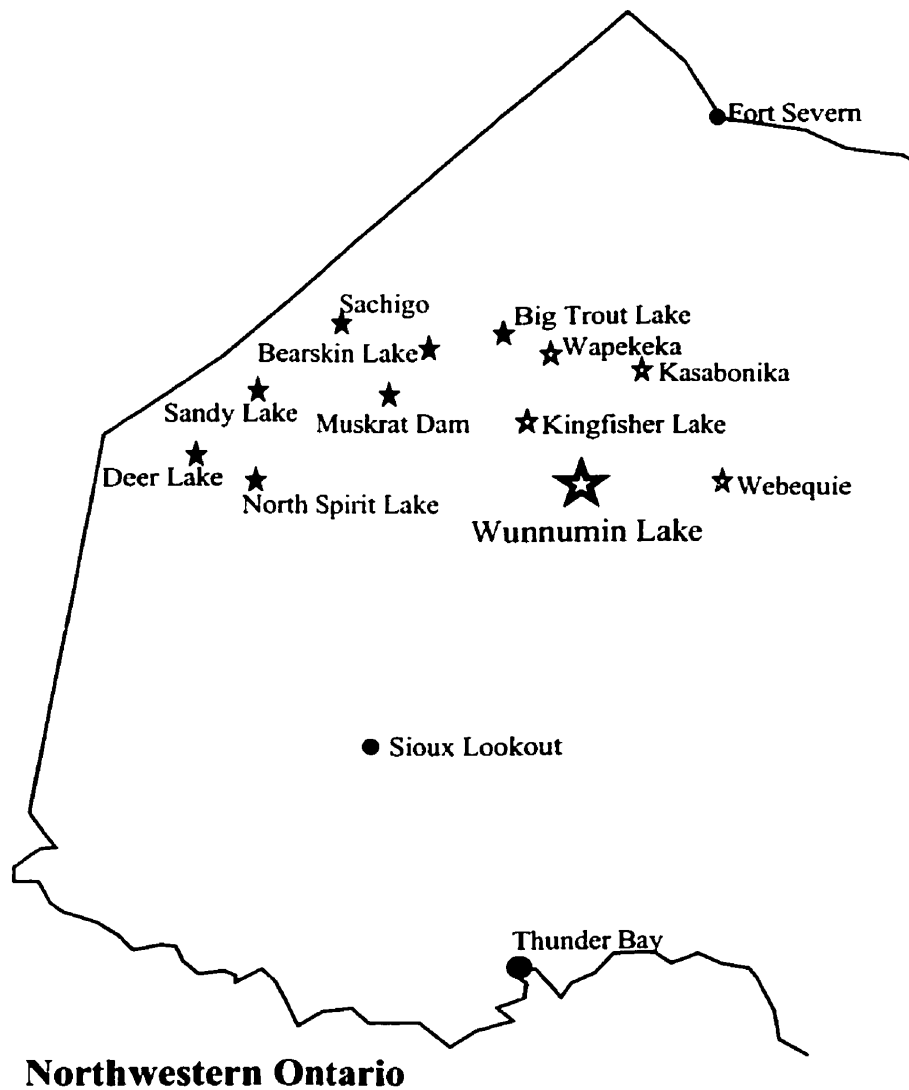
dialects of Cree have had on Anihshiniimowin are discussed by L.P. Valentine (1990, 1995) and J.R. Valentine (1994). For example, Swampy Cree is spoken in the northern area surrounding this dialect and thus borrowing is enabled through language contact. Other factors contributing to the influence of Cree in the past include the fact that it was spoken by missionaries and used as a trade language. Plains Cree has affected the language in the Severn region through the Cree Bible, as has Moose Cree through its role as a liturgical language in Anglican churches in Anihshiniimowin communities.

Geographical variation within Anihshiniimowin has been used to identify sub-dialects in the Severn area. J.R. Valentine (1994) cites Nichols's 1976 survey in which two sub-dialects of Anihshiniimowin are identified, the Big Trout area, and the Deer Lake area. Current treatment of this dialect includes three sub-dialect areas, North, East and Southwest. The community where the research for this thesis took place falls within the East sub-dialect. This sub-dialect is often referred to as the *n*-dialect because it has retained the nasal obstruent clusters (*nC*). This is not, however, a unique identifier as the Southwest sub-dialect has also retained nasal obstruent clusters while only the North sub-dialect has not. Communities within the East sub-dialect are listed as Wapekeka (Angling Lake), Kasabonika, Kingfisher, Webequie<sup>4</sup> and Wunnumin. North sub-dialect communities include Bearskin, Big Trout Lake, Muskrat Dam, and Sachigo. Communities in the Southwest sub-dialect include Deer Lake, North Spirit Lake and Sandy Lake.

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<sup>4</sup> Webequie is included here although its position is uncertain.

In the following map of northwestern Ontario, a star is used to mark the approximate location of Anihshiniimowin communities. Communities within the East sub-dialect are indicated by an open star.



## **2.2 Introduction to Wunnumin Lake First Nation**

Data for this research was collected in Wunnumin Lake, Ontario which is situated 500 kilometers north of Thunder Bay, Ontario. This Anihshiniimowin community of approximately 520 people is one of a minority of First Nations communities in Canada in which its ancestral language continues to be spoken by all members of the community and continues to be the first language acquired by infants. Children and teens use the language with their peers, a sign of language vitality in this community.

Like all other Severn communities, Wunnumin Lake is only accessible by air with the exception of ice roads in the winter. This isolation may be largely responsible for the strength of this dialect of Ojibwe. There are usually only a few non-Native people living in the community serving as nurses, teachers and store employees. For this reason, English can be heard spoken at the nursing station, the school, the store, and occasionally elsewhere in the community where interactions with English speaking people are more common, such as the band office.

### **2.2.1 Language in the community**

While Anihshiniimowin is the predominant language for the people of Wunnumin Lake, it is estimated that half of the community members are now bilingual. However, as discussed in the previous section, the role of English in the community remains quite limited. Anihshiniimowin is used as the main language at the local store where usually only one or two management staff come from outside the community. Even these people typically learn some Anihshiniimowin vocabulary as their employees use it among

themselves and with customers. It continues to be used for local radio broadcasts including social events such as local hockey tournaments and bingo games as well as community announcements and other programs. Church services are primarily in Anihshiniimowin and Cree (the language of the Bible) although the Sunday evening service is said to be at least partly in English. At major community events such as graduation, speeches are given in the Native language as well as in English to accommodate the teachers from outside. In other words, English is, for the most part, only used when there is an audience that is not fluent in the Native language.

The greatest exposure to English in the community is through the media. Nearly all homes are equipped with cable or satellite television and a Winnipeg English newspaper is sometimes available in the community. Despite this, community members are proud that Anihshiniimowin continues to be the dominant language in Wunnumin Lake and are saddened by neighbouring communities that have seen a near complete shift to English in their youth population.

### **2.2.2 Education**

In the past, elementary schools in northwestern Ontario were run by the federal government and all education was in English<sup>5</sup>. Ningewance (1992-93) reports that people in the communities had a positive attitude toward these schools and believed that English education would provide the best future for their children. In recent years, there has been a change to locally-controlled schooling and curricula have changed to reflect this.

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<sup>5</sup> Government controlled education is believed to have been introduced into Wunnumin Lake in the 60s or early 70s.

Local control of education began in 1988 in Wunnumin Lake and in 1998 the bilingual / bicultural curriculum was introduced. The aim of this curriculum is to educate students first and foremost in Anihshiniimowin and about Anihshiniimowin culture while also preparing them to function outside the community. Children begin their first level of Kindergarten at age four (K4) where an emphasis is placed on learning the syllabic writing system (described in section 2.3.2 below). The first four years (K4, K5, grade 1 and grade 2) are taught in Anihshiniimowin with English being introduced as a second language beginning in the third grade. For the remaining years English is the main language of education with language classes in Anihshiniimowin continuing throughout.

### **2.2.3 Literacy**

All Anihshiniimowin communities use the syllabics writing system although the degree of literacy varies from one community to the next. Syllabics “is a shorthand-based script written left to right, employing geometric characters, some representing syllables and some representing single segments” (Nichols 1996: 599). The syllabic orthography used in Anihshiniimowin communities is described in detail in section 2.3.2 below. The early emphasis on learning syllabics in Wunnumin Lake reflects the value placed on literacy in Anihshiniimowin; it is considered an important aspect of language learning. This is also reflected by the education authority’s desire for all Native teachers to be literate in syllabics and all non-Native teachers to achieve a certain level of fluency in the language. There is pride among parents in the community whose children are able to read and write in syllabics. The middle generation is typically not literate in syllabics due to

English education in the past. This generation and the generations following are generally able to read and write in English, the younger generation being literate in both the syllabic orthography and the Roman orthography used in writing English.

## **2.3 Anihshininiimowin writing systems**

### **2.3.1 Roman orthography**

The Roman orthography used to represent the sounds of Anihshininiimowin is described in this section. All Anihshininiimowin examples in this thesis are transcribed using this orthography as well as the pointed variety of the syllabic orthography described in 2.3.2. The Roman orthography presented in this section is not used within the community; it is used only by linguists and some linguistically-trained speakers.

#### **2.3.1.1 Consonants**

The consonants in Anihshininiimowin are:

<i>p</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>k</i>	
	<i>s</i>	<i>sh</i>	<i>h</i>
		<i>c</i>	
<i>m</i>	<i>n</i>		
<i>w</i>		<i>y</i>	

Phonetic values for the orthographic symbols shown above are as in IPA with the exception of *c* and *sh* for which the IPA equivalents are [č] and [ʃ] respectively. The voiceless consonants *p*, *t*, *k*, *s*, and *sh* can be voiced intervocalically and following nasals.

The following nasal, pre-aspirated and fricative clusters are also present:

nasal clusters	<i>nt, nk, ns, nsh, nc, mp</i>
pre-aspirated clusters	<i>hp, ht, hk, hs, hsh, hc, hw</i>
fricative clusters	<i>sk, shp, sht, shk</i>

### 2.3.1.2 Vowels

There are seven vowels, three short and four long. Long vowels are written double with the exception of long *e* which is written single as it has no short counterpart. The long vowels are:

	front	back
high	<i>ii</i>	<i>oo</i>
low	<i>e</i>	<i>aa</i>

The short vowels are:

	front	back
high	<i>i</i>	<i>o</i>
low	<i>a</i>	

### 2.3.2 Syllabic orthography

The syllabics system of writing was developed and introduced in the mid 1800s by James Evans (Murdoch 1985, Nichols 1996). Nichols (1996) describes Evans as a Wesleyan missionary who worked among the Cree and Ojibwe of northern Manitoba. In Evans' syllabic orthography each symbol represents an open syllable (V or CV). Closed syllables (VC or CVC) are marked by the addition of a symbol known as a *final* which takes the form of a superscript following the syllabic character and indicates the nature of the final consonant. A syllable beginning with *w* or having CwV is marked with a dot following the syllabic. In *pointed* syllabics vowel length is marked with a dot on top of the syllabic symbol; however many writers use *plain* syllabics in which the distinction in vowel length is not written (Nichols 1996). Other distinctions that are not always made in *plain* syllabics are the marking of pre-aspirated (fortis) consonants using the *h* final " preceding



The following chart presents a sub-set of the syllabic characters, known as the Western Cree Syllabary, used by the Eastern Big Trout group in northwestern Ontario which includes Wunnumin Lake. As can be seen from this chart, the shape of the symbol is determined by the consonant in a given syllable while the direction of the symbol is determined by the vowel.

### The Western Cree Syllabary

Consonants	Vowels				Finals
	e	i	o	a	
	▽	△	▷	◁	
w	▽·	△·	▷·	◁·	o
p	∨	∧	>	<	'
t	U	∩	⌋	⌈	/
k	q	p	d	b	\
c	γ	∩	⌋	⌈	-
m	⌈	⌈	⌈	⌈	ε
n	⌋	⌋	⌋	⌋	3
s	⌋	⌋	⌋	⌋	~
š	2	S	2	S	u
y	4	4	4	4	o
r	3▽	3△	3▷	3◁	3
l	ε▽	ε△	ε▷	ε◁	ε
nk					x
h					"

The Eastern Cree Syllabary (see Fiero 1985), used in some Cree and Lac Seul Ojibwe communities<sup>6</sup>, uses two sets of finals, both distinct from Western, as well as different representations for the r and l syllabics. In the Eastern Syllabary the diacritic marking *w* is placed on the left of the vowel syllabic rather than the right.

## **2.4 Typological overview**

A brief discussion of Anihshiniimowin typology is presented in this section. For a more detailed description of this dialect of Ojibwe see Todd 1970, J.R. Valentine 1994, and Rogers 1964. For an in-depth discussion of communicative practices see L.P. Valentine 1990, 1994, 1995.

Anihshiniimowin, like all Algonquian languages, has a polysynthetic structure consisting of a rich system of inflectional and derivational morphology. The language consists of three main parts of speech: nouns and verbs, which are inflected, and particles, which are not inflected.

### **2.4.1 Inflectional morphology**

#### **2.4.1.1 Nouns**

Nouns have inherent gender, they are either animate or inanimate. Gender is not marked in the noun stem, but rather by the form of the plural suffix. Animate nouns are marked for plurality with the suffix *-ak*, and inanimate nouns with *-an*. For example:

---

<sup>6</sup> Cree communities include Fort Albany, Attawapiskat, Kashechewan, Winisk and Fort Severn; Lac Seul Ojibwe communities include Lac Seul, Cat Lake, Osnaburg, Pikangikum, Poplar Hill, Fort Hope, Lansdowne House and Webequie (Fiero 1985).

## (a) animate nouns

<i>mahkwa</i>	L" b·	‘bear’
<i>mahkwak</i>	L" b·`	‘bears’
<i>ihkwe</i>	Δ" 9·	‘woman’
<i>ihkwewak</i>	Δ" 9·◁·`	‘women’
<i>ahkih</i>	◁" ρ" `	‘pot, pail, kettle’
<i>ahkihwak</i>	◁" ρ" b·`	‘pots, pails, kettles’

## (b) inanimate nouns

<i>mahkisin</i>	L" ρʹʹ	‘shoe’
<i>mahkisinan</i>	L" ρʹʹ aʹ	‘shoes’
<i>pimihsewin</i>	ΛΓ" ʹΔ·ʹ	‘airplane’
<i>pimihsewinan</i>	ΛΓ" ʹΔ·aʹ	‘airplanes’
<i>nakwaakan</i>	a b·bʹ	‘snare’
<i>nakwaakanan</i>	a b·baʹ	‘snares’

The gender categorization of nouns is somewhat predictable where mostly living things, such as animals, people and plants, are animate, and non-living things are inanimate. There are however exceptions to this pattern, for example, socks, which are not usually thought of as living, are animate.

Some nouns, such as kinship terms and body parts, are inalienable or dependent. These nouns are not able to stand on their own, but must be marked for possession by way of a personal prefix. For example:

## (c) dependent nouns

<i>nimaamaa</i>	σĠĠ	‘my mother’
<i>kitaanihs</i>	PĊσ" ^	‘your daughter’
<i>onihk</i>	▷σ" \	‘her/his arm’
<i>minihk</i>	Γσ" \	‘someone’s arm’

Nouns can also take obviative (as in (d)), locative (e), diminutive (f) and pejorative (g) suffixes.

## (d) animate obviative suffix (-an)

<i>shiihshiip</i>	Š" Š'	‘duck’
<i>shiihshiipan</i>	Š" Š<?	‘duck (obviative)’

## inanimate obviative suffix (-ini)

<i>tehsapiwin</i>	U" ʎ^Δ.?	‘chair’
<i>tehsapiwinini</i>	U" ʎ^Δ.σσ	‘chair (obviative)’

## (e) locative suffix (-ink)

<i>waahkaahikan</i>	ᐱ." ᐅ" Δᐅ?	‘house’
<i>waahkaahikanink</i>	ᐱ." ᐅ" Δᐅσ>\	‘in/at/to a house’
	(ᐱ." ᐅ" Δᐅσ <sup>x</sup> )	

## (f) diminutive suffix (-enhs)

<i>mahkisin</i>	L" Pʔ?	‘shoe’
<i>mahkisininhs</i>	L" Pʔᐅ>" ^	‘small shoe’

## (g) pejorative suffix (-ihsh)

<i>ciimaan</i>	ʃĠ?	‘boat, canoe’
<i>ciimaanihsh</i>	ʃĠσ" ^	‘worthless boat, canoe’

### 2.4.1.2 Verbs

Verbs in Ojibwe are categorized by transitivity and animacy. There are four categories which are distinguished by the selection of stem morphology and inflectional paradigms. Intransitive verbs can have either an animate or inanimate subject. The former are labeled animate intransitive (vai), and the latter inanimate intransitive (vii). Transitive verbs are classified as transitive animate (vta) or transitive inanimate (vti) based on the gender of their object. Verbs can be inflected in three distinct inflectional paradigms known as verbal orders: independent, conjunct, and imperative. Generally, verbs in main clauses are inflected in the independent order (as in (a)), verbs in dependent clauses are inflected in the conjunct order (b), and commands are inflected in the imperative order (c).

(a) Independent order

'she/he is sleeping right now'

*nipaa mekwaac*

σ< 7b.~

(b) Conjunct order

'if they are sleeping...'

*nipaawaac...*

σ< <1.~

(c) Imperative order

'don't go to sleep yet'

*kaawin mahshi nipaana*

bΔ.~ L" S σ<~

In the following table the vai inflections are shown using the verb *nipaa*  $\sigma\sigma<$  'sleep'.

		<b>Independent</b>	<b>Conjunct</b>	<b>Imperative</b>
<b>1</b>	(I)	<u>ninipaa</u> $\sigma\sigma<$	<u>nipaayaan</u> $\sigma<\text{y}$	
<b>2</b>	(you)	<u>kinipaa</u> $P\sigma<$	<u>nipaayan</u> $\sigma<\text{y}$	<u>nipaan</u> $\sigma<\text{y}$
<b>3</b>	(s/he)	<u>nipaa</u> $\sigma<$	<u>nipaac</u> $\sigma<^{\text{~}}$	
<b>3'</b>	(the other) obviative	<u>nipaawan</u> $\sigma<\text{d}$	<u>nipaanic</u> $\sigma<\sigma^{\text{~}}$	
<b>imp</b>	(indef.)	<u>nipaaniwan</u> $\sigma<\sigma\text{d}$	<u>nipaaniwank</u> $\sigma<\sigma\text{d}$	
<b>1p</b>	(we excl.)	<u>ninipaamin</u> $\sigma\sigma<\text{r}$	<u>nipaayaan</u> $\sigma<\text{y}$	
<b>21</b>	(we incl.)	<u>kinipaamin</u> $P\sigma<\text{r}$	<u>nipaayank</u> $\sigma<\text{y}$	
<b>2p</b>	(you pl.)	<u>kinipaanaawaa</u> $P\sigma<\text{a d}$	<u>nipaayek</u> $\sigma<\text{y}$	<u>nipaak</u> $\sigma<\text{y}$
<b>3p</b>	(they)	<u>nipaawak</u> $\sigma<\text{d}$	<u>nipaawaac</u> $\sigma<\text{d}$	

Verbs are also inflected for tense, mode and negation. Tenses are marked by preverbs that follow the personal prefixes and include past, neutral (unmarked), future, and voluntative. Examples showing each of these preverbs are given in (d):

- (d) *kii-* past *nikii-nipaa*  $\sigma P\sigma<$  'I slept'  
*ka-* future *nika-nipaa*  $\sigma b\sigma<$  'I will sleep'  
*wii-* voluntative *niwii-nipaa*  $\sigma \Delta \sigma<$  'I want to sleep'

Negation is marked in the independent order with the combination of a suffix and a negative particle. For example:

- (e) *kaawin ninipaahsiin*  $b\Delta \sigma\sigma<\text{r}$  'I am not sleeping'

Modes, in the independent and conjunct orders, are marked by suffixes and include neutral, preterit, dubitative and preterit dubitative. Verbs in the neutral mode are unmarked (as in (f)), the preterit marks past completed actions or irrealis forms (g),

dubitative marks uncertainty (h), and the preterit dubitative (i) marks a combination of the previous two as suggested by the name. Examples (f) through (i) are in the independent order.

(f)	neutral			
	<i>nipaa</i>	$\sigma \dot{<}$		‘she/he is sleeping’
(g)	preterit			
	<i>nipaapan</i>	$\sigma \dot{<} \dot{>}$		‘she/he was sleeping’
(h)	dubitative			
	<i>nipaatok</i>	$\sigma \dot{<} \dot{>}$		‘she/he must be sleeping’
(i)	preterite dubitative			
	<i>nipaakopan</i>	$\sigma \dot{<} \dot{d} \dot{>}$		‘she/he must have been sleeping’

#### 2.4.1.3 Particles

Particles are uninflectable words that serve many functions including conjunctions, demonstratives, adverbials and exclamations to name a few. For example:

(a)	<i>ekwa</i>	$\nabla b \cdot$	‘and, so’
	<i>ahko</i>	$\dot{<}'' d$	‘usually’
	<i>kaye</i>	$b \dot{<}$	‘and, also, too, as for’
	<i>eha</i>	$\nabla'' C$	‘only’
	<i>acina</i>	$\dot{<} \dot{r} a$	‘a while’
	<i>kahkina</i>	$b'' P a$	‘all, every’
	<i>weti</i>	$\nabla \cdot \cap$	‘there, over there’

### 2.4.2 Derivational morphology

Derivational affixes are usually found closer to the root morpheme than inflectional affixes. Within the category of derivational morphology in Anihshininiimowin, a distinction is made between primary and secondary stem derivation. In primary derivation, a stem is formed by joining bound constituents, typically a root in initial position, an optional medial, and a final. For example:

(a)	<i>tahkahkamikaa</i>	<i>tahk</i>	<i>ahkamik</i>	<i>aa</i>
	ᑕᑦᑲᑦᑲᑭᑲ	Root	Medial	Final
	'it is cold earth'	cold	earth, ground	vii

In secondary derivation, a new stem is typically formed by adding a final to an already existing stem. In example (b) a noun is derived from an animate intransitive verb stem by adding the final *-win*.

(b)	<i>nikamowin</i>	<i>nikamo</i>	<i>win</i>
	ᑎᑲᑭᑲᑭᑲᑭ	Stem (vai)	Final
	'song'	'sing'	nominal

### 2.5 Summary

In this chapter Anihshininiimowin, the most northern dialect of Ojibwe, was introduced. This dialect is characterized by both its unique features and its similarities to Cree. Anihshininiimowin continues to be the dominant language in Wunnumin Lake First Nation, the community in which this research is based. Section 2.2 provided an outline of the language, education and literacy in Wunnumin Lake, Ontario. The remainder of the chapter consisted of a description of Anihshininiimowin orthographies, including Roman and syllabic, and a typological overview of Anihshininiimowin.

### **3. LANGUAGE CHANGE**

#### **3.1 Introduction and outline**

“In a world where humans grow old, tadpoles change into frogs, and milk turns into cheese, it would be strange if language alone remained unaltered” (Aitchison 1991:4). As the previous quotation suggests, all languages change over time. As long as a language continues to be spoken, it is inevitable that it will evolve through the process of language change. Languages do not, however, evolve independently of their speakers. Changes emerge from the innovations of speakers. Section 3.2 examines several mechanisms of language change: language contact, cultural change, and child language acquisition. This section also explores how these mechanisms of change can lead to language obsolescence and ultimately language death.

In section 3.3 the question of how speakers’ innovations spread throughout a language and ultimately result in change is addressed. The rate of language change is not predictable, change occurs at variable rates. When change occurs at a rate such that it can be detected from one generation to the next, it is then often accompanied by the attitude that innovations are sub-standard, non-authentic varieties of language, and sometimes by concerns of language death. This is the case in Anihshiniimowin where some speakers are aware that differences exist between older and younger speakers. While most speakers are not able to identify what these differences are; there is a general concern that they represent language loss. The belief that change is equated with loss and the attitudes

associated with it are discussed in section 3.4. This section also explores the effects that these attitudes can have on a language and its speakers.

Section 3.5 considers what can be gained from exposing these attitudes and recognizing all varieties of language as authentic, with a focus on that which is of particular importance for Anihshininiimowin. Finally, a summary of chapter 3 is provided in section 3.6.

## **3.2 Mechanisms of change**

The causes of language change are too many and too complex to address in one section of a thesis. However, potential factors that enable this process can be discussed as a means of better understanding change in Anihshininiimowin and in all languages. Several mechanisms of change including language contact, cultural change, and child language acquisition are considered in this section.

### **3.2.1 Language contact**

Languages change in many ways as a result of regular interaction between their speakers. Language contact can result in lexical borrowing, an increase in structural similarities, and under extreme conditions, the development of pidgins and even language death (Hock and Joseph 1996). Contact between Ojibwe and English speakers, for example, has resulted in borrowing in both directions. Ojibwe has borrowed *pepan* √<? ‘paper’, *shookaa* ᓂᓅ ‘sugar’, and the names for months from English, for example, while English has borrowed words such as ‘moose’, ‘skunk’, and ‘moccasin’ from Ojibwe or

other Algonquian languages. In fact, particular areas of the lexicon are easily borrowed while other areas are more resistant. Words classified as *basic vocabulary* such as ‘eat’, ‘sleep’, ‘moon’, ‘rain’, ‘do’, ‘have’, and ‘be’ are very resistant to borrowing as are functional words such as ‘this’ ‘that’, ‘the’, ‘and’, ‘or’, ‘if’, and ‘when’ (Hock and Joseph 1996). Nouns are borrowed more freely than verbs and “the most easily borrowed words belong to more specialized forms of discourse, often referring to technology or other phenomena that require a good deal of mental and linguistic abstraction” (1996: 258).

Borrowings can appear as loan words, which are often phonologically adapted into the language (as ‘paper’ and ‘sugar’ above), or as loan translations through a process known as calquing in which words are translated morpheme by morpheme into equivalent morphemes in the borrowing language (Crystal 1997). Borrowings also have the capacity to introduce aspects of morphology or syntax into the language (Hock and Joseph 1996). Lexical borrowing and loan words in Anihshiniimowin are discussed further in chapter 6.

The effects that bilingualism itself can have on the languages spoken is discussed by Seliger and Vago (1991). They begin by noting that a speaker’s first language (L1) can be weakened as the second language (L2) increases in use. In looking specifically at the process of bilingual development, Seliger and Vago identify the third and final stage as problematic for L1. It is in this stage that the grammatical principles of L2 influence those of L1 resulting in change. They add however that “the intrusion of L2 elements into L1 is not necessarily indicative of attrition: it could simply be a case of code mixing or code switching” (Seliger and Vago 1991: 6). Code switching is a feature of Anihshiniimowin modern language which can be attributed to an increase in bilingualism in the community

as a result of language contact. An analysis of code switching in Anihshiniimowin is presented in section 6.4.2 below.

Language contact can also eventually result in language death through the process of language shift, where the speakers of a language abandon their own for the one that they have come into contact with. Typically language shift involves switching to a dominant or more prestigious language. The process of language shift can take several forms. Hock and Joseph (1996: 447) discuss two ways in which language death results from shift: 'language suicide' and 'language murder'. The experience of many immigrant families in the United States is given as an example of 'language suicide'. Often they decide not to use their language anymore so that their children will be fluent in English. Hock and Joseph add, however, that this is often an individual phenomenon and not one that typically affects whole speech communities. 'Language murder' is defined by Hock and Joseph as the forced language shift of an entire speech community by a politically more powerful group. For example, until the 1960s Aboriginal children in the United States and Canada were separated from their families to attend residential schools where they were prohibited from speaking their language. While efforts to force language shift are not always successful, the residential school experience is believed to be largely responsible for the decline in Aboriginal languages (Norris 1998).

Language shift can also be a more gradual, and less aggressive process. Hock and Joseph (1996) describe a situation where there is a gradual increase in the use of the non-native language as well as the social contexts that non-native language is used in, while use of the native language decreases. The impact that this can have on a community is

great as children acquiring language will have limited exposure to the native language of that community. For example, the use of Gros Ventre, an obsolescent Algonquian language spoken in Montana, is now restricted to the domains of formal demonstrations and rituals (Taylor 1989).

### **3.2.2 Cultural change**

Another mechanism that enables language change is cultural change. The functional view of language change, as discussed by Aitchison (1991), explains that languages change (especially the lexicon) as a result of need. Words for items or activities that no longer play a major role in a culture are lost while new words are introduced for new concepts. For example, young speakers of Anihshininiimowin rarely find occasion to speak of snowshoe construction, and thus do not need to know the technical vocabulary associated with this activity to function in everyday life. An Anihshininiimowin elder provided the following example as a way of expressing how he feels that the language has changed. “We teach them how to survive in the bush. When we talk to them, they sometimes don’t understand the meaning of things.” The elder is referring to the school’s cultural days when he and other elders take the students out to camp. The lack of understanding presumably is due to the fact that the activities they are talking about are not a part of everyday living for these students. As a result they have had little opportunity in which to learn the associated terminology.

While some vocabulary is no longer a part of everyday life, the introduction of new concepts brings new terminology. For example, new lexical items are being introduced

with the advent of computers and the internet. Bavin (1989: 267) states that changes in Warlpiri, an Aboriginal language of Australia, result from “the adoption of new ways, together with exposure to the English language” as well as the fact that “young people are attracted by aspects of the non-Aboriginal way of life”. These are factors that commonly affect Aboriginal languages in Canada as well. Where new concepts and technology arise, new terminology can be created within the language or borrowed from another.

### 3.2.3 Child language acquisition

Along with language contact and cultural change, the process of child language acquisition also enables language change. Within the perspective of the linguistic theory of universal grammar, it is believed that all infants are born with the innate ability to acquire language. This innate knowledge provides children with the tools necessary to formulate the grammar of the language being acquired, based on the language in their environment (Cook and Newson 1996). In other words, language is not *taught*, the rules of grammar of any given language are *acquired* based on the language that the child is exposed to. It is, therefore, inevitable that the internal grammar formulated in the acquisition process will vary from the internal grammars that form the basis for the language that the child is exposed to.

Seliger and Vago (1991) argue that the process of language acquisition can also lead to attrition. They suggest that for a bilingual speaker, the relationship between L1 and L2 in acquisition can be one that will produce attrition in L1. This is explained through a theory of markedness in which the principles of universal grammar are considered

unmarked and the language specific parameters are considered marked. Thus, in a situation where L1 contains the marked form of a rule and L2 the unmarked form, it is suggested that the unmarked form in L2 will be preferred over the marked form in L1. This can be thought of as a simplification process in which rules that are universal (found in all languages) are favoured over rules that are specific to a language.

### **3.3 The spread of language change**

The previous section presents several mechanisms that facilitate or allow for innovations in language to occur. The current section outlines the process through which these innovations spread throughout a language. In all types of language change, the new innovation and the old form co-exist bringing about variation within the speech community. Eventually the old form is replaced by the new. In phonological change, for example, a particular change does not simultaneously affect all of the words to which it is applicable. How then does change progress?

The diffusion of change across the lexicon begins once a particular change has affected a few words that are common or important to a specific subculture (Aitchison 1991). It has been noted that frequently used words will quite often be affected before words used less frequently. Although it has not been determined if this is the case in Anihshiniimowin, there is evidence of sound change gradually working its way through the lexicon of each speaker. The examples below illustrate the effects of the unrounding

rule in which the rounding of vowels and semi-vowels is lost after coronals<sup>7</sup> as shown in (a) and (b) respectively.

(a) /o/ → /i/ / Cor\_\_

(b) /w/ → Ø / Cor \_\_

Data reveal that this change is spreading as it is not yet found in all places that it is expected for modern speakers, and it only occasionally shows up in the language of traditional speakers. In example (c)<sup>8</sup> MS1, MS2 and TS2 have unrounding as shown in rule (a). In examples (d) and (e)<sup>9</sup> however, only MS2 has unrounding.

(c) *aashokan* ᐱᐱᐱᐱ (ni) 'dock'

TS1	<i>aashokan</i>	ᐱᐱᐱᐱ
TS2	<i>aashikwan</i>	ᐱᐱᐱᐱ
MS1	<i>aashikwan</i>	ᐱᐱᐱᐱ
MS2	<i>aashikwan</i>	ᐱᐱᐱᐱ


(d) *moosokan* ᐱᐱᐱᐱ (ni) 'moose bone'

TS1	<i>moosokan</i>	ᐱᐱᐱᐱ
TS2	<i>moosokan</i>	ᐱᐱᐱᐱ
MS1	<i>moosokan</i>	ᐱᐱᐱᐱ
MS2	<i>moosikwan</i>	ᐱᐱᐱᐱ

<sup>7</sup> Coronal refers to the position of the tongue in the mouth during the production of a consonant. Coronal consonants are produced with the blade of the tongue in a raised position. In Anihshiniimowin coronals include /t/, /c/, /s/, /ʃ/, and /n/. When written in rules, coronal is abbreviated Cor to refer to any coronal consonant.

<sup>8</sup> This example also shows the spread of rounding or labialization in which /k/ → /kw/ / o\_\_. This occurs prior to unrounding. Labialization is the focus of section 4.4.2.2 below.

<sup>9</sup> Other changes in this example are due to sibilant harmony which is discussed in section 4.4.2.3 below.

(e) *niishwaahso*  (nm) 'seven'

TS1 *niiswaahso*      ႁႏႱႱႱ

TS2    *niishwaahso*                      لہ "نیشواہسو"

**MS1** *niiswaahso*      ႁိၵ်ႈႁူဝ်

**MS2** *niisaahso*      ႁႃႃႃ

Similar patterns of lexical diffusion can be noted for many of the changes described in section 4.4 below. Aitchison (1991) suggests that generally, innovations spread gradually until at some point they become accepted by a particular group of speakers. At this point, variation between the new and old exist, but eventually, the new variation takes over.

### 3.4 Language attitudes

This section contains a discussion of speakers' attitudes toward language change. These are typically negative attitudes that accompany the belief that change is equated with decay. In Anihshiniimowin for example, the fact that the term 'baby language' is sometimes used to refer to the modern variety suggests that there is a stigma attached to this variety. Elders disapprove of younger speakers' innovations and feel they are a sign that the language is in decline. The effect that these negative attitudes can have on a language and language maintenance efforts is also considered in this section.

### 3.4.1 Attitudinal correlates of change

It seems inevitable that where there is noticeable language change, there exists feelings of condemnation toward newer varieties. This attitude is not limited to

Anihshiniimowin. For example, Schmidt (1985: 18) reports of Dyirbal that older speakers describe younger people's language as "error-ridden, spoken in 'bits-an-pieces', and 'all mixed up with English'". She emphasizes that these are linguistic attitudes that cannot be taken to represent the actual structure of younger people's language. These unfavourable attitudes are a result of language purism, the belief that language is corrupted by change, whether it be through borrowing from other languages or innovation within the language.

The evolution of English has inspired outbursts from purists on several occasions throughout its history. According to Aitchison (1991), the eighteenth century saw many such outbursts expressing disgust toward language change, often accompanied by suggested solutions for improving the state of the language. These outbursts stem from a prescriptivist tradition which places an emphasis on rules of correct speech. Departures from these rules are criticized by those who view them as a decline in linguistic ability. Bloomfield (1964: 391), however, addresses the myth that the use of incorrect forms represents ignorance, "the incorrect forms cannot be the result of ignorance or carelessness, for they are by no means haphazard, but, on the contrary, very stable".

The notion that certain forms of language are 'correct' while others are simply 'incorrect' is very common among non-linguists. The following excerpt from an interview with an Anihshiniimowin elder in Wunnumin Lake tells of a generation that has lost their language and culture. However, as discussed in section 2.1 of this thesis, Anihshiniimowin continues to be the main language spoken by all members of the

Wunnumin Lake community. This excerpt therefore, reveals a social judgment about the quality of the language spoken by this generation: that it is not the 'real' language.

Since 1945 all the surrounding First Nations children were being taught English. The children who are now adults who started the education since 1945, they sometimes have problems understanding their own language, some can't write in syllabics, they lost their language as well as culture... Also, the middle age youth, for example from 20 to 30, some have problems to speak, write and read.

If we consider the value placed on the 'traditional language' this might help us to understand the stigma of the 'modern language'. Language represents cultural identity and a means for its transmission from one generation to the next. The idea of linguistic decline is therefore closely associated with the idea of cultural decline (Aitchison 1991). Resistance to change is a means of preserving cultural identity. As the next section explains, however, it is essential to remove this stigma in order for language maintenance efforts to succeed.

### **3.4.2 The effects of unfavourable attitudes**

The previous section shows that unfavourable attitudes toward change are not limited to Anihshiniimowin. These attitudes are said to arise out of the prescriptivist tradition in which only the traditional or standard language is considered correct. In reality, languages are not spoken in a vacuum, they are a social means of communication. The language used by a university student in speaking to a professor, for example, may differ from that used in speaking to his or her peers. The formality of the situation, as well as other social factors such as gender and age, will influence the language used by the student. While a prescriptivist might deem the language used in the peer group as sub-

standard or incorrect, the descriptivist tradition does not pass judgement on correctness but instead considers the language as spoken in both situations to be worthy of investigation.

The attitudes that arise out of prescriptivism can have an effect on the speakers of stigmatized varieties. In Dyrbal, for example, some speakers prefer to use English when speaking to traditional speakers to avoid being corrected (Schmidt 1985). If the concern of a community is to maintain language, then we can see from this example that it is necessary to remove the stigma. Crystal (2000) discusses the importance that removing the stigma and establishing all varieties as authentic has for language maintenance efforts. He stresses that language maintenance efforts cannot succeed without the speakers having feelings of confidence, self-esteem, and pride toward their language; without these, the community may lack the ability to deal with the pressure of ongoing change. Crystal places an emphasis on the psychological and social value that a language has, even once it has changed from its traditional character. Although some part of the population may speak a different variety of a language or dialect, they continue to form their identity through this language or dialect.

...the *whole* of a language is authentic, in all its dialects, varieties, and styles. It is an axiom of linguistics that all languages change, as they keep pace with society; and one of the consequences of this change is the proliferation of new words, pronunciations, grammatical patterns, discourse styles, and regional or social varieties, alongside the gradual loss of older forms of expression... The only languages which do not change are dead ones. (Crystal 2000: 115-116)

A step toward removing the stigma associated with the modern variety of Anihshininiimowin involves providing an understanding that not all language change is

decay. Is it possible, then, to tell whether or not language change is an indication of decline and incipient death? While there is no set of criteria that can be used to determine if a language is dying, systematic patterns of change, such as reductions in phonological distinctions and in morphological complexity, have been observed in obsolescent languages (Campbell and Muntzel 1989). Loss of lexical inventory, and loss of productivity in word formation have also been observed in language decay (Mithun 1989). Patterns of phonological, morphological and lexical change that have been observed in dying languages are discussed more fully in sections 4.3, 5.3, and 6.3 respectively.

### **3.5 Understanding the features of Anihshininiimowin ‘modern language’**

Investigating language change in Wunnumin Lake Anihshininiimowin is essential in order to understand the features that distinguish the modern variety of this dialect. As outlined in the previous section, recognizing all varieties of a language as authentic is necessary for language maintenance efforts to succeed. Given that language maintenance is a concern in Wunnumin Lake, it is clear that removing the stigma from the ‘modern language’ should be considered a priority. An essential part of recognizing that modern varieties are ‘real’ is understanding that these varieties are grammatical and rule-governed (Milroy and Milroy 1999). A step in removing the stigma, therefore, involves understanding what the features of ‘modern language’ are, and how this variety both differs from and resembles ‘traditional language’.

While this seems straightforward, it is not always so to non-linguists. While investigating Anihshininiimowin phonological changes in Wunnumin Lake, the significance

of focusing on differences in pronunciation was questioned. Generally speakers are not actually aware of differences in pronunciation. Once made aware however, these differences are often viewed as insignificant by speakers because they do not hinder communication. For example, the shift from /o/ to /i/ after coronals, as shown in section 4.3.1.1 below, does not render any word unintelligible. It does however, represent a pattern of change that is characteristic of modern speakers' language. Consider, for example, the difference between the pronunciation of the word 'hat' in (a) and (b):

(a)	traditional	<i>ahtotin</i>	◁" ɔ̃ɲ
(b)	modern	<i>ahtitin</i>	◁" ɪɲ

This represents not only a change in the way that the word for 'hat' is pronounced, but a rule-governed pattern of change for vowels. Short round vowels become unround following coronal consonants as shown in the following rule:

(c) /o/ → /i/ / Cor \_\_

In order to provide an understanding of the modern variety, all changes must be considered relevant, no matter how insignificant they appear. If the difference in pronunciation between (a) and (b) above is treated as insignificant because it is not noticeable to the untrained ear or because a speaker can be understood using either form, where do we draw the line? Does a change only become significant when communication is hindered? When language maintenance is a concern, as it is in Anihshiniimowin, every change must be treated as significant.

The importance placed on literacy in the community presents another reason why it is important to understand the features that distinguish Anihshiniimowin ‘modern language’. Children in Wunnumin Lake are learning the syllabic orthography as soon as they enter the first level of kindergarten at age four, and some are learning earlier if they attend day care. While (a) and (b) above may not sound much different to a speaker, the difference is certainly reflected in the writing system. As shown in the following examples, the syllabic symbol is turned to reflect the difference in vowel quality.

‘hat’

(d) traditional *ahtotin* ᐱᐱᐱᐱ

(e) modern *ahtitin* ᐱᐱᐱᐱ

‘swing’

(f) traditional *memepison* ᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱ

(g) modern *memepisin* ᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱ

Unlike writing systems, such as that used in English, which do not reflect pronunciation, the syllabic orthography is written based on the way the language sounds. As a result, we would expect that younger speakers will write ‘hat’ and ‘swing’ as in (e) and (g) above. While no examples of the writing of school-aged children were available to verify this, MS1 did write ‘hat’ and ‘swing’ as in (e) and (g) respectively. Through the understanding that the unrounding of short vowels following coronal consonants (/o/ → /i/ / Cor\_\_\_) is a systematic change occurring in the language, we know that differences in the spelling should be expected between traditional and modern speakers. The fact that literacy is highly valued in the community presents another way in which this study can be applied. An understanding of the differences between the modern and

traditional varieties of Anihshiniimowin may function as a tool in addressing problems that occur in the teaching of the writing.

### **3.6 Summary**

In this chapter language change is described as a process that affects all living languages. Mechanisms that enable change, such as language contact, cultural change, and child language acquisition are examined. These processes all allow for innovations in language to occur and thereby enable language change. The mechanisms discussed show that change is dependent on the speakers of a language, it does not evolve on its own. An examination of the process through which changes spread reveals why variation exists in language. During this gradual process new and old forms co-exist, but eventually new forms may replace old ones.

With the co-existence of new and old forms comes the attitude of disapproval toward the new forms. Typically these attitudes belong to those who view language change as a sign of decay and therefore are resistant to it. The importance of challenging these attitudes and recognizing stigmatized varieties of language as authentic is discussed in section 3.4. Finally, this chapter closes with a discussion of how understanding the features that distinguish the modern variety of Anihshiniimowin has a role in removing the stigma from this variety. Appreciating that all languages change and that changes do not necessarily represent decay is important for Wunnumin Lake, and all communities where language maintenance is a concern.

## **4. PHONOLOGICAL CHANGE**

### **4.1 Introduction and outline**

Sound change in Anihshininiimowin has resulted in differences in pronunciation between the modern and traditional speakers. While many speakers have commented that the language has changed, they are generally not able to identify what the changes are. A language teacher and several elders involved in language planning in the community were asked to describe how the language of younger speakers differs from the language of the elders. The language teacher described younger speech as ‘shorter’ or more contracted; the elders did not offer any examples. While contraction is found in younger speech (see section 4.3.1.2), it is only one of many features that distinguish the modern and traditional varieties of Anihshininiimowin.

This chapter is divided into four major sections beginning with 4.2 which outlines sound changes that have been documented in other Algonquian languages and dialects. Many of the changes outlined in this section are paralleled in the Anihshininiimowin data. Others are not but are listed nonetheless as they suggest other potential areas of change. This is followed by section 4.3 which gives an overview of patterns of sound change noted in the literature on obsolescent languages. The Anihshininiimowin data collected in Wunnumin Lake is presented in section 4.4. Phonological changes in the local dialect are compared to changes in related languages and dialects and obsolescent languages in the final section of this chapter.

## **4.2 Phonological change in other Algonquian languages**

In this section I present phonological changes that have been documented in languages and dialects that are related to Anihshiniimowin. Although the literature in this area is limited, it is meaningful in that many of the changes outlined in this section are also found in the language of younger speakers of Anihshiniimowin in Wunnumin Lake. Some of the changes below are not paralleled in Anihshiniimowin but are mentioned as other potential areas of change.

### **4.2.1 Algonquin**

Algonquin is a dialect of Ojibwe spoken in Québec that, like Anihshiniimowin, is experiencing change that is noticeable from one generation to the next. Change in this dialect, as spoken in Kitigânik (see Artuso 1998a, b), reveals a situation that resembles that of Anihshiniimowin. In both cases, speakers are aware that considerable change has taken place in their language but, when asked, are not able to identify these changes.

In his comparison of the language of four generations of an Algonquin family, Artuso (1998a, b) observed many changes in the phonology. For example, irregular short vowel deletion was noted for younger speakers of Algonquin. While short vowel deletion is typical in weak syllables for elder speakers, younger speakers tend to delete short vowels based on the stress pattern of the bare stem. The stress pattern of a word is altered with the addition of prefixes, thus affecting the vowels that are deleted by elder speakers, but not by younger speakers. Artuso also noted some variation in the production of sibilants, most notably younger speakers were found to have palatalized forms where elder

speakers would not. Younger speakers tended to delete /w/ where older speakers retained it. Metathesis was noted in children's speech although Artuso (1998b: 48) points out that this is not uncommon for middle aged speakers and it has also been noted in other Algonquian languages.

#### 4.2.2 Cree

The following changes in Cree were observed by H.C. Wolfart (personal communication) in comparing his data to that of Bloomfield from 1925:

<b>Bloomfield 1925</b>	<b>Modern</b>	
<i>êtokê</i>	<i>êtokwê / êtikwê</i>	dubitative preterit
<i>nôtokêw</i>	<i>nôtokwêw / nôtikwêw</i>	'old woman'
<i>pîhtokêw</i>	<i>pîhtokwêw / pîhtikwêw</i>	'enter'

In comparing the two sets of words, we can see two changes that have occurred. First, labialization has spread onto *k* from the preceding *o*, resulting in *kw*. Second, following the coronal consonant *t*, the quality of the round vowel *o* is affected by unrounding, resulting in *i*. Although these are not recent changes that distinguish elder and younger speakers as in Anihshiniimowin, they suggest a precedence for sound changes such as unrounding and labialization (discussed in section 4.4 below).

#### 4.2.3 Montagnais

Montagnais is a dialect of Cree spoken in Labrador and Québec. Clarke and MacKenzie (1982) examined two phonological changes in progress in North West River Montagnais in Sheshatshiu, Labrador; nasalization and U-copying (vowel harmony). These

changes are both found to have spread from other dialects through language contact. The nasalization rule involves the loss of /n/ between vowels with the preceding vowel being nasalized. For example:

- (a) /ma:nitenĩš/ [mandenĩš] ‘sheep’ → [mandēyš]  
(Clarke and MacKenzie 1982: 224)

Upon closer examination, this rule is found to occur only when the intervocalic /n/ is followed by /ĩš/. They also observed that not all words with this sequence were affected at the same time, but rather that the rule is spreading by lexical diffusion. This is also found for rules of sound change in Anihshininiimowin, rather than applying simultaneously to all lexical items meeting the required environment, change spreads gradually throughout the lexicon with variation within and between speakers.

The second rule discussed by Clarke and MacKenzie (1982), U-copying, involves the progressive labialization of a vowel preceded by a sequence of word initial /um/ or /up/. What appears to be metathesis of this initial sequence may occur as in (b), but the word initial /u/ may also be retained as in (c):

- (b) /upa:ssikan/ [obasəgən] ‘his gun’ → [bwasəgən]  
(c) [obwasəgən]  
(Clarke and MacKenzie 1982: 228)

For this reason, this process is not viewed as metathesis but rather as vowel harmony followed by the optional deletion of the initial labial vowel.

Drapeau (1981) on Betsiamites Montagnais in Québec finds a systematic palatalization of /t/ before high front vowels and glides /ii/ and /y/ in younger speakers. The data reveal that an alveopalatal affricate is used in place of nonaspirated dental stops

both morpheme-internally and at morpheme boundaries for speakers in their teens and early twenties. For example:

- (a) 'I buy something'  
*nət-ya.-n*  
 1st-buy-1st  
 A: [ɲdya.n]  
 B: [ɲjya.n]

(Drapeau 1981: 343)

### 4.3 Phonological change in obsolescent languages

Obsolescent or dying languages experience change just as healthy languages do. Based on data for obsolescent languages obtained from Manessy (1977) on African languages, Dorian (1973, 1977, 1978) on Scottish Gaelic, and Weinreich (1963), Andersen (1982) proposes three hypotheses for phonological change in dying languages. In language contact situations there are inevitably bilingual speakers. Andersen's first hypothesis is that in a language loss situation, the bilingual speaker will make fewer phonological distinctions in the obsolescent language than a fully competent speaker of the same language would. Campbell and Muntzel (1989) elaborate on this by adding that it is the less marked form that will survive while the more marked form will be lost. They provide the loss of contrastive vowel length in Pipil and American Finnish as an example where short vowels are less marked and vowel length is lost. The opposite phenomenon, the overgeneralization of marked features, is also suggested as characteristic of bilingual speakers of moribund languages by Campbell and Muntzel (1989). They add, however,

that this feature is internal in that it appears “to stem from imperfect learning of the moribund language” (1989: 189) rather than from the influence of the dominant language.

Andersen’s (1982) second hypothesis proposes that the distinctions preserved by the bilingual speaker are those that are common to both languages while those that are lost are unique to the obsolescent language. The third and final hypothesis elaborates again on which distinctions will be preserved by taking functional load into consideration. A distinction with a high functional load makes many contrasts in the language, while one with a low functional load makes only a few. Those distinctions in the threatened language with a higher functional load will survive in the bilingual speaker’s moribund language longer than those with a low functional load (Andersen 1982, Campbell and Mutzel 1989).

The next section presents the phonological changes observed in comparing the language of traditional and modern speakers of Anihshininiimowin in Wunnumin Lake. As a means of addressing the concern that language change represents decay, a discussion comparing the changes observed in the data to the hypotheses of expected phonological reduction in language obsolescence is the focus of the final section.

#### **4.4 Phonological change in Anihshininiimowin**

The phonological changes presented herein are divided into two major sections; vowel change and consonant change. Each type of change is accompanied by examples from traditional and modern speakers of Anihshininiimowin in Wunnumin Lake, Ontario. For speakers’ age, sex, and background see section 1.3.

#### 4.4.1 Vowel change

##### 4.4.1.1 Unrounding

Unrounding affects both vowels and semi-vowels and can be represented by two rules. For vowels, unrounding is represented by the rule in (a) and for semi-vowels, (b):

- (a) /o/ → /i/ / Cor\_\_  
 (b) /w/ → Ø / Cor\_\_

Elicitation shows these unrounding rules to be gradually spreading through the lexicon.

There is variation for modern speakers MS1 and MS2 who show extensive evidence of this change but do occasionally retain rounding where unrounding is expected. TS1 does not show any evidence of this change while TS2 does only in a few words such as (c) ‘dock’. MS1 and MS2 have approximately a two to one ratio of change to no change in the words elicited. Rule (a) is found to occur for modern speakers both within the word and in word final position as in the following examples:

(c)	<i>aashokan</i>	ᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱ	(ni)	‘dock’
TS1	<i>aashokan</i>	ᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱ		
TS2	<i>aashikwan</i>	ᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱ		
MS1	<i>aashikwan</i>	ᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱ		
MS2	<i>aashikwan</i>	ᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱ		

(d)	<i>ahtotin</i>	אָהטֹתִין	(ni)	‘hat’
	<b>TS1</b> <i>aht<u>o</u>tin</i>	אָהטֹתִין		
	<b>TS2</b> <i>aht<u>o</u>tin</i>	אָהטֹתִין		
	<b>MS1</b> <i>aht<u>i</u>tin</i>	אָהטִתִין		
	<b>MS2</b> <i>aht<u>i</u>tin</i>	אָהטִתִין		
(e)	<i>memepison</i>	מֵמֵפִיסֹן	(ni)	‘swing’
	<b>TS1</b> <i>memep<u>i</u>son</i>	מֵמֵפִיסֹן		
	<b>TS2</b> <i>memep<u>i</u>son</i>	מֵמֵפִיסֹן		
	<b>MS1</b> <i>memep<u>i</u>s<u>i</u>n</i>	מֵמֵפִיסֹן		
	<b>MS2</b> <i>memep<u>i</u>s<u>i</u>n</i>	מֵמֵפִיסֹן		
(f)	<i>ihkwapison</i>	אִחְוָפִיסֹן	(ni)	‘suspenders’
	<b>TS1</b> <i>ihkwap<u>i</u>son</i>	אִחְוָפִיסֹן		
	<b>MS1</b> <i>ihkwap<u>i</u>s<u>i</u>n</i>	אִחְוָפִיסֹן		
	<b>MS2</b> <i>ihkwap<u>i</u>s<u>i</u>n</i>	אִחְוָפִיסֹן		
(g)	<i>kashkikwaahso</i>	קאַשקִיקוואַהסֹ	(vai)	‘sew’
	<b>TS1</b> <i>kashkwaahs<u>o</u></i>	קאַשקִיקוואַהסֹ		
	<b>TS2</b> <i>kashkwaahs<u>o</u></i>	קאַשקִיקוואַהסֹ		
	<b>MS1</b> <i>kashkikwaahs<u>i</u></i>	קאַשקִיקוואַהסֹ		
	<b>MS2</b> <i>kashkwaahs<u>i</u></i>	קאַשקִיקוואַהסֹ		

Note in (g) that in the forms used by TS1, TS2 and MS2 the short /i/ has been deleted

between two homorganic consonants (both /k/ in this case). This type of vowel syncope is



Examples of unrounding of semi-vowels as in rule (b) are shown in (i) and (j):

- (i) *matwehsicikan*      LU-"ɾɾɓʼ      (ni)      ‘bell’
- TS1 *matwehsicikan*      LU-"ɾɾɓʼ
- TS2 *matwehsicikan*      LU-"ɾɾɓʼ
- MS1 *matehsicikan*      LU" ɾɾɓʼ
- MS3 *matehsicikan*      LU" ɾɾɓʼ
- (j) *niishwaahso*      ʃ ɩ-" ɾ      (nm)      ‘seven’
- TS1 *niiswaahso*      ʃ ɩ-" ɾ
- TS2 *niishwaahso*      ʃ ɩ-" ɾ
- MS1 *niiswaahso*      ʃ ɩ-" ɾ
- MS2 *niisaahso*      ʃ ɩ-" ɾ

#### 4.4.1.2 Contraction

For modern speakers, there is a tendency for /iwi/ and /owi/ sequences contract to /oo/. Evidence of this change is especially common in nominalizations where the derivational suffix *-win* is used to form a noun (as in (a)) from a verb (as in (b)). For example:

- (a) *tipaacimowin*      ɒ<ɾ ɿΔ-ʼ      (ni)      ‘story, narration’
- (b) *tipaacimo*      ɒ<ɾ ɿ      (vai)      ‘tell news, narrate’

Variation in the data reveal that contraction is a change in progress. Modern speakers have it in some words and not in others and in some cases give both forms.

(c) *tehsapiwin* ᑭᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱ (ni) 'chair'

TS1 *tehsapiwin* ᑭᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱ

TS2 *tehsapiwin* ᑭᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱ

MS1 *tehsapoon* ᑭᐱᐱᐱᐱ

MS2 *tehsapiwin* ᑭᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱ

MS3 *tehsapoon* ᑭᐱᐱᐱᐱ

(d) *ishkooniwikamik* ᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱ (ni) 'school'

TS2 *ishkooniwikamik* ᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱ

MS1 *ishkoonookamik* ᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱ

(e) *nikamowin* ᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱ (ni) 'song'

TS1 *nikamowin* ᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱ

TS2 *nikamowin* ᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱ

MS1 *nikamowin* ᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱ

*nikamoon* ᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱ

MS3 *nikamoon* ᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱ

(f) *tipaacimowin* ᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱ (ni) 'story'

TS1 *tipaacimowin* ᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱ

TS2 *tipaacimowin* ᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱ

MS1 *tipaacimowin* ᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱ

MS3 *tipaacimoon* ᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱ

(g) *pahpaapiwin* <"<^Δ> (ni) 'window'

TS1 *pahpaapiwin* <"<^Δ>

TS2 *pahpaapiwin* <"<^Δ>

MS1 *pahpaapoon* <"<^>

MS3 *pahpaapowin* <"<^>Δ>

The only contraction of this type that was found in the language of traditional speakers was in the indefinite subject form where an animate intransitive verb is derived from a transitive animate verb (vta → vai) as in (h) and (i). In this construction, contraction is found in rapid pronunciation by speakers in both age groups. TS1 originally gave the contracted form in (h) followed by the *-iwi* form explaining that both forms are acceptable, the *oo* form is simply the quick pronunciation used by all ages. TS2 and MS1, however, only offered the contracted forms for this construction.

(h) *waapamaakaniwi* <Δ<LbσΔ> (vai) 'be seen'

TS1 *waapamaakanoo* <Δ<Lbσ

*waapamaakaniwi* <Δ<LbσΔ>

TS2 *waapamakanoo* <Δ<Lbσ

(i) *kiiwewinaakaniwi* P∇·Δ·αbσΔ> (vai) 'be taken home'

TS2 *kiiwewinaakanoo* P∇·Δ·αbσ

MS1 *kiiwewinaakanoo* P∇·Δ·αbσ

#### 4.4.2 Consonant change

##### 4.4.2.1 Palatalization

The diminutive in Anihshininiimowin, marking small size or physical immaturity, is formed by adding the suffix *-enhs* to a noun stem (J.R. Valentine 1994). Palatalization of the diminutive suffix in Anihshininiimowin occurs as a regular sound symbolism rule. Generally, in sound symbolism there is a link between the nature of a sound and its meaning (Hinton, Nichols and Ohala 1994). The sound symbolism rule in Anihshininiimowin transforms the diminutive *-enhs* to *-enhc*, the hypocoristic form which carries the meaning ‘cute’ (J.D. Nichols, personal communication). Other Algonquian languages also have sound symbolism rules involving palatalization. In Pentland’s (1975) description of diminutive consonant sound symbolism in Cree and Montagnais dialects, the diminutive is marked by palatalization. For example *atihk* ‘caribou’ becomes *ačihkošš* ‘little caribou’.

When the hypocoristic form is used in Anihshininiimowin, there is also often a spread of palatalization from right to left in the word. For example:

(a)	<i>mitaahs</i>	ᑭᑦᑦᑦᑦ	‘pants’
(b)	<i>mitaahsenhs</i>	ᑭᑦᑦᑦᑦᑦᑦ	‘little pants’
(c)	<i>micāahshēnhc</i>	ᑭᑦᑦᑦᑦᑦᑦᑦᑦ	‘cute little pants’
	<i>micāahcēnhc</i>	ᑭᑦᑦᑦᑦᑦᑦᑦᑦ	‘cute little pants’

Where this is productive, it is stigmatized and referred to as ‘baby talk’ because it is used to talk to and about babies. It is used by all ages and not restricted to younger speakers, however, younger speakers tend to use the *-enhc* diminutive more frequently than older





possible that this palatalization in the language of younger speakers is the reason for modern language more commonly being referred to as ‘baby language’ as this is a sound change that is very noticeable and meaningful in the language.

#### 4.4.2.2 Labialization

Labialization in this case involves the spread of rounding from the vowel /o/ onto the following velar consonant /k/. This results in the velar /k/ being pronounced with lip-rounding as in /kw/. The process of labialization is represented by rule (a)

(a) /k/ → /kw/ / /o/ \_\_

Note that in most of the examples below two ordered rules occur, (a) followed by (b), the unrounding rule from 4.4.1.1(a) above:

(b) /o/ → /i/ / Cor\_\_

Labialization, like the previous sound changes discussed in this chapter, appears to be spreading gradually throughout the lexicon of each speaker. Example (c) shows labialization in both modern speakers as well as TS2 while in example (d) only MS2 has labialized /k/.

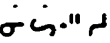
(c)	<i>aashokan</i>	ᐱᐱᐱᐱ	(ni)	‘dock’
TS1	<i>aashok<u>a</u>n</i>	ᐱᐱᐱᐱ		
TS2	<i>aashik<u>w</u>an</i>	ᐱᐱᐱᐱ		
MS1	<i>aashik<u>w</u>an</i>	ᐱᐱᐱᐱ		
MS2	<i>aashik<u>w</u>an</i>	ᐱᐱᐱᐱ		

(d)	<i>moosokan</i>	ᓄᓚᓂ	(ni)	‘moose bone’
TS1	<i>moosok<u>a</u>n</i>	ᓄᓚᓂ		
TS2	<i>moosok<u>a</u>n</i>	ᓄᓚᓂ		
MS1	<i>moosok<u>a</u>n</i>	ᓄᓚᓂ		
MS2	<i>moosik<u>w</u>an</i>	ᓄᓚᓂᓐ		

#### 4.4.2.3 Sibilant harmony

J.R. Valentine (1994: 125) reports that “some Severn Ojibwe communities and some Saulteaux communities seem to be losing the contrast of alveolar /z,s/ and palato-alveolar /ʒ,ʃ/ fricatives, just as Plains Cree has.” The Anihshiniimowin data from Wunnumin Lake reveals that /s/ harmonizes with /sh/ for modern speakers (MS1, 2 and 6) and for TS1 (in most cases) but not for TS2. In the following examples harmony is regressive (it moves from right to left), that is /sh/ → /s/ when there is a following /s/ in the word.


(a)	<i>paashkisikan</i>	ᓐᓂᓱᓂᓂᓐ	(ni)	‘gun’
TS1	<i>paashk<u>i</u>sikan</i>	ᓐᓂᓱᓂᓂᓐ		
TS2	<i>paashk<u>i</u>sikan</i>	ᓐᓂᓱᓂᓂᓐ		
MS1	<i>paashk<u>i</u>sikan</i>	ᓐᓂᓱᓂᓂᓐ		
MS6	<i>paashk<u>i</u>sikan</i>	ᓐᓂᓱᓂᓂᓐ		


(b) *niishwaahso*        (nm) 'seven'

TS1    *niiswaahso*    

TS2    *niishwaahso*    


MS1    *niiswaahso*    

MS2    *niisaahso*    

(c) *shaankahso*        (nm) 'nine'

TS1    *saankahso*    

TS2    *shaankahso*    

MS1    *saakahso*<sup>10</sup>    

MS2    *saankahso*    

While TS1 has sibilant harmony more frequently than TS2, examples where she does not are presented in (d) and (e). Also notable in (e) is that MS1 has no sibilant harmony where it is expected, showing some variation in this area of her language. No speaker has contracted the /owi/ sequence to /oo/ in (e) as might be expected in this nominalized form (see 4.4.1.2 above).

<sup>10</sup> The absence of the nasal obstruent cluster /nk/ in this case is likely a symbol of more northern-like speech motivated by the prestige associated with northern dialects. This speaker also shows evidence of this in 5.4.1.2 (c), (d) and (e) but retains the nasal obstruent cluster in 5.5.1 (e).

(d) *kaashkipaason* ᑲᐃᑭᑭᑭᑭᑭᑭᑭᑭ (ni) 'razor'

TS1 *kaashkipaason* ᑲᐃᑭᑭᑭᑭᑭᑭᑭᑭ

TS2 *kaashkipaason* ᑲᐃᑭᑭᑭᑭᑭᑭᑭᑭ

MS1 *kaaskipaasin* ᑲᐃᑭᑭᑭᑭᑭᑭᑭᑭ

MS2 *kiskipaasin* ᑭᑭᑭᑭᑭᑭᑭᑭᑭᑭ

MS5 *kaaskipaason* ᑲᐃᑭᑭᑭᑭᑭᑭᑭᑭ

(e) *ishinihkaasowin* ᐃᑭᑭᑭᑭᑭᑭᑭᑭᑭᑭ (ni) 'name'

TS1 *ishinihkaasowin* ᐃᑭᑭᑭᑭᑭᑭᑭᑭᑭᑭ

TS2 *ishinihkaasowin* ᐃᑭᑭᑭᑭᑭᑭᑭᑭᑭᑭ

MS1 *ishinihkaasiwin* ᐃᑭᑭᑭᑭᑭᑭᑭᑭᑭᑭ

MS2 *ishinihkaasowin* ᐃᑭᑭᑭᑭᑭᑭᑭᑭᑭᑭ

Often people who are literate in the syllabic orthography, like TS1, can recover changed forms from the writing system (especially if they attend church where the Bible is in Plains Cree syllabics). However, since no distinction is made between /s/ and /sh/ in Plains Cree, this is one change that cannot be recovered through the writing system. While the older generation does not make a distinction between /s/ and /sh/ in the syllabic orthography, the younger generation does.

#### 4.5 Summary

The intention of this section is to examine how the hypotheses presented in 4.3 on phonological change in obsolescent languages apply to the Anihshininiimowin data, if at all. The first hypothesis states that there will be a decrease in phonological distinctions in

the obsolescent language (Andersen 1982). None of the phonological changes observed in Wunnumin Lake Anihshiniimowin suggest the reduction in phonological distinctions. In each case, change is rule governed and only occurs when the necessary environment is met. Of all the changes, sibilant harmony (see 4.4.2.3) might be suspected to be a reduction in phonological distinction due to the absence of this distinction in some dialects of Cree, such as Plains Cree. However, this does not seem to be the case since sibilant harmony in Anihshiniimowin is dependent on the presence of /s/ in the word, while elsewhere the distinction between /sh/ and /s/ continues to be made. Although older people do not make this distinction in writing due to its absence in the Plains Cree syllabic orthography, younger speakers do, which also suggests that this distinction remains intact.

Andersen's (1982) second hypothesis states that those distinctions that are common to both languages are preserved while those unique to the obsolescent language are lost. Given that the changes observed in this chapter do not suggest a decrease in phonological distinctions, this hypothesis has not been tested. This is also the case for the third hypothesis which states that functional load is also a factor in determining which distinctions will be preserved.

In considering how the changes in Anihshiniimowin compare to those in related languages and dialects, we can see that the processes of palatalization, labialization and unrounding are not uncommon in Algonquian languages. While many of the changes in Anihshiniimowin phonology are paralleled in other Algonquian languages and dialects, none suggest that this dialect of Ojibwe is changing to become phonologically more like English.

## **5. MORPHOLOGICAL CHANGE**

### **5.1 Introduction and outline**

In this chapter several constructions are examined as a means of determining morphological differences between speakers of the traditional and modern varieties of Anihshiniimowin. While elicitations reveal differences between age groups for some constructions, for others there are no differences. Examples of constructions where there is variation and those where there is not are both presented in this chapter.

A review of the literature on morphological change in other Algonquian languages is the focus of section 5.2. This is followed by an overview of morphological change in obsolescent languages in 5.3. Section 5.4 on morphological change in Anihshiniimowin is divided into two major sections; inflectional morphology and derivational morphology. Within the category of inflectional morphology, the obviative noun possessor and the relational construction are discussed in section 5.4.1. Section 5.4.2 on derivational morphology consists of an analysis of the use of medials. In section 5.5 on morphophonemic change, elicitations of the indefinite actor construction are presented. Finally, section 5.6 considers whether patterns revealed in the Anihshiniimowin data are comparable to those discussed in sections 5.2 and 5.3.

## 5.2 Morphological change in other Algonquian languages

### 5.2.1 Algonquin

Artuso's (1998b) examination of Algonquin over four generations notes several changes in the areas of inflectional and derivational morphology. One such change is that younger speakers tend to use fewer body part medials than older speakers do. For example, a younger speaker used *ngii-oji-odayaasiinaanaan dazhigan goni makizin*, 'I had no socks or shoes' to mean 'I was barefoot' in place of *ngii-zhaashaaginizide* where the medial *-zid-* 'foot' is used (Artuso 1998b: 103).

In regards to Algonquin inflectional morphology, Artuso (1998b) reports a decline in the use of obviation. He finds that younger speakers not only lack obviation on English personal names, but also omit the obviative suffix from nouns in Algonquin. Younger speakers also show inconsistencies in verbal inflections, a lack of nominal plural marking, a decline in the use of the conjunct order and thus an inconsistent conjunct morphology. Other changes noted include the incorrect use of imperative forms of transitive verbs, and a reluctance to use inverse forms<sup>11</sup>.

### 5.2.2 Gros Ventre

Gros Ventre is an obsolescent Algonquian language spoken in Montana. Taylor (1989) reports that less than a dozen people have extensive knowledge of this language. In his investigation, in which he aims to identify those aspects of the language that have been

<sup>11</sup> Inverse forms are used when the subject is a third person (*wiin* ᐃᐅ 'she/he', *wiinawaa* ᐃᐅᐱᐅ 'they') and the object is a first person (*niin* ᐅᐅ 'me', *niinawint* ᐅᐱᐅᐅ 'we' (excl), *kiinawint* ᐅᐱᐅᐅ 'we' (incl)) or second person (*kiin* ᐅᐅ 'you', *kiinawaa* ᐅᐱᐅᐅ 'you' (pl)). It is also used where the secondary or obviative third person is the subject and the primary third person is the object (see 5.4.1.1).

affected by obsolescence, Taylor finds extensive evidence of loss and replacement of morphological structures. One type of error noted by Taylor is in the plural inflection of nominals. As a result of paradigmatic leveling, the Gros Ventre ‘semi-speaker’ often applies the wrong plural allomorph. Taylor notes that although leveling often accounts for change, “the grammar and semantics of English also appear to be at work in some of the derivational errors” (Taylor 1989: 174). The influence of the dominant language in language obsolescence is discussed further in the following section.

### **5.3 Morphological change in obsolescent languages**

In the literature on morphological change in dying languages the words reduction and simplification are commonplace. As in the previous chapter, Andersen’s (1982) hypotheses are used as a point of departure in this discussion of changes expected in language decay.

In regards to morphological reduction, Andersen (1982) predicts that there will be a decrease in categories that are marked morphologically. However, as in phonological reduction, the morphological categories marked in both languages of the bilingual speaker will survive longer than those that are unique to the weaker language. Variability is expected in the morphological categories that continue to be marked. Again, as in phonological reduction, functional load is a factor in determining which morphological categories are retained in obsolescence. “Those morphological distinctions which have a high functional load (where a loss of the distinctions would result in frequent loss of information) in language X will be maintained” (Andersen 1982: 97). Finally, the

grammatical morphemes that will be retained the longest are those that are acquired earliest, while the first to be lost are those that are acquired latest (Andersen 1982).

One means by which morphological and morphophonemic simplification occurs in obsolescent languages is through paradigmatic leveling (Maher 1991). Examples of this are found in Dressler (1991) on Breton, Vago (1991) on the attrition of Hungarian, and Schmidt (1985, 1991) on Dyirbal to name a few. Other discussions of morphological reduction include Mithun's (1989) investigation of Cayuga, an Iroquoian language, in which she compares a receding dialect that is spoken in Oklahoma to a viable dialect spoken in Ontario. In Oklahoma Cayuga she finds a reduction in morphological productivity evidenced by a speakers reluctance to combine multiple affixes within a word. Reduction in morphological complexity is characteristic of morphological decay according to Hill (2001) who points to a reduction in noun incorporation in Mexicano and its disappearance in Nahuatl as examples.

Changes in the morphological structure of the dying language can also be attributable to influence from the dominant language. It has in fact been predicted that in language death, the dying language will become structurally similar to the dominant language (Dorian 1978). Dressler (1991) attests to this in his observation of reductions in Breton inflectional morphology which are attributable to the influence of French.

#### **5.4 Morphological change in Anihshininiimowin**

As a means of determining how Anihshininiimowin has changed structurally, several constructions were chosen based on observations made by J.D. Nichols during



Nouns possessed by a third person must be obviative. Morphological marking of nouns possessed by *obviative* third persons is the focus of this section. The suffix marking possession of animate or inanimate nouns by an obviative possessor in Anihshininiimowin is *-iniin*. This morpheme occurs in place of the obviative suffix (*-an* or *-ini*). In the Anihshininiimowin data obtained for this research, this morpheme is used consistently by traditional speakers while some variation is found for modern speakers. For example, in (a) below, the form given by MS3 completely lacks the obviative possessor morpheme *-iniin*. The difference between the two forms offered by MS1 in (a) however, is an example of vowel syncope in which the short vowel /i/ is deleted between homorganic consonants, which in this case are both /n/. As stated earlier (see 4.4.1.1), this process is common for speakers of all ages and does not reflect change or the improper use the morpheme in question.

(a)	<i>o- taataam -an</i>	<i>o- ciimaan -iniin</i>	▷ĊĊLʹ	▷ŦĬσσʹ
	3- father -nad.obv	3- canoe (ni) -obv.poss		
	'her/his father's canoe'			
TS1	<i>otaataaman ociimaaniniin</i>		▷ĊĊLʹ	▷ŦĬσσʹ
TS2	<i>otaataaman ociimaaniniin</i>		▷ĊĊLʹ	▷ŦĬσσʹ
MS1	<i>otaataaman ociimaaniin</i>		▷ĊĊLʹ	▷ŦĬσʹ
	<i>otaataaman ociimaniniin</i>		▷ĊĊLʹ	▷ŦĬσσʹ
MS3	<i>otaataaman ociimaan</i>		▷ĊĊLʹ	▷ŦĬʹ

MS1 provided forms on two occasions, as shown in (b) and (c), where she has inflected the animate possessed noun with the animate obviative suffix *-an* rather than the obviative possessor suffix *-iniin*.

- (b) *o- maamaam -an*      *ot- emihkwaan -iniin*    ▷ĹĹĹ'    ▷UΓ"ḃ.σσ'  
 3- mother -nad.obv    3- spoon (na) -obv.poss  
 'her/his mother's spoon'

<b>TS1</b>	<i>omaamaaman otemihkwaan<u>iniin</u></i>	▷ĹĹĹ'	▷UΓ"ḃ.σσ'
<b>TS2</b>	<i>omaamaaman otemihkwaan<u>iniin</u></i>	▷ĹĹĹ'	▷UΓ"ḃ.σσ'
<b>MS1</b>	<i>omaamaaman otemihkwaan</i>	▷ĹĹĹ'	▷UΓ"ḃ.ᓇ'
<b>MS3</b>	<i>omaamaaman otemihkwaan<u>iniin</u></i>	▷ĹĹĹ'	▷UΓ"ḃ.σσ'

- (c) *o- tootem -an*      *ot- ootaapaan -iniin*    ▷ᓅUL'    ▷ᓅᓇᓇᓇσσ'  
 3- friend -nad.obv    3- car (na) -obv.poss  
 'her/his friend's car'

<b>TS1</b>	<i>otooteman ootoapaan<u>iniin</u></i>	▷ᓅUL'	▷ᓅᓇᓇᓇσσ'
<b>TS2</b>	<i>otooteman ootoapaan<u>iniin</u></i>	▷ᓅUL'	▷ᓅᓇᓇᓇσσ'
<b>MS1</b>	<i>otooteman ootoapaanan</i>	▷ᓅUL'	▷ᓅᓇᓇᓇᓇ'
	<i>(otaataaman ootoapan<u>iniin</u></i>	▷ᓇᓇᓇᓇ'	▷ᓅᓇᓇᓇσσ')
<b>MS3</b>	<i>otooteman ootoapaan<u>iniin</u></i>	▷ᓅUL'	▷ᓅᓇᓇᓇσσ'

Note in (c) however, when elicited with a different possessor (*otaataaman* ▷ᓇᓇᓇᓇ' 'her/his father's'), MS1 used the obviative possessor suffix.

Examples (d) and (e) show both MS1 and MS3 using the obviative noun possessor suffix in the same manner as traditional speakers.

- (d) *o- taanihs -an*                      *o- mahkisin -iniin*    ▷Ċσ" ʎᵛ    ▷L" Pʀσσᵛ  
 3- daughter -nad.obv    3- shoe (ni) -obv.poss  
 'her/his daughter's shoes'

<b>TS1</b>	<i>otaanihsan omahkisin<u>iniin</u></i>	▷Ċσ" ʎᵛ	▷L" Pʀσσᵛ
<b>TS2</b>	<i>otaanihsan omahkisin<u>iniin</u></i>	▷Ċσ" ʎᵛ	▷L" Pʀσσᵛ
<b>MS1</b>	<i>otaanihsan omahkisin<u>iniin</u></i>	▷Ċσ" ʎᵛ	▷L" Pʀσσᵛ
<b>MS3</b>	<i>otaanihsan omahkisin<u>iniin</u></i>	▷Ċσ" ʎᵛ	▷L" Pʀσᵛ

- (e) *o- htehs -an*                      *o- taahs -iniin*    ▷"U" ʎᵛ    ▷Ċ" ʀσᵛ  
 3- older brother -nad.obv    3- pants (nad) -obv.poss  
 'her/his older brother's pants'

<b>TS1</b>	<i>ohtehsan otaahs<u>iniin</u></i>	▷"U" ʎᵛ	▷Ċ" ʀσᵛ
<b>TS2</b>	<i>ostehsan otaahs<u>iniin</u></i>	▷^U" ʎᵛ	▷Ċ" ʀσᵛ
<b>MS1</b>	<i>ostehsan otaahs<u>iniin</u></i>	▷^U" ʎᵛ	▷Ċ" ʀσᵛ
<b>MS3</b>	<i>ohtehsan otaahs<u>iniin</u></i>	▷"U" ʎᵛ	▷Ċ" ʀσᵛ

#### 5.4.1.2 The relational construction

The relational construction is used to mark an animate third person that is connected to a first or second person primary actor of an animate intransitive (vai) or transitive inanimate (vti) form (J.R. Valentine 1994). The relational is marked by the morpheme *-w* suffixed to the verb stem followed by additional morphology that increases the valency and brings in the third person participant. Elicitations of this construction focused mainly on vti forms in the independent order as attempts at eliciting vai relational forms often resulted in the benefactive construction which is distinct from the relational. The relational construction is especially common where there is a third person possessor

of an object. For example, contrast (a) ‘I see a boat’ and (b) ‘I see your boat’ where there is no third person participant involved, to (c) ‘I see her/his boat’ in which there is a third person possessor.

- (a) ‘I see a boat’  
*niwaapantaan ciimaan*  $\sigma \dot{\Delta} \cdot \langle \rangle \dot{\Delta} \cdot \dot{\Delta} \dot{\Delta}$   $\dot{\Delta} \dot{\Delta} \dot{\Delta}$   
*ni- waapant- aa- n ciimaan*  
 1- Stem ‘see’- theme(vti)- sg subj boat (na)
- (b) ‘I see your boat’  
*niwaapantaan kiciimaan*  $\sigma \dot{\Delta} \cdot \langle \rangle \dot{\Delta} \cdot \dot{\Delta} \dot{\Delta}$   $\dot{\Delta} \dot{\Delta} \dot{\Delta}$   
*ni- waapant- aa- n ki- ciimaan*  
 1- Stem ‘see’- theme(vti)- sg subj 2- boat (na)
- (c) ‘I see her/his boat’  
*niwaapantam(o)waan ociimaan*<sup>12</sup>  $\sigma \dot{\Delta} \cdot \langle \rangle \dot{\Delta} \cdot \dot{\Delta} \dot{\Delta}$   $\dot{\Delta} \dot{\Delta} \dot{\Delta}$   
*ni- waapant- am(o)- w- aa- n o- ciimaan*  
 1- Stem ‘see’- theme(vti)- REL- dir theme(vta)- sg subj 3- boat (na)

Both traditional speakers and MS1 consistently used the relational construction to mark an involved animate third person which, in this case is the possessor of the object in question. However, as shown in the examples below, MS3 did not use this morpheme but rather produced the form as if the possessor of the object in question was not a third person (as in (a) and (b) above).

- (d) *niwaapantam(o)waan ociimaan* ‘I see her/his boat’  
 $\sigma \dot{\Delta} \cdot \langle \rangle \dot{\Delta} \cdot \dot{\Delta} \dot{\Delta} / \sigma \dot{\Delta} \cdot \langle \rangle \dot{\Delta} \cdot \dot{\Delta} \dot{\Delta}$   $\dot{\Delta} \dot{\Delta} \dot{\Delta}$
- |            |                                       |   |
|------------|---------------------------------------|---|
| <b>TS1</b> | <i>niwaapatam<u>w</u>aan ociimaan</i> | $\sigma \dot{\Delta} \cdot \langle \rangle \dot{\Delta} \cdot \dot{\Delta} \dot{\Delta}$ $\dot{\Delta} \dot{\Delta} \dot{\Delta}$ |
| <b>TS2</b> | <i>niwaapatam<u>w</u>aan ociimaan</i> | $\sigma \dot{\Delta} \cdot \langle \rangle \dot{\Delta} \cdot \dot{\Delta} \dot{\Delta}$ $\dot{\Delta} \dot{\Delta} \dot{\Delta}$ |
| <b>MS1</b> | <i>niwaapatam<u>w</u>aan ociimaan</i> | $\sigma \dot{\Delta} \cdot \langle \rangle \dot{\Delta} \cdot \dot{\Delta} \dot{\Delta}$ $\dot{\Delta} \dot{\Delta} \dot{\Delta}$ |
| <b>MS3</b> | <i>niwaapantaan ociimaan</i>          | $\sigma \dot{\Delta} \cdot \langle \rangle \dot{\Delta} \cdot \dot{\Delta} \dot{\Delta}$ $\dot{\Delta} \dot{\Delta} \dot{\Delta}$ |

<sup>12</sup> The parentheses indicate that /o/ is not always present here.

- (e) *niwaapantam(o)waan omahkisinin* 'I see her/his shoes'  
 σḁ<ḁCḁḁ / σḁ<ḁCLḁḁ ḁL"ḁḁḁḁ
- TS1 *niwaapatamwaan omahkisinin* σḁ<ḁCLḁḁ ḁL"ḁḁḁḁ  
 TS2 *niwaapatamwaan omahkisinin* σḁ<ḁCLḁḁ ḁL"ḁḁḁḁ  
 MS1 *niwaapatamwaan omahkisinin* σḁ<ḁCLḁḁ ḁL"ḁḁḁḁ  
 MS3 *niwaapantaan omahkisinin* σḁ<ḁCḁḁ ḁL"ḁḁḁḁ
- (f) *nintayaawaan otaapahikan* 'I have her/his key'  
 σḁCḁḁḁḁ ḁC<"ḁḁḁḁ
- TS1 *nintayaawaan otaapahikan* σḁCḁḁḁḁ ḁC<"ḁḁḁḁ  
 TS2 *nitayaawaan otaapahikan* σḁCḁḁḁḁ ḁC<"ḁḁḁḁ  
 MS1 *nitayaawaan otaapahikan* σḁCḁḁḁḁ ḁC<"ḁḁḁḁ  
 MS3 *nintayaan otaapahikan* σḁCḁḁḁ ḁC<"ḁḁḁḁ

## 5.4.2 Derivational morphology

### 5.4.2.1 Incorporated nouns

Anihshiniimowin object nominals can be incorporated into the verb stem by way of noun incorporation or denominalization. The focus of this section is to determine what form this object nominal takes when it is incorporated into the verb by speakers of the 'modern language'. For many nouns there is a medial form that is distinct from the surface form. For example the medial form used to incorporate the noun 'moose' is *-oonsw-* as in *ahshwahoonswe* ḁ"ḁ"ḁḁḁḁ 'to lie in wait for moose'. Younger speakers may have a tendency to incorporate the surface noun form *moons* into the verb rather than the medial form resulting in *ahshwahimoonswe* ḁ"ḁ"ḁḁḁḁ which is stigmatized by elder speakers

(J.D. Nichols, personal communication). This example represents a possible trend toward an increase in the use of transparent forms in which the noun stem is retained.

Whether there are changes in this area of the language is difficult to assess by elicitation. Especially problematic in this case is the use of English (a non-incorporating language) as the language of elicitation. Often this prompts the speaker to produce a form that reflects the structure of English in place of an incorporated form. The following examples of denominals however, reflect that middle aged speakers continue to use medials rather than surface noun forms.

(a)	'shoe, moccasin' (ni)	<i>mahkisin</i>	L" Pʔ
	medial form	<i>-ahkisin-</i>	
	<i>akaahsahkisine</i>	ᐱᐅ" ᐱPʔᐅ	'she/he has small shoes'
	TS2	<i>akaahsahkisine</i>	ᐱᐅ" ᐱPʔᐅ
	MS3	<i>akaahsahkisine</i>	ᐱᐅ" ᐱPʔᐅ
	<i>oshkahkisine</i>	ᐅᐃ" Pʔᐅ	'she/he has new shoes'
	TS2	<i>oshkahkisine</i>	ᐅᐃ" Pʔᐅ
	<i>pihtahkisine</i>	ᐱ" C" Pʔᐅ	'she/he put on her/his shoes'
	TS1	<i>pohtahkisine</i> <sup>13</sup>	>" C" Pʔᐅ
	TS2	<i>pohtahkisine</i>	>" C" Pʔᐅ
	MS1	<i>pihtahkisine</i>	ᐱ" C" Pʔᐅ

<sup>13</sup> The form given by TS1 and TS2 show regional variation, *poht-* being the more northern form.



## 5.5 Morphophonemic change

### 5.5.1 Indefinite actor *-naaniwan*

The suffix *-naaniwan* removes the valency from the verb by deriving an intransitive inanimate form (vii), shown in (a), from an animate intransitive (vai), as in (b). This process results in an impersonal or indefinite actor form such as (a) ‘there is eating’.

- (a) *wiihsininaaniwan* (vii) ‘there is eating’  
 Δ" ʔσ<sub>u</sub>σ<ʔ
- (b) *wiihsini* (vai) ‘she/he is eating’  
 Δ" ʔσ

Preliminary survey in Anihshininiimowin-speaking communities identified this suffix as a potential area of morphophonemic change by way of paradigmatic leveling. Typically, *-naaniwan* is simply suffixed to the verb. However, for a vai ending in *-e*, the final *-e* changes to *-aa* to which *-niwan* is added. For a vai ending in *-aa* the suffix takes the form *-niwan*. The prediction is that younger speakers will suffix *-naaniwan* to verbs ending in *-e* resulting in forms such as those in (d) and (f), which have been recorded in other Anihshininiimowin-speaking communities, rather than those in (c) and (e).

- (c) *piintikaaniwan* ‘there is a church service’ (lit. ‘there is a coming in’)  
 ^ ʔŋbσ<ʔ
- (d) *piintikenaaniwan*  
 ^ ŋŋ<sub>u</sub>σ<ʔ
- (e) *wanihikaaniwan* ‘there is trapping’  
 <σ" Δbσ<ʔ
- (f) *wanihikenaaniwan*  
 <σ" Δŋ<sub>u</sub>σ<ʔ

The forms elicited in Wunnumin Lake reveal that modern speakers do not show evidence of paradigmatic leveling in deriving the impersonal vii form. Several examples of verbs ending in *-e* are given in (g)-(j):

- |     |  |  |
|-----|--|--|
| (g) | <i>piintike</i> (vai)<br>ᐱᑦᓂᑦᑭ<br><i>piintikaaniwan</i> (vii)<br>ᐱᑦᓂᑦᑭ ᐱᑦᓂᑦᑭ       | 'she/he is entering, coming/going inside'<br><br>'there is a church service' |
|     | <b>TS1</b> <i>piitikaaniwan</i>  | ᐱᑦᓂᑦᑭ  |
|     | <b>TS2</b> <i>piitikaaniwan</i>  | ᐱᑦᓂᑦᑭ  |
|     | <b>MS1</b> <i>piintikaaniwan</i>   | ᐱᑦᓂᑦᑭ  |
|     | <b>MS3</b> <i>piintikaaniwan</i>   | ᐱᑦᓂᑦᑭ  |
| (h) | <i>wanihike</i> (vai)<br>ᐱᑦᓂᑦᑭ ᐱᑦᓂᑦᑭ<br><i>wanihikaaniwan</i> (vii)<br>ᐱᑦᓂᑦᑭ ᐱᑦᓂᑦᑭ | 'she/he is trapping, setting traps'<br><br>'there is trapping'               |
|     | <b>TS1</b> <i>wanihikaaniwan</i>   | ᐱᑦᓂᑦᑭ ᐱᑦᓂᑦᑭ  |
|     | <b>TS2</b> <i>wanihikaaniwan</i>   | ᐱᑦᓂᑦᑭ ᐱᑦᓂᑦᑭ  |
|     | <b>MS1</b> <i>wanihikaaniwan</i>   | ᐱᑦᓂᑦᑭ ᐱᑦᓂᑦᑭ  |
|     | <b>MS3</b> <i>wanihikaaniwan</i>   | ᐱᑦᓂᑦᑭ ᐱᑦᓂᑦᑭ  |
| (i) | <i>metawe</i> (vai)<br>ᓂᑦᓂᑦᑭ<br><i>metawaaniwan</i> (vii)<br>ᓂᑦᓂᑦᑭ ᐱᑦᓂᑦᑭ           | 'she/he is playing'<br><br>'there is playing' (also 'festival')              |
|     | <b>TS1</b> <i>metawaaniwan</i>   | ᓂᑦᓂᑦᑭ ᐱᑦᓂᑦᑭ  |
|     | <b>TS2</b> <i>metawaaniwan</i>   | ᓂᑦᓂᑦᑭ ᐱᑦᓂᑦᑭ  |
|     | <b>MS1</b> <i>metawaaniwan</i>   | ᓂᑦᓂᑦᑭ ᐱᑦᓂᑦᑭ  |
|     | <b>MS3</b> <i>metawaaniwan</i>   | ᓂᑦᓂᑦᑭ ᐱᑦᓂᑦᑭ  |

- (j) *taashkikahike* (vai) 'she/he is splitting wood'  
 ČʸPb" Δq  
*taashkikahikaaniwan* (vii) 'there is wood splitting'  
 ČʸPb" Δbσ Δʸ
- TS2** *tashkikahikaaniwan* ČʸPb" Δbσ Δʸ  
**MS1** *tashkahikaaniwan* Čʸb" Δbσ Δʸ  
**MS3** *tashkekaaniwan* Čʸq̣bσ Δʸ

The variation in (j) (and in (l) below) results from vowel syncopation between homorganic consonants (as in 4.4.1.1 and 5.4.1.1) and does not represent paradigmatic leveling in the application of this suffix.<sup>14</sup>

There was also no evidence of paradigmatic leveling for verbs ending in *-aa*. For example:

- (k) *nipaa* (vai) 'she/he is sleeping'  
 σ<  
*nipaaniwan* (vii) 'there is sleeping'  
 σ<σ Δʸ
- TS1** *nipaaniwan* σ<σ Δʸ  
**TS2** *nipaaniwan* σ<σ Δʸ  
**MS1** *nipaaniwan* σ<σ Δʸ  
**MS3** *nipaaniwan* σ<σ Δʸ

Finally, an example of a verb ending in *-i* to which the suffix *-naaniwan* is added by all speakers is shown in (l):

<sup>14</sup> The form given by MS3 shows further contraction in which the sequence /ahi/ is reduced to /e/.

(I)	<i>wiihsini</i> (vai)	‘she/he is eating’
	Δ" ʃσ	
	<i>wiihsininaaniwan</i> (vii)	‘there is eating’
	Δ" ʃσ ɔ σ ɔ ɔ	
<b>TS1</b>	<i>wiihsininaaniwan</i>	Δ" ʃσ ɔ σ ɔ ɔ
<b>TS2</b>	<i>wiihsinaaniwan</i>	Δ" ʃσ ɔ σ ɔ ɔ
<b>MS1</b>	<i>wiihsininaaniwan</i>	Δ" ʃσ ɔ σ ɔ ɔ
	<i>wiihsinaaniwan</i>	Δ" ʃσ ɔ σ ɔ ɔ
<b>MS3</b>	<i>wiihsininaaniwan</i>	Δ" ʃσ ɔ σ ɔ ɔ

## 5.6 Summary

The main morphological feature of obsolescent languages is reduction in both productivity and complexity. The Anihshininiimowin data reveal some variation in morphological marking by speakers in the modern group. For example, the obviative noun possessor was not marked consistently by modern speakers and the relational morpheme was never used by MS3. Given that these categories are not marked in English, this supports Andersen’s hypothesis of morphological reduction which suggests that categories marked in both languages will survive longer than those that are not. While marking of these categories is not lost by modern speakers, there is variability as predicted.

Elicitations of denominals revealed minimal variation in the use of medials by modern speakers. However, there is a rather limited amount of data suggesting that perhaps a more concentrated analysis of this area is required in order to determine whether there is in fact a trend toward the use of more transparent forms.

There was no evidence of paradigmatic leveling by modern speakers based on the indefinite actor construction, for which simplification has previously been observed in Anihshininiimowin. This raises the point that change does not progress at the same rate even between relatively close communities. Based on the data in this chapter it seems that modern speakers in Wunnumin Lake (at least the ones in this sample) do not show the level of morphological reduction expected based on previous observations of change in Anihshininiimowin.

## **6. LEXICAL CHANGE**

### **6.1 Introduction and outline**

The increased presence of English in the language of younger speakers is possibly the most noticeable change to speakers of Anihshiniimowin. With an increase in bilingualism there is corresponding increase in borrowing from English and code switching between Anihshiniimowin and English. These strategies are sometimes used to fill gaps in the lexicon. Other strategies used to fill lexical gaps are discussed in section 6.2 in which a review of the literature on lexical changes in Algonquin is presented. In section 6.3 an overview of lexical change in obsolescent languages is given including examples from Oklahoma Cayuga (Mithun 1989). Examples of lexical change in Wunnumin Lake are presented in section 6.4 which includes discussions on lexical reduction, borrowing, and code switching in that community. A summary of lexical change in Anihshiniimowin and a comparison to lexical change in other languages including obsolescent languages is given in section 6.5.

### **6.2 Lexical change in other Algonquian languages**

#### **6.2.1 Algonquin**

Artuso (1998b) notes that there is a high number of English loan words in the language of younger speakers of Algonquin. He adds that these loan words serve not only to label new concepts and technology, but that “even some of the most traditional of Algonquin vocabulary and concepts are being replaced by loan words” (Artuso 1998b:

105). In most cases these loan words are not phonologically integrated into the language but many are inflected with Algonquin affixes.

Aside from borrowing, Artuso finds that other strategies such as extension, substitution and circumlocution are employed by younger speakers to fill gaps in their lexicons. In extension, the meaning of a particular lexical item extends enough to replace the need for a separate term. The use of the replaced lexical item decreases as a result of this process and eventually is lost from the lexicon of younger speakers. In substitution and circumlocution a specific lexical item is either substituted with a more general term for the same concept or replaced by a lengthy description of the concept. While these strategies are used by younger speakers for a range of different topics, Artuso particularly notes a loss of terminology related to traditional lifestyle.

Some changes in the Algonquin lexicon can be attributed to interference from English. An example of this is the effect that the English kinship system has on the language of some young Algonquin speakers. Algonquian languages do not distinguish between male and female younger siblings as English does. Artuso (1998b) provides an example of interference from English where the term for younger sibling has been reinterpreted to mean younger sister and the word for boy is added to distinguish younger brother.

### **6.3 Lexical change in obsolescent languages**

Generally, lexical change in obsolescent languages is characterized by reduction. Andersen (1982) proposes three hypotheses of lexical reduction. The first, and most

general hypothesis predicts a reduction in the variety and number of lexical items available to the speaker. The second hypothesis elaborates on the first by specifying that the most impoverished areas of the lexicon will be those where the speaker has not had recent experience. For example, in Mithun's (1989: 248) discussion of lexical loss in Oklahoma Cayuga she notes that "words for objects no longer discussed have been forgotten, such as 'moose', 'beaver', 'mink', and 'weasel'". The third hypothesis proposed by Andersen elaborates further on the type of lexical items that will be retained, while further characterizing those that will be lost. The speaker will retain "common, highly-frequent, unmarked lexical items; the gaps will be of less-common, low-frequency, highly-marked items" (Andersen 1982: 94).

#### **6.4 Lexical change in Anihshininiimowin**

Data in this section were obtained by elicitation as well as from recorded texts. Textual data consists of a recorded conversation between two modern speakers (MS7 and MS8) and three recorded monologues by MS1. The conversation between modern speakers ranges in topic covering such areas as memories from their childhood, their children, and people and events in the community. The three monologues recorded by MS1 consist of stories from her past mostly about hunting, trapping, and fishing with her parents and grandparents.

#### **6.4.1 Lexical reduction**

As noted in section 2.2.1 the use of Anihshininiimowin is not restricted to certain domains in this community, therefore the variety of lexical items that younger speakers are exposed to is not limited in this way. Changes away from the traditional lifestyle, however, have resulted in a decrease in the use of lexical items associated with this lifestyle. A language teacher in Wunnumin Lake reported that her students showed a lack of terminology in areas associated with living in the bush and trapping for example. This trend is not uncommon in Aboriginal communities as noted by Artuso (1998b) on Algonquin and Mithun (1990) on Warlpiri, an Aboriginal language of Australia in which children's lexicons typically lack traditional terms such as those describing hunting weapons. This supports the hypotheses proposed by Andersen (1982) in that younger speakers have had very little, if any, recent experience in these areas. At the same time, it is important to note that some people in the community do continue to hunt and trap and as a result the basic terminology associated with these activities continues to be culturally salient. For example, unlike Oklahoma Cayuga which, as noted above, has lost the words for 'moose', 'beaver', 'mink', and 'weasel', modern speakers of Anihshininiimowin had no difficulty listing words such as 'moose', 'muskrat', 'rabbit', 'marten', 'fox', 'beaver', 'bear', 'pelt', and 'snare'.

There is, however, evidence of loss in more specialized terminology in Anihshininiimowin - such as naming the parts of a trap or a snowshoe - where younger speakers extend the meaning of a more general term or use a descriptive or a compound form in place of the traditional term (J.D. Nichols, personal communication). Elicitations

revealed some gaps in the lexicons of modern speakers. For example, the word for ‘ice fishing hole’ *twaahikan* ᑕ·" Δb’ was correctly supplied by traditional speakers but not by modern speakers. The word provided by MS1 referred to a hole cut in something (not specifically in the ice for the purpose of fishing) and MS2 provided a verbal form associated with the activity of ice fishing. Traditional speakers, however, also experience lexical reduction in areas where they have not had recent or any experience. One elder speaker claimed that she would not be able to provide the technical terms for naming the parts of a snowshoe but that her husband would be able to as he has experience making them.

Another potential area of lexical loss is suggested by the forms that modern speakers supplied for describing a short winter or a short summer as shown in (a):

- |     |                          |            |                |
|-----|--------------------------|------------|----------------|
| (a) | <i>acina ehta pipoon</i> | ᐱᑦᐱ ᐃᑦ ᐱᑦᑦ | ‘short winter’ |
|     | <i>acina ehta niipin</i> | ᐱᑦᐱ ᐃᑦ ᐃᑦᐱ | ‘short summer’ |

Here two particles are used to describe the concept: *acina* ᐱᑦᐱ ‘a while, a short time’, and *ehta* ᐃᑦ ‘only’. An elder speaker in the community remarked that these forms are young people’s language and offered the forms in (b) as the correct forms.

- |     |                        |           |                |
|-----|------------------------|-----------|----------------|
| (b) | <i>pehshwaa-pipoon</i> | ᐅᑦᑦ ᐃᑦᐱᑦᑦ | ‘short winter’ |
|     | <i>pehshwaa-niipin</i> | ᐅᑦᑦ ᐃᑦᐱᑦ  | ‘short summer’ |

### 6.4.2 Borrowing

Gaps in the lexicon that result from lexical loss are often filled through borrowing. In a discussion of lexical changes in Warlpiri, an Aboriginal language of Australia, Bavin (1989) finds borrowing from English to be common. Warlpiri borrowings from English are primarily cultural, they include place names, personal names and words for new concepts (Bavin 1989). However, some of the loan words that have been introduced are not for new concepts but rather for concepts that are already in place for which Warlpiri already has a word. This trend is increasing in Anihshininiimowin as well. Bavin notes that children in particular use many English words where a Warlpiri word already exists. She adds that this can be attributed partly to the fact that young mothers are using many of these same English loan words in their caregiver speech.

Many loan words that were borrowed into Anihshininiimowin from English in the past have been phonologically integrated into the language such as *pepan* √<? ‘paper’, *shookaa* ʃb̥ ‘sugar’, and *pepaa* √< ‘pepper’. However, with an increase of bilingualism in the community there is a corresponding reduction in the phonological integration of borrowed words. Bilingual speakers have the capacity to retain the phonology of the origin language of the borrowed lexical item (Mougeon and Beniak 1989). In fact, Bavin (1989: 270) reports of Warlpiri that “English pronunciations for newly borrowed words are generally restricted to the speakers who have a fairly good knowledge of English, so they will be aware of the English origin.” As a result of the tendency for bilingual Anihshininiimowin speakers to retain the pronunciation of the origin language, new sounds

are introduced into the borrowing language. The fact that there are symbols to represent the *r* and *l* sounds in the syllabary is evidence of this (see 2.4.2).

While English loan words used by modern speakers in Wunnumin Lake are not always phonologically integrated, they are often inflected with Anihshininiimowin affixes<sup>15</sup>. The same tendency is noted of Warlpiri (Bavin 1989), Central Pomo, a Pomoan language of Northern California (Mithun 1990) and Algonquin (Artuso 1998b) in which morphological integration of loan words occurs readily. The most common example of this in my data is the use of the locative suffix *-hkaank*. For example, the word *storehkaank* ‘to the store’ was heard used by modern speakers in the community on many occasions. Two English words were inflected with the Anihshininiimowin locative suffix by MS8 in the recorded conversation as shown in (a).

- (a)      MS8    *throathkaank*    ‘on the throat’  
                          *hitchhkaank*    ‘on the hitch’

The inflection of English loan words with the locative suffix is also very common in Algonquin (Artuso 1998b). Artuso (1998b) also reports inflection of the possessive prefix on loan words to be common in Algonquin, but only with the third person. In the conversation between MS7 and MS8 there is one example of Anihshininiimowin possession marked on an English noun. In this case the form is marked for first person possession: *nbasket* ‘my basket’.

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<sup>15</sup> While gender assignment of words borrowed from English was not examined as part of this research, the pattern seems to be for borrowed words to be assigned the same gender as similar objects. For example, ‘skidoo’ *iskitoo* is animate as is ‘sled’ and ‘toy box’ is inanimate as is ‘box’.

In the recorded conversation between modern speakers, both speakers use English numbers to name years. This is discussed in section 6.4.2.1 as situational code switching, although it is acknowledged here that English years and month names have been borrowed into the language as they are used even by many monolingual speakers (J.D. Nichols, personal communication). As stated in Poplack and Sankoff (1984), the distinction between borrowing and code switching is not always clear. For this reason I have based my analysis of code switching on L.P. Valentine's (1995) extensive work in a neighbouring Anihshininiimowin community.

#### **6.4.3 Code switching**

The term code switching refers to the process whereby a person who speaks two or more languages switches back and forth between languages. Switching can occur between speakers in a conversation as well as between or within utterances (Milroy and Muysken 1995). L.P. Valentine (1995) looks at code switching between Anihshininiimowin and English as well as Anihshininiimowin and Cree in a community only 40 kilometers from Wunnumin Lake. Here I will concentrate on her analysis of Anihshininiimowin and English in which she finds that switching can be characterized as 'situational'. Situational code switching, as defined by Blom and Gumperz (1972), refers to a switch triggered by a change in the speaker's definition of the social situation. For example, L.P. Valentine (1995) explains that in a recording of a local radio broadcast two situational elements trigger a switch to English by the broadcaster. First, a caller to the station triggers a switch by leaving a message in English. The second element that triggers

a switch is the fact that the message to be relayed on-air is written down in English. L.P. Valentine adds that other situational elements may have also contributed. For example, the message consisted of a telephone number. Most numbers prompt the use of English in Anihshiniimowin and in fact “this practice extends to all units of time, including dates and other time phrases, such as week, month, and year” (L.P. Valentine 1995: 65).

#### 6.4.3.1 Situational switching in Wunnumin Lake

There are several examples of situational code switching in a recorded conversation between MS7 and MS8. First, a child who is wandering in and out of the room provides motivation for both speakers, on separate occasions, to switch to English when speaking to him. For example:

- (a) **MS8** Are you okay?
- (b) **MS7** ...*maacaan, weti ishaan, maacaan, toys naaskaw.*  
'...go, go over there, go, get the toys.'
- (c) **MS7** ...toy box *ohsha weti ahte...*  
'...the toy box is sitting over there...'
- (d) **MS7** ...you can have some if you want some *toohkan...*  
'...you can have some if you want some like this...'

In example (a) the switch to English is for that speaker's entire utterance. Milroy and Muysken (1995) refer to this as 'inter-sentential' while examples (b), (c) and (d), where switching occurs for only a small part of the utterance, are referred to as 'intra-sentential'.

A second motivation for situational code switching is the presence of numbers and time phrases including years. For example:

- (e) **MS7** How long.. how many.. seventy eight, four years old *ohshe aantshke naanta* three, *nkeniin sha* seventy nine *nkanooohke*.  
‘how long.. how many.. seventy eight, four years old and maybe three, I too remember seventy nine.’
- (f) **MS8** Nineteen seventy nine, nineteen seventy eight *ohsha*.  
‘Nineteen seventy nine, nineteen seventy eight indeed.’
- (g) **MS7** ...*mikoshkaac iko* the year two thousand...  
‘...it was disturbing the year two thousand...’
- (h) **MS8** ...two skidoos *eyaapacihaac nimaamaa wiinawaa*, two long sleighs.  
‘...my mother and them were using two skidoos, two long sleighs.’

In example (h) there are two instances of code switching, both prompted by the presence of a number. Interestingly, MS8 later uses the Anihshiniimowin word to speak of her mother’s sleigh where there is no number present to trigger the switch as shown in (i).

- (i) **MS8** ...*otaapaanaahk ohsha.. oshitaapaanepaniin nimaamaa*...  
‘...it was the sleigh.. my mother was fixing her sleigh load...’

The most productive type of situational code switching observed by L.P. Valentine (1995: 73) “involves lexical insertion, where an English word is used when there is no immediately accessible Severn equivalent.” L.P. Valentine (1995) finds this to be common especially in place names, numbers over thirty and a few prepositional phrases. Numbers, as shown above, did trigger code switching for these two speakers, but was not restricted to those over thirty. As well, there were instances of switching prompted by place names (‘Kingfisher’ and ‘Thunder Bay’) and by a prepositional phrase as shown in (j).

- (j) **MS8** Over the Christmas *shwiin ta-pi-kiwe*.  
‘Over the Christmas she will come home.’

There were several other occurrences of lexical insertion in this text that seemed to be prompted by the speaker’s need to fill a lexical gap in Anihshiniimowin. For example:

- (k) **MS7** *aahiisha kaye nkii-inentaan.. ci-kaahkipicihsekin kekoonan,*  
computer, *aatika tahsh kaye* those tv's, electricity...  
'I had also thought that.. that things would stop, computer, and  
also those tv's, electricity...'

Code switching can also serve to frame an utterance or part of an utterance. For example, in (l) and (m) MS7 switches to English to indicate quotation marks surrounding the utterance.

- (l) **MS7** I would rather be in your shoes, *sa ihkiton...*  
'I would rather be in your shoes, say that...'
- (m) **MS7** ...yep, that's right, alone *ohsha kaye ihkito...*  
'...yep, that's right, alone she also says...'

## 6.5 Summary

The restriction of the use of a language to certain domains within a community as found in obsolescent languages such as Gros Ventre reduces the size of the lexical inventory that is used. In Wunnumin Lake, Anihshiniimowin is not restricted in its use; it continues to be the primary means of communication in that community. There is however some evidence that the number of lexical items available to modern speakers is not equal to that of elder speakers. As in Andersen's (1982) hypothesis, the areas in which speakers have not had recent experience are those that show evidence of lexical reduction in Anihshiniimowin. This is not, however, restricted to modern speakers as traditional speakers also lack specialized terminology in areas where they have not had any recent experience. However, with an increase in bilingualism as well as increased exposure to English through media such as satellite television, and the recent advent of computers and the internet into the community, changes in the lexicon go beyond reduction to include an

increase in borrowing and code switching. While some older borrowings from English are even used by monolingual speakers of Anihshiniimowin, such as the names for months and years, modern speakers tend to borrow much more freely than elder speakers and tend not to integrate loan words phonologically. This pattern is as expected with an increase in bilingualism as noted by Artuso (1998b) on Algonquin and Bavin (1989) on Warlpiri.

## **7. CONCLUSION**

### **7.1 Conclusion**

The primary goal of this thesis was to document differences between the ‘modern language’ of middle aged Anihshiniimowin speakers and the traditional language of elder speakers in Wunnumin Lake, Ontario. This is a community in which the language continues to thrive while many surrounding Anihshiniimowin communities are experiencing a rapid decline in the use of their language. Perhaps as a result of this decline there are concerns in this community that, as the language changes, it is being lost. The data presented herein generally reveal that this is not the case although this does not suggest that language maintenance efforts should be put aside. The data also reveal some areas of morphology and the lexicon that are potentially problematic in terms of language maintenance.

Although changes in the area of morphology were few, the variation exhibited by modern speakers suggests that there is some degree of reduction in this area. In some of the constructions that were elicited for, modern speakers showed inconsistencies in marking. Only in the relational construction however, did one of the modern speakers (MS3) have a complete lack of marking. The other modern speaker (MS1) had no difficulty with the morphological marking of the relational. Given that the approach taken here was to elicit for specific constructions where variation had previously been observed, a more broad analysis of the morphology would be beneficial.

Changes in the lexicon are due in large part to an increase in bilingualism, and thus an increase in borrowing and code switching. A shift away from the traditional lifestyle has also affected the lexicon. We must keep in mind that lexical change is expected as certain items and concepts become less salient and new ones are introduced. A general trend that was noted however, is that words for new concepts and items tend to be English. For example, in a conversation between modern speakers, English was used to talk about computers, televisions and electricity. Another trend that was noted is that modern speakers tend not to integrate loan words phonologically. The failure to integrate loan words phonologically and morphologically is considered a sign of moribundity (Dressler 1991). Modern speakers however, readily integrated loan words morphologically.

Changes in the phonology are not of the type found in obsolescent languages, nor do they suggest that Anihshiniimowin is changing to sound more like English. In fact, there is a precedence for many of these changes, including unrounding, palatalization and labialization, noted in other Algonquian languages. The best way to deal with these changes might be to create an awareness that differences exist rather than to attempt to 'correct' the pronunciation of younger speakers.

It is hoped that this thesis has created an awareness that all languages change as an inherent part of their evolution and that change is not necessarily decay. It is also hoped that the knowledge herein will serve to assist in language maintenance efforts even if only by promoting an awareness of the shape of the language. Understanding the changes documented in this thesis, and thus some of the more salient features of 'modern language' is necessary in order to remove any stigma associated with this variety. This is

in turn central to the process of language maintenance. In order for language maintenance efforts to succeed, it is necessary for speakers to have a sense of pride and self-confidence in their linguistic abilities. Therefore, recognizing that different varieties of a language exist and that they are equally authentic is essential to the continued survival of this language.

## **7.2 Suggestions for future research**

The data in this thesis reveal many of the features of Anihshiniimowin ‘modern language’ that have resulted from language change. In many ways, however, this thesis only begins to describe the features of this variety of Anihshiniimowin. A more in-depth examination in the areas of phonology, morphology or the lexicon would certainly help to further characterize ‘modern language’ as would an analysis of the syntactic features.

While in this particular community Anihshiniimowin continues to be the main language spoken by all ages, this is not the case in all of the other communities in the Severn area. It might therefore be the case that the language of middle-aged speakers in other communities shows greater evidence of change. For this reason, a study including speakers from other communities would be recommended for further investigation into the changes in this language. Unfortunately certain limitations could not be overcome in the current study. It would be ideal in a study of this type to control for gender as well as to include a larger number of speakers in the sample. An investigation into the language of speakers under thirty years old would also help to better understand the changes that are taking place in Anihshiniimowin. The data in this thesis cannot possibly account for all

the changes in the language and for this reason a more in-depth look at any one of the areas discussed herein would have much to offer.

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