Nominalizations in Naskapi: Production and Inflection

BILL JANCEWICZ

Summer Institute of Linguistics and
Naskapi Development Corporation

The language described in this paper has been referred to as “Western Naskapi”. It is a palatalized y-dialect spoken in the northeast of the Cree-Montagnais-Naskapi continuum. The data are from speakers resident at the Naskapi community of Kawawachikamach, near Schefferville, Québec.

PRODUCTION PROCESS

Like other languages in the Cree-Montagnais-Naskapi continuum, one very productive means employed to form new words in Naskapi is the process referred to as nominalization. Essentially, this is accomplished by adding a *kaa-* prefix to a verb inflected for conjunct indicative neutral, third person singular. Although *kaa-* is homophonous with the prefix that marks a conjunct verb as past reference, Lynn Drapeau (1978:214) points out that in Montagnais this *kaa-* functions as a relative particle referring to an antecedent, meaning roughly ‘the one who...’ or ‘the thing that...’, forming a relative clause. As in Montagnais, it is from these relative conjunct verbs that Naskapi nominalizations arise, when they are lexicalized as nouns by the speech community. Once thus lexicalized, nominalizations function syntactically as nouns and are (for the most part) inflected as nouns:¹

(1) a. chiskutimaachaaw Al ‘s/he teaches’
   b. kaa-chiskutimaachaat NomA ‘teacher’

(2) a. nituutiihkwaaaw Al ‘s/he is hunting caribou’
   b. kaa-nituutiihkwaaat NomA ‘caribou hunter’

¹ As in other Algonquian languages, the citation form for a verb (as listed in a lexicon or dictionary, for example) is the third person singular of the independent indicative neutral. When a source verb is listed, this is the form that is presented, unless otherwise noted. Abbreviations: TA = transitive animate verb; TI = transitive inanimate verb; Al = animate intransitive verb; II = intransitive inanimate verb; NomA = nominalization, animate; NomI = nominalization, inanimate. Persons are marked 1, 2, 3 and 3’ (obviative).
(3) a. puutaachaa-w Al ‘s/he blows’  
b. kaa-puutaachaa-t NomA ‘jet plane’
(4) a. titipii-w titipiyuw/ Al/II ‘s/he, it rolls’  
b. kaa-titipii-t NomA ‘tire’
(5) a. suuskupii-w suuskupiyuw/ Al/II ‘s/he, it slides along’  
b. kaa-suuskupii-sch Noml ‘carpenter’s plane’
(6) a. siipschipii-w siipschipiyuw/ Al/II ‘it is stretchy’  
b. kaa-siipschipii-ch Noml ‘slingshot; elastic’
(7) a. chipitaa-w II ‘it closes’  
b. kaa-chipitaa-sch Noml ‘zipper’
(8) a. miihkwaakimi-w miihkwaakimuw/ II ‘it is red liquid’  
b. kaa-miihkwaakimi-ch Noml ‘wine’
(9) a. miskuwaa-w II ‘it is hard’  
b. kaa-miskuwaa-ch Noml ‘cheese’
(10) a. wiisaawaa-w II ‘it is yellow’  
b. kaa-wiisaawaa-ch Noml ‘butter’
(11) a. kinuwaaiht-im Ti ‘s/he has, keeps it’  
b. kaa-kinuwaaiht-aahk NomA ‘caretaker’
(12) a. niikaanisk-im Ti ‘s/he leads it’  
b. kaa-niikaanisk-aahk NomA ‘president’

Depending upon the context, the kaa + conjunct form may be understood as a past reference verb, a relative clause, or a nominalization:

(13) As a past reference verb in a wh-question:  
taatispii kaaachiskutimaachaat  
when he.taught  
‘When did he teach?’
(14) As a relative clause:  
na naapaaw kaaachiskutimaachaat utaahch-kaatipimipiich niwiichiwaakin an that man who.taught last.week my.friend that  
‘The man who taught last week was my friend.’
(15) As a noun (nominalization):  
chaamiit misinaakiniyuw kaaachiskutimaachaat  
give.it.to.him book (obv.) teacher  
‘Give the book to the teacher.’
Derivation from Al verbs

Many nominalizations are derived from animate intransitive (Al) verbs. A partial paradigm of the Al conjunct indicative neutral is given in 16:

\[
\begin{align*}
1 & \quad \text{aa-chiskutimaachaa-yaan} \quad \text{‘[when] I teach’} \\
2 & \quad \text{aa-chiskutimaachaa-yin} \quad \text{‘[when] you teach’} \\
3 & \quad \text{aa-chiskutimaachaa-t} \quad \text{‘[when] s/he teaches’} \\
3’ & \quad \text{aa-chiskutimaachaa-ichii} \quad \text{‘[when] his/her (son) teaches’}
\end{align*}
\]

Since nominalizations are formed by using the \textit{kaa-} prefix with the third person singular of the conjunct indicative neutral, the formula for deriving a nominalization from an Al verb is \textit{kaa + verb stem + -t}. But the standard lexicon listing for verbs is the third person singular of the independent indicative neutral, so to determine the verb in the lexicon from which the nominalized form is derived, the formula must be reversed, and the verb stem inflected for independent indicative neutral, third person singular, with the suffix \textit{-w}:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{a.} & \quad \text{chiskutimaachaa-w Al ‘s/he teaches’} \\
\text{b.} & \quad \text{kaa-chiskutimaachaa-t NomA ‘teacher’}
\end{align*}
\]

Certain Al verbs follow a slightly different pattern, using \textit{-st} as the suffix, as in \textit{kaataapwaast} ‘caller at bingo’ from \textit{taapwaaw} ‘s/he calls out’ and \textit{kaakuunichaast} ‘photographer’ from \textit{kuunichaaw} ‘s/he takes a picture’.

Some of these may take either ending: \textit{kaachiskutimaachaat} and \textit{kaachiskutimaachaast} both mean ‘teacher’. Speakers have indicated that the latter usually carries a diminutive sense, the \textit{-st} ending marking a “younger” or “smaller” version of the named person. However, in certain cases there is no change in meaning; speakers say that elders seldom if ever use the \textit{-st} ending with such words.

There are some nominalizations that require the \textit{-st} ending and cannot end in \textit{-t} alone, like \textit{kaakuunichaast}. It is possible that these are recent lexicalizations, which occurred after a pattern shift from \textit{-t} to \textit{-st}. See the section on diminutives for a discussion of the \textit{-st} ending.

Derivation from II verbs

Similarly, nominalizations derived from inanimate intransitive (II) verbs are formed with the preverb \textit{kaa-} plus the third person form of the conjunct indicative neutral verb:
Thus, the formula for nominalizing II verbs is *kaa-* + verb stem + *-ch*:

(19)  
(a) *miskuwaaw-* II ‘it is hard’  
(b) *kaa-miskuwaaw-* Noml ‘cheese’

**kaamiskuwaach** is a lexicalized nominalization meaning ‘cheese’. The identical form can be used as a verb meaning ‘[when] was it hard?’, or as a relative clause ‘that which is hard’. The context must be depended upon to determine whether the word is functioning as a noun.

A large subgroup of these words end in *-aapiich*. These are formed on inanimate intransitive verbs ending in *-aapiyuw*, a suffix meaning ‘it does it’. Since this is a very productive derivational pattern, many contemporary words are being added to the lexicon by this process. Thus, this large subgroup describe objects that “do something”, like the following examples:

(20)  
(a) *waapaakaichaapiyuw* /waapaakaichaapii-*w* ‘it washes clothes’  
(b) *kaa-waapaakaichaapii-*ch ‘washing machine’

(21)  
(a) *uhtaapiyuw* /uhtaapii-*w* ‘it fizzes’  
(b) *kaa-uhtaapii-*ch ‘baking soda’

**Derivation from TA verbs**

Research to date has uncovered no indisputable examples of nominalizations formed directly on the third person singular form of transitive animate verbs. There is a verbal derivational process that adds an Al suffix *-iwaaw*- to TA verbs which in effect “de-transitivizes” them. O’Meara (1992:325) and Wolfart (1973:72) both provide examples of this process in other Algonquian languages. The nominalization process described in this paper occurs on these Al verbs, but the fact that they derive from TA stems is immaterial: this is simply a subclass of Al verbs that have undergone the nominalization process, and not actual TA verbs. Further, MacKenzie (personal communication, 1997) points out that syntactic rules prohibit adding a noun phrase to these verbs, establishing them both morphologically and syntactically as animate intransitive.
However, TA verbs provide the source for a nominalization process that starts with the “unspecified actor” or passive form of the verb. These are described later in this paper.

The examples below list first the TA verb, then the AI derivative, followed by the nominalization of this AI verb, following the same nominalization procedure as the other AI examples above:

(22) a. *maatisw-aaw* TA ‘s/he cuts him/her, it (anim.)’
    b. *maatiswaawaa-w* AI ‘s/he cuts people’
    c. *kaa-maatiswaawaa-t* NomA ‘surgeon’

(23) a. *tikukusw-aaw* TA ‘s/he welds it (anim.)’
    b. *tikukuswaawaa-w* AI ‘s/he welds things (anim.)’
    c. *kaa-tikukuswaawaa-t* NomA ‘welder’

(24) a. *miyawaimw-aaw* TA ‘s/he comforts him/her’
    b. *miywaimuiiwaa-w* AI ‘s/he comforts people’
    c. *kaa-miywaimuiiwaa-t* NomA ‘comforter’

Derivation from TI verbs

Some animate nominalizations are derived from transitive inanimate (TI) verbs. They are formed on the third person form of the conjunct indicative neutral verb:

(25) 1 *aa-kinuwaaht-imaan* ‘[when] I take care of, have it’
    2 *aa-kinuwaaht-imin* ‘[when] you take care of, have it’
    3 *aa-kinuwaaht-aahk* ‘[when] s/he takes care of, has it’
    3’ *aa-kiinuwaaht-imiichii* ‘[when] his/her (son) takes care of, has it’

Thus, the formula for nominalizing transitive inanimate (TI) verbs is *kaa-* + verb stem + -aahk:

(26) a. *kinuwaaht-im* TI ‘s/he takes care of it’
    b. *kaa-kinuwaaht-aahk* NomA ‘caretaker’

Inflection patterns

Naskapi nouns may be inflected for possession, number of possessor, locative, number (of noun) and obviation. An indication that these nominalizations are functioning as nouns is the fact that their inflection patterns are mostly noun-like. To demonstrate this, the inflection patterns
for ordinary nouns will be compared with those for nominalizations. It will be shown that although the nominalizations continue to function syntactically as nouns, as Drapeau (1978:220) concludes, they occupy some "middle ground" between verb and noun by still taking verbal inflections for number and obviation.

**Possession**

Animate nouns are inflected for possession by adding both a prefix and a suffix. The prefix indicates the person of the possessor, and the suffix -im indicates possession. Inanimate nouns normally only take the personal prefix. The -im suffix does sometimes occur with inanimate nouns, but has a very limited distribution. Clarke (1982:27) suggests that, for Montagnais, the distribution of the -im suffix has to do with semantic factors; that is, certain things have an inherent "possessability" (such as a book), while other things (like a lake) do not have this characteristic, and thus require an overt possessive marker. Naskapi appears to be similar in this respect.

The prefix indicates the person of the possessor, and the suffix -im (when required) indicates possession:

(27) a. chi-siisiip-im 'your duck' (anim.)  
    b. ni-siisiip-im 'my duck'  
    c. u-siisiip-im-a 'his duck'

(28) a. chi-misinaaikin 'your book' (inan.)  
    b. ni-misinaaikin 'my book'  
    c. u-misinaaikin 'his book'  
    d. u-misinaaikin-iyuw 'somebody else's book'

(29) a. chi-saakaaikin-im 'your lake' (inan.)  
    b. ni-saakaaikin-im 'my lake'  
    c. u-saakaaikin-im 'his lake'  
    d. u-saakaaikin-im-iyuw 'somebody else's lake'

Note that, depending upon the final sound of the noun stem, the possessive suffix -im undergoes a morphophonemic transformation, as in:

(30) a. waapiyaaw 'white ptarmigan'  
    b. ni-waapiyaaw-m 'my white ptarmigan'

(31) a. ministikw 'island'  
    b. ni-ministiku-m 'my island'
Animate nominalizations are inflected for possession in an similar manner, using the same prefix to indicate the person of the possessor, and the suffix -im to indicate possession:

(32) a. kaakunichaast ‘photographer’
   b. u-kaakunichaas-im-a ‘his photographer’

(33) a. kaapuutaachaat ‘jet plane’
   b. chi-kaapuutaachaa-m ‘your jet plane’

(34) a. kaachiskuutimaachaat ‘teacher’
   b. ni-kaachiskuutimaachaa-m ‘my teacher’

(35) a. kaaniikaaniskaahk ‘president’
   b. ni-kaaniikaaniskaa-m ‘my president’

The process observed for words ending in a consonant is to drop the consonant and add -im. For those words ending in st or sch, only the final consonant is dropped. For words ending in aat, the long vowel aa triggers a morphophonemic change in the suffix (deletion of the short -i from -im), as in ordinary nouns.

Inanimate nominalizations are inflected in an similar manner, and most take the -im suffix:

(36) a. kaasiwaasch ‘sugar’
   b. chi-kaasiwaas-im ‘your sugar’

(37) a. kaapisikwaakimich ‘motor oil’
   b. ni-kaapisikwaakim-im ‘my motor oil’

(38) a. kaaitaakistaach ‘linoleum, floor covering’
   b. u-kaaitaakistaa-m ‘his linoleum, floor covering’

(39) a. kaataapwaachaapiich ‘horn’
   b. ni-kaataapwaachaapii-m ‘my horn’

(40) a. kaawaakaaskaach ‘banana’
   b. ni-kaawaakaaskaan-im ‘my banana’

Note that kaawaakaaskaach ‘banana’ has a final -n when it is inflected for possession. Drapeau (1979:241) concludes for Montagnais that certain stems have the -n as their final sound and the kaa- nominalization is a morphological derivation that reveals this underlying stem shape. It appears that this is also true for Naskapi.
Plural possessor

When a noun is possessed by more than one possessor, this distinction is marked by an additional suffix, -uwaaw or -inaan (following the -im suffix, if required) as in:

(41) a. *chi-siisiip-im-uwaaw* ‘your (pl.) duck’
    b. *ni-siisiip-im-inaan* ‘our (excl.) duck’
    c. *u-siisiip-im-uwaaw-a* ‘their duck’

(42) a. *chi-misinaaikin-uwaaw* ‘your (pl.) book’
    b. *ni-misinaaikin-inaan* ‘our (excl.) book’
    c. *u-misinaaikin-uwaaw* ‘their book’

Nominalizations follow the same pattern for plural of possessor:

(43) a. *kaapuutaachaat* ‘jet plane’ (anim.)
    b. *chi-kaapuutaachaam-m* ‘your jet plane’
    c. *chi-kaapuutaachaam-m-uwaaw* ‘your (pl.) jet plane’

(44) a. *kaachiskuutimaachaat* ‘teacher’
    b. *ni-kaachiskuutimaachaam-m* ‘my teacher’
    c. *ni-kaachiskuutimaachaam-m-inaan* ‘our (excl.) teacher’

(45) a. *kaakunichaast* ‘photographer’
    b. *u-kaakunichaas-im-a* ‘his photographer’
    c. *u-kaakunichaas-im-uwaawa* ‘their photographer’

(46) a. *kaamichaapiskaach* ‘quarter (25 cents)’ (inan.)
    b. *chi-kaamichaapiskaa-m* ‘your quarter’
    c. *chi-kaamichaapiskaa-m-uwaaw* ‘your (pl.) quarter’

(47) a. *kaasuuskupiisch* ‘carpenter’s plane’
    b. *ni-kaasuuskupiis-im* ‘my carpenter’s plane’
    c. *ni-kaasuuskupiisi-im-inaan* ‘our (excl.) carpenter’s plane’

(48) a. *kaautaaichaapiich* ‘vacuum cleaner’
    b. *u-kaautaaichaapii-m* ‘his vacuum cleaner’
    c. *u-kaautaaichaapii-m-uwaaw* ‘their vacuum cleaner’

Locative

The basic suffix used to mark nouns as a location is -iihch, as in the following:

(49) a. *siisiip* ‘duck’
    b. *siisiip-iihch* ‘on the duck’
(50) a. taawaaikin ‘drum’
   b. taawaaikin-iihch ‘on the drum’

(51) a. misinaaikin ‘book’
   b. misinaaikin-iihch ‘on the book’

(52) a. miichiwaahp ‘house’
   b. miichiwaahp-iihch ‘in the house’

If a noun ends in -lew or -mw, the suffix takes the form -uuhch, and the w is dropped:

(53) a. atiihk ‘caribou’
   b. atiihk-uuhch ‘on the caribou’

(54) a. mischaakw ‘muskeg’
   b. mischaak-uuhch ‘in, at, on the muskeg’

If the noun ends in a long vowel + w, the suffix takes the shape -hch, and the w is dropped:

(55) a. iskuutaaw ‘fire’
   b. iskuutaa-hch ‘in the fire’

A locative suffix may also be added to a noun already inflected for possessive and number of possessor, the suffix occurring immediately following the other suffixes, and exhibiting the morphophonemic changes described above:

(56) a. u-siisiip-im-uwaaw ‘their duck’
   b. u-siisiip-im-uwaa-hch ‘on their duck’

(57) a. u-saakaaikin-im-uwaaw ‘their lake’
   b. u-saakaaikin-im-uwaa-hch ‘on their lake’

Animate nominalizations follow a similar pattern, but only a few examples were found that can take a locative suffix. If the nominalization ends in a long vowel + consonant, the suffix takes the shape -hch, and the consonant is dropped:

(58) a. kaasuuhchiit ‘loader, grader (heavy equipment)’
   b. kaasuuhchii-hch ‘on the loader, grader’

(59) a. kaawaaskaapiit ‘record player’
   b. kaawaaskaapii-hch ‘on the record player’

Inanimate nominalizations also follow this pattern, but since they
already end in -ch, it is difficult to distinguish the locative inflection. Naskapi speakers, when faced with explicitly marking the locative for these words, added a locative particle antaa ‘on’ or ‘at’:

(60) a. kaamaamuchitaasupiich ‘calculator’
    b. antaa kaamaamuchitaasupi-hch ‘on the calculator’

Preaspiration of the final -hch is perceptable, but since preaspiration is not marked in the Naskapi orthography, in writing no distinction is made for the locative. The few inanimate nominalizations that end in a short -i in the final syllable drop the vowel and final consonant before the locative suffix -iihch:

(61) a. kaapisikwaakimich ‘motor oil’
    b. antaa kaapisikwaakim-iihch ‘in the motor oil’

(62) a. kaamiihkwaakimich ‘wine’
    b. kaamiihkwaakim-iihch ‘in the wine’

If the nominalization is already inflected for possession, it follows the same pattern as nouns:

(63) a. nikaasuuhchiiminaan ‘our (excl.) loader’
    b. nikaasuuhchiiminaan-iihch ‘on our loader’

(64) a. nikaamaamuchitaasupiim ‘my calculator’
    b. nikaamaamuchitaasupiim-iihch ‘on my calculator’

(65) a. nikaamiihkwaakimim ‘my wine’
    b. nikaamiihkwaakimim-iihch ‘in my wine’

**Number**

Animate nouns are marked for plural by adding the suffix -ich:

(66) a. siisiip ‘duck’
    b. siisiip-ich ‘ducks’

If the noun ends in -n, the suffix is simply -ch:

(67) a. taawaaikin ‘drum’
    b. taawaaikin-ch ‘drums’

If the noun ends in w, the w combines with the suffix to form -uch:

(68) a. atiihk ‘caribou’
    b. atiihk-uch ‘(some) caribou’
(69) a. naapaaw ‘man’
   b. naapaa-uch ‘men’

A plural suffix may also be added to a noun already inflected for possession and number of possessor, the suffix occurring immediately following the other suffixes:

(70) a. ni-siisiip-im-inaan ‘our (excl.) duck’
   b. ni-siisiip-im-inaan-ch ‘our (excl.) ducks’

Inanimate nouns are marked for plural by adding the suffix -a:

(71) a. misinaaikin ‘book’
   b. misinaaikin-a ‘books’

A plural suffix may also be added to a noun already inflected for possessive and number of possessor, the suffix occurring immediately following the other suffixes:

(72) a. u-saakaaiikin-im-uwaaw ‘their lake’
   b. u-saakaaiikin-im-uwaaw-a ‘their lakes’

The pattern for inflecting animate nominalizations appears to be similar to the pattern for ordinary nouns. The final consonant is dropped and the plural suffix -ich is added:

(73) a. kaamaakunuwaast ‘police officer’
   b. kaamaakunuwaas-ich ‘police officers’

When the nominalization has a vowel remaining after removing the final consonant, the plural suffix is -ch:

(74) a. kaachiskuutimaachaat ‘teacher’
   b. kaachiskuutimaachaa-ch ‘teachers’

(75) a. kaautikitaaskuut ‘bulldozer’
   b. kaautikitaaskuu-ch ‘bulldozers’

(76) a. kaapisisit ‘small person’
   b. kaapisisiis-ch ‘small people’

But the pattern for inflecting an unpossessed inanimate nominalization is different. While it entails the addition of a suffix, the suffix is not the usual inanimate plural nominal suffix -a but instead -ii:

(77) a. kaataapwaachaapiich ‘horn’
   b. kaataapwaachaapiich-ii ‘horns’
(78) a. kaawaakaaskaach ‘banana’
   b. kaawaakaaskaach-ii ‘bananas’

However, once the nominalization is inflected for possession, the usual
nominal plural suffix -a is used:

(79) a. nikaataapwaachaapiim ‘my horn’
   b. nikaataapwaachaapiim-a ‘my horns’

(80) a. nikaawaakaaskaanim ‘banana’
   b. nikaawaakaaskaanim-a ‘my bananas’

(81) a. nikaakischikwaasupiim ‘my sewing machine’
   b. nikaakischikwaasupiim-a ‘my sewing machines’

It appears from the examples above that unpossessed plural nominaliz­
a­tions in Naskapi take verbal plural inflections, since the form of the
nominal animate plural -ich is identical to the verbal plural, and the
inanimate nominalizations definitely take the verbal plural marker -ii. But,
as shown in the examples above, these verbal plural markers are only used
if the nominalization has not already taken noun possession markers.

Obviation

In the context of discourse, when a second noun is referred to in
relation to a first, this second noun is marked with a suffix that reflects its
focus ranking. This obviative suffix for animate nouns is -a:

(82) a. siisiip ‘duck (prox.)’
   b. miskuwaaw siisiip-a ‘s/he (prox.) finds a duck (obv.)’

For inanimate nouns the obviative suffix is -iyuw:

(83) a. misinaaikin ‘book (prox.)’
   b. miskim misinaaikin-iyuw ‘s/he (prox.) finds a book (obv.)’

The obviative form for animate nominalizations is a completely
different ending, -siichii:

(84) a. kaakinuwaaihchaaat ‘protector, keeper (prox.)’
   b. miskuwaaw kaakinuwaaihchaa-siichii ‘s/he (prox.) finds a
       protector (obv.)’

(85) a. kaapimiyaast ‘airplane (prox.)’
   b. miskuwaaw kaapimiya-siichii ‘s/he (prox.) finds an airplane (obv.)’
The formation of the obviative form for inanimate nominalizations is also different, taking the form -yich:

(86) a. kaawiisaawaach 'butter (prox.)'
   b. miskim kaawiisaawaa-yich 's/he (prox.) finds the butter (obv.)'

(87) a. kaawaapaakaichaapiich 'washing machine (prox.)'
   b. miskim kaawaapaakaichaapii-yich 's/he (prox.) finds a washing machine (obv.)'

Most Naskapi writers do not spell this sequence iyi but rather as long ii. In the Naskapi orthography, it is commonly written with the syllabic character ⟨i⟩, not ⟨yi⟩.

These obviative endings on nominalizations are the verbal obviative endings — not the obviative inflections normally found on nouns. Peter Denny (1984:266) describes -isi- as a stative abstract AI final, which in the above examples undergoes a morphophonemic change. Marguerite MacKenzie (personal communication, 1996) suggests that the full forms of the nominalizations in 84b and 85b may be /kaa-kinuwaaihchaa-si-iyi-chii/ ‘protector (obv.)’ and /kaa-pimiyaa-si-iyi-chii/ ‘airplane (obv.)’.

Perhaps the AI final -isi- is obligatory in the obviative but optional in the proximate — this may account for the variation between the -st and -t endings on nominalizations that are not perceived by Naskapi speakers to denote a change in meaning.

Once a nominalization is inflected as a noun, it no longer takes verbal inflections for obviation, but rather the normal nominal obviative inflections, -a for animate and -iyuw for inanimate. Examples 88c, 89c, 90c and 91c are inflected for possession, and exhibit the nominal obviative markers:

(88) a. kaakinuwaaihchaat ‘protector, keeper (prox.)’
   b. miskuwaaw kaakinuwaaihchaa-siichii ‘s/he (prox.) finds a protector (obv.)’
   c. miskuwaaw chi-kaakinuwaaihchaa-m-a ‘s/he (prox.) finds your protector (obv.)’

(89) a. kaapimiyaast ‘airplane (prox.)’
   b. miskuwaaw kaapimiyyaa-siichii ‘s/he (prox.) finds an airplane (obv.)’
   c. miskuwaaw ni-kaapimiyaas-im-a ‘s/he (prox.) finds my airplane (obv.)’

(90) a. kaawiisaawaach ‘butter (prox.)’
   b. miskim kaawiisaawaa-yich ‘s/he (prox.) finds the butter (obv.)’
   c. miskim ni-kaawiisaawaa-m-iyuw ‘s/he (prox.) finds my butter (obv.)’
(91) a. *kaawaapaakaichaapiiich* ‘washing machine (prox.)’
   b. *miskim kaawaapaakaichaapii-yich* ‘s/he (prox.) finds a washing machine (obv.)’
   c. *miskim chikaawaapaakaichaapii-m-iyuw* ‘s/he (prox.) finds your washing machine (obv.)’

**DERIVATIONS AND COMPOUNDING**

Derivations are similar in structure to inflections. That is, they are formed by adding a prefix or suffix to the word. But derivations are distinguished from inflections in that the addition of these affixes will form a new lexical item, and thus fits into a category of “word formation” rather than inflection.

**Diminutive**

A common derivation for Naskapi animate nouns is the diminutive. To denote a smaller or younger version of a noun, the derivational suffix -is is added.

(92) a. *siisiip* ‘duck’
   b. *siisiip-is* ‘small duck, young duck’

(93) a. *misinaaikin* ‘book’
   b. *misinaaikin-is* ‘small book’

Since these are derivations, a diminutive of a noun is a new word, which can be inflected in turn by means of the inflections listed in the previous section:

(94) *ni-siisiip-is-im* ‘my small duck’
(95) *ni-misinaaikin-is* ‘my small book’

Animate nominalizations take the diminutive suffix -is as well, but it occurs before the final consonant (-t), and the short -i of the suffix is dropped after the final stem vowel:

(96) a. *kaanituuwaaschaat* ‘goose hunter’
   b. *kaanituuwaaschaas-s-t* ‘young goose hunter’

(97) a. *kaanihtaachauchimutit* ‘robber, thief’
   b. *kaanihtaachauchimuti-s-t* ‘little robber, thief’

However, in only a very limited number of nominalizations does this
diminutive suffix actually mean ‘smaller’ or ‘younger’. As mentioned earlier, certain nominalizations that end in -t may also end in -st, without a change in meaning. Naskapi speakers indicated that, for these words, the older speakers would never use the -st form, only the -t form. Examples of these are:

(98)  kaachisipiit or kaachisipi-s-t  ‘jet plane’
(99)  kaamuunaaichaat or kaamuunaaicha-s-t  ‘digger, one who digs (person or machine)’

Further, Naskapi speakers pointed out that there are other sets of nominalizations that must be one or the other, but never both, and some which never take the diminutive suffix. Examples of these are:

(100)  kaakinuwaaihchaat ‘protector, keeper’ (not *kaakinuwaaihchaast)
(101)  kaakunichaast ‘photographer’ (not *kaakunichaat)

It appears that in these cases the diminutive suffix itself (when used) has become lexicalized along with the nominalization itself. Or, as Marguerite MacKenzie (personal communication, 1996) suggests, this could be the Al abstract final -isi- on certain words having to do with professions.

Inanimate nominalizations normally take the diminutive suffix in a similar manner, before the final consonant:

(102)  a.  kaawaapaakaiaichaapiich  ‘washing machine’
       b.  kaawaapaakaiaichaapi-s-ch  ‘small washing machine’

However, certain other inanimate nominalizations form the diminutive by replacing the final -ch with -s alone:

(103)  a.  kaakischikwaasupiiich  ‘sewing machine’
       b.  kaakischikwaasupii-s  ‘small sewing machine’

This may be an difference due to the age of the speaker, and needs further research.

Compounding

Putting two nominal concepts together to form a new word is common in Naskapi:

(104)  iskutaa-utaapaan  ‘train’
       (‘fire’ + ‘vehicle’)
(105) *uchimaa-skwaaw* ‘female boss, foreman; boss’s wife’  
(‘boss, foreman’ + ‘woman’)

This kind of compounding also occurs with a limited number of nominalizations. The nominalization drops its final consonant before *iskwaaw*:

(106) *kaamaakunuwaast* ‘police officer’  
*kaamaakunuwaas-iskwaaw* ‘female police officer’

Nominalizations that end in long vowel + consonant exhibit the usual morphophonemic transformation after dropping the consonant:

(107) *kaachiskutimaachaat* ‘teacher’  
*kaachiskutimaachaa-skwaaw* ‘female teacher’

Nominalizations can be found as either the first or second component in a compound:

(108) Nominalization + noun:  
*kaanaanituschaaihtaahk-asiniiyuw* ‘prospector for minerals’  
(‘s/he continually examines it’ + ‘rocks’)

(109) Particle + nominalization:  
*tipiskuuhch-kaauhpiit* ‘helicopter’  
(‘straight up’ + ‘it rises’)

(110) Nominalization + noun:  
*kaataataaskaakinuch-chistwaawaapichikin* ‘piano’  
(‘people repeatedly kick, step on them (anim.)’ + ‘stringed instrument’)

(111) Nominalization + nominalization:  
*kaaniisumuich-kaapimiyaast* ‘plane with two propellers’  
(‘it has two’ + ‘airplane’)

(112) Noun + nominalization + nominalization:  
*nipiich-kaatwaaut-kaapimiyaast* ‘float-plane’  
(‘on water’ + ‘it lands’ + ‘airplane’)

OTHER NOMINALIZED FORMS

A few other nominalizations are notable because they differ from the usual formation from the third person singular of conjunct indicative neutral verbs. Some of these are formed on transitive animate (TA) verb stems.
Unspecified actor stems

Instead of the usual third-person-actor form, nominalizations of unspecified actor stems are formed on the passive or "unspecified actor" form of the TA verb. The following is a partial paradigm of the conjunct indicative neutral:

(113) X–1  aa-maakun-ikuyaan  '[when] I am grabbed'
    X–2  aa-maakun-ikuiin  '[when] you are grabbed'
    X–3  aa-maakun-aakinut  '[when] s/he is grabbed'
    X–3' aa-maakun-aakinuiichii  '[when] his/her (son) is grabbed'

The formula for nominalizing these verbs is $kaa- + verb stem + -aakinut$:

(114) a.  maakun-aaw  TA ‘s/he grabs him/her’
       b.  kaa-maakun-aakinust  NomA ‘prisoner’

Note that $kaamaakunaakinust$ has been lexicalized with the diminutive ending -is attached; see the section on diminutives for a fuller discussion.

This type of nominalization on "unspecified actor" TA verbs forms animate nominalizations, and displays inflection patterns similar to those nominalizations formed on AI verbs:

(115) a.  saakusim-aaw  ‘s/he slips it (anim.) into a slot’
       b.  kaa-saakusim-aakinut  ‘8-track, cassette or video cassette tape’

(116) a.  puutaat-aaw  ‘s/he blows, inflates it (anim.)’
       b.  kaapuutaat-aakinut  ‘balloon’

Plural unspecified actor stems

Another kind of nominalization that starts with TA verbs is formed on the third person plural unspecified-actor inflection (X–3p):

(117) a.  taapiiht-aaw  ‘s/he fits it (anim.) together’
       b.  kaa-taapiiht-aakinuch  ‘puzzle’

(118) a.  chiihchiikum-aaw  ‘s/he gnaws on it (anim.)’
       b.  kaa-chiihchiikum-aakinuch  ‘corn’

(119) a.  piihtwaatuw-aaw  ‘s/he smokes it (anim.)’
       b.  kaa-waat-aakinuch  ‘marijuana’
Inanimate nominalizations from animate stems

Another kind of nominalization is formed on the AI unspecified actor forms, and yields inanimate nominalizations. A partial paradigm of the AI conjunct follows:

(120) 1 aa-chistaapaawiisu-yaan ‘[when] I wash myself’
2 aa-chistaapaawiisu-yin ‘[when] you wash yourself’
3 aa-chistaapaawiisu-t ‘[when] s/he washes himself’
X aa-chistaapaawiisu-naanuuhch ‘[when] people wash themselves’

The formula for nominalizing these verbs is kaa- + verb stem + -naanuuhch:

(121) a. chistaapaawiisu-w Al ‘s/he washes himself’
b. kaa-chistaapaawiisu-naanuuhch Noml ‘bathtub’

Some other examples of this type of nominalization are:

(122) kaa-iimi-naanuuhch ‘telephone’ (‘people talk’)
(123) kaa-ipi-naanuuhch ‘hotel room’ (‘people sit’)

CONCLUSION AND RESIDUE

This paper has been a broad description of nominalizations observed in the Naskapi language. While it is clear that the nominalization of verb forms remains a very productive means of making new words in Naskapi, it must be pointed out that the formation of neologisms is not automatic. The form must be lexicalized by speakers of the language before it can display noun-like characteristics.

Marguerite MacKenzie (personal communication, 1996) has pointed out that although kaa-nominalization is productive for word formation in the palatalized dialects in the Cree-Montagnais-Naskapi continuum, it is uncommon in the western, non-palatalized dialects. A comparison of word formation across the dialect continuum is another subject that deserves further research.

The research carried on to produce this paper is by no means complete, and although in the course of the study the production processes and inflection patterns became clearer, they nonetheless raised many questions. Some of these include the variation of usage and formation of neologisms between younger and older speakers, the significance of certain finals, and the boundaries of potential verb sources for these kinds of derivations.
Based upon the parallels between inflection and derivation of ordinary nouns and nominalizations, it has been shown that except for the plural inflection, nominalizations take the usual nominal endings, demonstrating their status as nouns. However, due to the fact that they continue to take verbal plural and obviation markers, they have not completely lost their verb-like quality. However, once a nominalization is inflected for some other category of normal noun inflection, it is "marked" as a noun and functions completely as a noun thereafter, even when inflected for plural.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to thank the Naskapi Development Corporation for their support in encouraging and funding this research, Naskapi speakers Silas Nabinacaboo and Alma Chemaganish, and Marguerite MacKenzie for her valuable help in preparing and checking this paper. I also wish to acknowledge the helpful comments and input of David Thomas and Lana Martens.

REFERENCES


