Nipmuck (Loup A)

December 3, 2009 // Michael Sappir / **ProAlKi** // Following Gustafson (2000)

Background

"Loup A"

- Loup A is an extinct Algonquian language of New England; the only available data is the (sorely incomplete) field notes of 18th-century French missionary and Ojibwa specialist Jean-Claude Mathevet

- These notes were edited and analyzed by Gordon Day (1975), who identified Loup A as the language of the Pocumtuck of Vermont

- Gustafson (2000), in her grammar of the language, disagrees and, based on analysis of Eastern Algonquian reflexes of Proto-Algonquian phonemes, identifies Loup A as Nipmuck

    - However, her argument against Day's analysis (that too many records must be considered incorrect to support it) could with little change be applied to some of her analysis as well (e.g. analysis of some forms as "unexpected reflexes for Nipmuck" and thus probable Ojibwe influence)

Nipmuck

- The Nipmuck tribe of Massachusetts was scattered during the 17th century, and although virtually landless, managed to remain intact, albeit without its lost language

Methodology

- Mathevet's French orthography is inconsistent, highly ambiguous, and grossly inadequate for positive identification of the phonetics, phonology and morphology in the data

    - e.g.   [s] may be written <s>, <ch>, <ss>, <x>, <c>, or <z>

    - word-final <g8e> or <k8e> could correspond to [kwɛ], [kwə] or [kw]

    - [ã] is written <en>, <an>, or <a>; <en> and <an> can also signify [en] or [an]

- Data from other languages appears throughout the *Mots Loups* field notes, and Mathevet's background in Ojibwa suggests the possibility that the Loup data itself is influenced by Ojibwa and other Algonquian languages

- It is also quite likely that the Loup were living together with speakers of other Algonquian languages, suggesting both actual changes to their language and non-Loup data mixed in in Mathevet's notes

- Gustafson reconstructs the probable underlying data through:

    - analysis of the orthography

    - comparison with other attested Algonquian languages, particularly neighboring Eastern Algonquian languages Massachusett and Abenaki

    - comparison with Proto-Algonquian, especially Pentland's (1998) dictionary, and data from communications with Pentland

- Still, in some cases the Mathevet data is so ambiguous that morphemes cannot be positively identified

Throughout the handout, as in the source, reconstructed, unattested forms are denoted with an asterisk following the form.

Phonology

Consonants

Gustafson suggests the following phonemic consonants:

p   t   tʸ   c   k   (kʷ)
    s   h
    l
m   n
w   y

- Voicing is not distinctive.

- [*c*] represents a voiceless palatal affricate.

Vowels

Here, orthographic ambiguity is even bigger a problem than with consonants. Gustafson's suggested vowel system is the result of comparison with reflexes in other Algonquian languages of southern New England. Her guess [sic] is the following system:

	front	central	back
high	i:	i	
mid	e	o	a o:
low			a: ã

Some distinctions in this system are absent in Mathevet's orthography but inferred by Gustafson.

Some important phonological processes

Palatalizations:

- t → c / _{*i, *i:, *y}

  ○ This palatalization also appears independently in some cases as a diminutive or pejorative (Sapir's (1915) "consonant symbolism").

- k → tʸ / _a:

Final syllable dropping: final syllables are dropped in some cases (especially when they are short), and the dropped syllable is sometimes restored.

(Mathevet's orthography sometimes complicates things by adding what seems to be a silent [*e*] at the end of words that should end with no vowel. Gustafson does not provide a final explanation for the pattern of dropping and restoration.)

Nouns

Possessive Inflection

- Inflection for person (prefix) and number (suffix)

- Some possessed forms include the possessive suffix *-em*

- With third person possessors, animate possessees are marked for obviation

1sg	*ne(t)-*
1pe	*ne(t)- -enã*
1pi	*ke(t)- -enã*
2sg	*ke(t)-*
2pl	*ke(t)- -ewã*
3sg-0	*we-*
3sg-3'	*we- -a*
3pl-0	*we- -ewã*
3pl-3'	*we- -ewãwa*

Number Inflection

Gustafson suggests the following paradigm:

	singular		plural	
	AN	INAN	AN	INAN
accessible	-Ø		-ak	-as
inaccessible	-ã	-aː*	-ekak*	-ekas*

Inaccessible forms are attested where referring to deceased individuals (albeit only the singular animate.)

Vocative

Marked with *-ã* in singular, *-etok* in plural

Personal pronouns

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	indep	objective
1sg	*niːl*	*nehak / nahakaː*
1pe	*niːlawenã*	
1pi	*kiːlawenã*	
2sg	*kiːl*	*kehak / kehakaː*
2pl	*kiːlawã*	
3sg	*naːkemã*	*wehaka / wahakaː*
3pl	*naːkemãwã*	

(Empty cells in this paradigm have no attested or reconstructed form.)

- Objective pronouns are used as reflexive objects of TA verbs. They are formed by adding possessive nominal inflection to *(n)ehak* "(my)self" or *nahakaː* "(my) body"

Verbal Inflection

- Gustafson follows Bloomfield (1946) in identifying three orders of verb forms, some additionally divided into modes:

  - independent
    - <u>modes</u>: indicative, preterite, present
  - imperative

  - conjunct
    - <u>modes</u>: indicative, "changed"/relative, subjunctive, participle, present, preterite, optative

Gustafson's optative mode of the conjunct order corresponds with Bloomfield's "prohibitive order"

- There is an additional differentiation between absolute and objective inflection. Objective generally denotes a subordinate function.

- As usual, verbs are divided into AI, II, TA, TI, and TI-O
  - TI-O verbs take TI inflection but no object and are semantically intransitive

- Negation is inflected with the suffix *-w-*, which is deleted after long vowels and becomes *-ow-* after consonants.

AI Independent Indicative

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	absolute	objective
1sg	*ne(t)-*	*ne(t)- -(e)n*
1pe	*ne(t)- -emen(ã)*	?
1pi	*ke(t)- -emen(ã)*	*ke(t)- -enemen*
2sg	*ke(t)-*	*ke(t)- -(e)n*
2pl	*ke(t)- -em(ã)*	*ke(t)- -enawã*
3sg	*-w*	*we(t)- -en*
3pl	*-wak*	*we(t)- -enã*
X		*-en*

II Independent Indicative

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These verbs take an inanimate subject. They are inflected with final *-w.*

TA Indicative Independent

Gustafson cites the following hierarchies with little discussion:

  1,2 > 3 > 3' > 0 > 0'   (in outline of Algonquian grammar)

  2/1 > X > 3 > 3'   (in section on verbal inflection)

	1sg	1pe	1pi	2sg	2pl	3sg	3pl	3'sg	3'pl
1sg				ke(t)--es	ke(t)--elemã	ne(t)--ã	ne(t)--ãwak		
1pe				?	ke(t)--elemenã*	ne(t)--ã(we)nã	ne(t)--ãnawak/ãwenãnak		
1pi						ke(t)--ã(we)nã	ke(t)--ãnawak/ãwenãnak*		
2sg	ki--i	ki--imã*				ke(t)--ã	ke(t)--ãwak		
2pl	ki--im*	ki--imã*				ke(t)--ãwã	ke(t)--ãwãwak*		
3sg	ne(t)--ekw	ne(t)--ekwanã	ke(t)--ekwanã	ke(t)--ekw	ke(t)--ekowã			we(t)--a:w	we(t)--ãw
3pl	ne(t)--ekwak*	ne(t)--ekwenãnak*	ke(t)--ekwen(ãn/aw)ak*	ke(t)--ekwak	ke(t)--ekowãwak*			we(t)--a:wak*	we(t)--ãw
3'sg						-ekw	-ekw		
3'pl						-ekw*	-ekw*		
X						-ã	-ãwak		

(wherever there was a choice, I took data from the absolute paradigm rather than the objective; the 3-3'pl data is from the objective paradigm.)

TI Independent Indicative

	absolute	objective singular (P 0sg)	objective plural (P 0pl)
1sg	ne(t)-	ne(t)- -en	ne(t)- -enãs
1pe	ne(t)- -emenã	ne(t)- -ena:nã*	ne(t)- -ena:nãnas*
1pi	ke(t)- -emenã	ke(t)- -ena:nã	ke(t)- -ena:nãnas*
2sg	ke(t)-	ke(t)- -en	ke(t)- -enãs
2pl	ke(t)- -emã	ke(t)- -ena:wã*	ke(t)- -ena:wãwas*
3sg	-(w)	we(t)- -en	we(t)- -enãs*
3pl	-(w)ak	we(t)- -ena:wã*	we(t)- -ena:wãwas*

AI Conjunct Indicative

1sg	-(y)ã
1pe	-(y)ãk*
1pi	-(y)akw
2sg	-(y)an
2pl	-(y)a:kw
3sg	-t / -k
3pl	-hetit*
X	-mek / -k*

Consonant-final stems take -k* instead of -t or
-mek.

II Conjunct Indicative

Inanimate Intransitive verbs are inflected for
conjunct indicative with -k in the singular and
-kis* in the plural.

TA Conjunct Indicative

	1sg	1pe	1pi	2sg	2pl	3	3'
1sg				-elã	-elãn*	-ãyã	
1pe				?	?	-ãyãkw	
1pi						-ãyakw	
2sg	-iyan	?				-ãyan	
2pl	?	?				-ãya:kw	
3sg	-ekoyã	-ekoyãkw*	-ekoyakw*	-ekoyan*	-ekoya:kw		-ãt
3pl	-ekoyã	-ekoyãkw*	-ekoyakw*	-ekoyan*	-ekoya:kw		-ãhetit

Source

Gustafson, Holly Suzanne. 2000. *A Grammar of the Nipmuck Language.*