

A PRACTICAL GRAMMAR
OF THE
NASKAPI INDIAN LANGUAGE

Lana Martens and Carol Chase

November 1983

Summer Institute of Linguistics

INTRODUCTION

This handbook was written for the Naskapi people, particularly for those involved in teaching and those who want to know more about their language. We hope the information included here will be easily understood, and that it will help those who want to read and write Naskapi but have had no opportunity to learn until now.

For easier reference, we have included a glossary in which the major terms we use in the book are defined. The terms appearing in the glossary are identified in the text with an asterisk (*) following it.

We know this is very brief; there is much more to the Naskapi Indian language than has been included here. We would like to challenge you to come up with more examples (or even exceptions!) for what is mentioned.

We thank each one who has helped us in learning to speak the language: for your help in teaching us, for your patience in our slowness and in our mistakes, and for your corrections and your encouragement. What appears in this book are some of the things we have learned. If there are any mistakes, however, they are our mistakes alone.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

<u>Chapter</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Page</u>
1	Some Differences Between English and Naskapi	1
2	Phonology--the Sounds of Naskapi	4
3	Writing Naskapi	8
4	Noun Finals	12
5	Locative	14
6	The Diminutive	15
7	Animacy and Inanimacy	16
8	Plurals	18
9	The Possessive Markers	19
10	Introduction to Verbs	21
11	Person Markers	23
12	Obviative	27
13	Preverbs	29
14	Commands	31
15	Conjunct	32
16	Negatives	34
17	Tense	35
18	Questions	37
19	Unspecified Subject	39
	Glossary	41

1. Some Differences Between English and Naskapi

English and Naskapi are very different languages. Each has its own particular way of saying things, and each organizes information in a different way. The purpose of this chapter is simply to highlight some of the differences that may cause difficulty in learning to speak one of the languages.

1. Sounds in the language.

English has some sounds that don't occur in Naskapi. These include r and l, as well as consonants b, d, g, z, j.

Naskapi also has sounds that English does not have. Some of the most common are kw and mw :

ᐱᓂᓂᓂᓂ
amiskw
'beaver'

ᓂᓂᓂᓂᓂ
mwakw
'loon'

Naskapi vowels differ from English vowels. This is further explained in the next chapter (Phonology--the sounds of Naskapi).

2. Animacy* and Male-female distinction.

English and Naskapi have different ways of classifying nouns*. Naskapi classifies each noun as either 'animate'* or 'inanimate'*. 'Animate' and 'inanimate' are just labels used in grammar books. A word is 'animate' if you can use ᓂ ᐱᓂᓂᓂᓂ (ni wapimaw) with it,

la lo ǵAL^o
chan-a mani wapimaw

'Mary sees John'

the listener knows that it is the other way around-- that Mary sees someone, and the one she sees is John. The -ǵ (-a) ending shows who is seen. (For more explanation of this, see the chapter on Obviative.)

English can sort out people too, but in a different way. English depends on the order of the words. In the sentence above, 'John sees Mary', John is the one who sees someone because his name is said first.

2. Phonology--the Sounds of Naskapi

In Naskapi there are nine consonants: p t k m n
ch s w y.

p	as in	ᐱᓴ ^o piyaw	'ptarmigan'
t	as in	ᐱᓴ ^o atihkw	'caribou'
k	as in	ᓴᓴ ^h kukus	'pig'
m	as in	ᓴᓴ ^h ᐱᓴ ^o misinaikin	'book'
n	as in	ᓴᓴ ^h ᐱᓴ ^o napaw	'man'
ch	as in	ᓴᓴ ^h achukw	'seal'
s	as in	ᓴᓴ ^h ᐱᓴ ^o sakaikin	'lake'
w	as in	ᓴᓴ ^h wawa	'eggs'
y	as in	ᓴᓴ ^h iyu	'Indian'

There are also six vowel sounds. Three of these vowels are strong and three weak (grammar books will often refer to these as 'long' and 'short' vowels): the strength makes the vowel sound different and sometimes the strength of the vowel is the only difference between two words. On the next page are some examples of the strong and weak vowels.

	'strong'	'weak'
i	σ Δ > <u>niipu</u> 'he marries, stands up'	σ > <u>nipu</u> 'he dies'
	ʃ ʃ Δ ^e chi <u>miin</u> 'you give it to me'	ʃ ʃ ^e chi <u>min</u> 'you drink'
u	Δ ^h > Δ ^h ρ ^e <u>uspuakina</u> 'his pipe'	Δ ^h > Δ ^h ρ ^e <u>uspuakin</u> 'pipe'

It is now pretty hard to hear a difference between the 'weak i' and the 'weak a'. Many years ago they probably sounded more different, but languages change, and this is one of those changes. Quite often now both sounds are written as a 'weak i', although sometimes a 'weak a' will be written.

'Weak' vowels are often left out when a word is pronounced, but they are not usually left out when the word is written:

σ ʃ	'there'
<u>nita</u>	pronounced "nta"
σ ʃ Δ ^h Δ ^h L ^e	'I saw him'
<u>nichii</u> wapimaw	pronounced "nchiiwapimaw"
ʃ ʃ Δ ^h	'building, shelter'
<u>miichiwap</u>	pronounced "miichwap"
Δ ^h Δ ^h	'child'
<u>awas</u>	pronounced "was"

One of the most common places where this happens is when a word begins with \int - (chi- (a 'weak i')) followed by another 'ch-' or an 's-' or a 't-' syllable. The 'weak i' is not pronounced, and the initial 'ch-' sounds like an 's-':

\int ʰ ɔ "p ^e		'door'
<u>ch</u> istuhkin	pronounced	" <u>s</u> tuhkin" or " <u>s</u> tuhin"
\int ʰ ɔ ^d		'bear'
<u>ch</u> isayakw	pronounced	" <u>ch</u> ayakw"
\int ʰ ɔ ɔ "c ^e		'you went'
<u>ch</u> i <u>ch</u> ii ituhtan	pronounced	" <u>s</u> chiituhtan"
\int c ɔ p ^e		'you are coming'
<u>ch</u> i takusin	pronounced	" <u>s</u> takusin"

When two 'n-' syllables with weak vowels occur together at the beginning of a word, usually one is not pronounced:

\int ʰ ɔ < e		'I sleep'
<u>n</u> i <u>n</u> ipan	pronounced	" <u>n</u> ipan"
\int ʰ ɔ ɔ ɔ ^e		'I listen to him'
<u>n</u> i <u>n</u> atuhtuwaw	pronounced	" <u>n</u> tuhtuwaw"

There is also another sound--'h'--that occasionally appears between vowels, as in:

\int " ɔ		'yes'
nihi		

But 'h' also appears before p, t, and k, and sometimes blends with those sounds when the word is spoken quickly.

Look at these words and how they are sometimes pronounced.

◁ḍ"◁		'coat'
aku <u>h</u> p	sometimes pronounced	"aku <u>f</u> "
◁ḥ"ḍ		'caribou'
ati <u>h</u> kw	sometimes pronounced	"ati <u>h</u> w"

Younger Naskapi often use an 'h' sound now instead of the former 'ht', 'hk', or 's'. For example:

Younger Naskapi:

ḥ ḍḍ"ḥ°	'he went'	
chi itu <u>h</u> taw		chi itu <u>h</u> o
ḥ ḥ	'are you ready?'	
s <u>a</u> a		s <u>a</u> h

3. Writing Naskapi

Naskapi is written in syllabics. Syllabic writing uses symbols that represent syllables or parts of a syllable. The symbol may represent either a sequence of a consonant and a vowel, or it may be a vowel by itself. Each consonant has a different shape, and the vowel that follows it determines which direction the shape is written.

The consonant:	followed by:	i	u	a
(no consonant; the vowel by itself)		Δ	▷	◁
p		∧	>	<
t		∩	∩	∩
k		ρ	∫	6
ch		∩	∩	∩
s		∩	∩	∩
m		∩	∩	∩
n		∩	∩	∩
w		Δ	▷	◁
y		∩	∩	∩

If a syllable has a final consonant, it may be written as a small raised syllabic of the symbol normally used for that consonant followed by 'a':

▷ < < ^{◌̣}	'car'
utapan <u>̣</u>	
ɾ ɾ ◌̣ Δ ɾ ◌̣	'book'
misinaikin <u>̣</u>	

The same is also done when a syllable begins with a sequence of two consonants. The first (usually an 's') is written as a small raised symbol:

ɾ ^ʰ ʌ ɾ ◌̣	'orange'
mistimin <u>̣</u>	
Δ ^ʰ ɔ ɾ ◌̣	'fire'
iskutaw <u>̣</u>	

Some words end with a '-kw' sound that is different from the '-k'. This '-kw' sound is written as a small raised 'ku' symbol to distinguish it from the '-k':

◁ ɾ ^ʰ ɔ	'beaver'
amiskw <u>̣</u>	
σ ^ʰ ɔ	'goose'
nisk <u>̣</u>	

As can be seen from these two examples, a syllable may also end in two consonants, in which case both symbols are small and raised.

The sound 'w' often occurs following another consonant. When this happens, the 'w' is represented by a colon placed before the symbol, as shown in this next example.

$\Delta \text{'}6^\circ$
 iskwaw 'woman'

'w' also occurs at the end of words, and may be represented by a small raised '°':

$\Delta \text{'}6^\circ$	$\underline{\text{e}} <^\circ$	$\Delta \text{'}\text{d}\text{C}^\circ$
iskwaw	napaw	iskutaw
'woman'	'man'	'fire'

Some writers do not write any final consonant as a raised syllabic. In the following examples, the one on the left is written as a raised syllabic, the one on the right is not:

$\text{D}\text{C} <^\circ$	'car'	$\text{D}\text{C} < \underline{\text{e}}$
utapan		utapan(a)
$\Delta \text{'}6^\circ$	'woman'	$\Delta \text{'}6 \text{ } \text{◌}$
iskwaw		iskwaw(a)

This can be somewhat confusing, as the following example illustrates:

$\underline{\text{e}} < \text{◌} \text{ } \text{◌} \text{ } \text{◌} \text{ } \text{◌}$	may mean either 'he sees the man'
napawa wapimawa	or 'does he see the man?'

The difference in meaning is clearer when the raised syllabic is used:

$\underline{\text{e}} < \text{◌} \text{ } \text{◌} \text{ } \text{◌} \text{ } \text{◌}^\circ$	'he sees the man'
napawa wapimaw	
$\underline{\text{e}} < \text{◌} \text{ } \text{◌} \text{ } \text{◌} \text{ } \text{◌}$	'does he see the man?'
napawa wapimawa	

'h' may be represented by a small raised quotation mark to distinguish similar words:

<")ä°
pahtuwaw

'he hears him'

<)ä°
patuwaw

'he brings it to him'

However, some writers may not write the 'h' sound at all.

In Naskapi, strong and weak vowels are not always written differently. Usually when they are written differently, the strong vowel is written with an additional vowel symbol:

σ Δ Λ
niipi
'leaf'

σ Λ
nipi
'water'

4. Noun Finals

Some nouns* in Indian contain word-parts that explain a little about what shape the thing is, or what it is made of or what it looks like.

1. -askw occurs in words for things made of wood that are long and stick-like:

misinaikinaskw 'pencil'

akutaskw 'axe'

2. -apui is used in some words referring to a liquid:

chichinapui 'milk'

supapui 'soup'

3. -atikw occurs in words for things made of wood:

michuakinatikw 'table'

4. -chiwap occurs in words for a shelter:

michiwap 'house'

misinaikinchiwap 'office'

5. -аѣА (-ayaapi) is found in words for things that are like string:

ꞑꞑаѣА 'yarn'
 sikinayaapi

ꞑ'АѣА 'string'
 chastikayaapi

6. -аѠ (-achii) is found in words for things that are flat and like a sheet:

ꞑꞑаѠꞑꞑ '(sheet of) paper'
 misinaikinachii

5. Locative

To say that someone is going someplace, or that something is located somewhere, an ending -ich is attached to the noun that tells the destination or location:

ᐃᑕᓐᓴ ᐱ ᐃᑕᑦᑕᑦ
 utanach chi ituhtaw 'he went to town'

ᐃᑭᑦᑕᑦᑕᑦ ᐃᑦᑕᑦᑕᑦᑕᑦ ᑕᑦ
 iyumisinaikinchiwapich taw 'he is at the band office'

ᑎᑦ ᑭᑦᑕᑦ ᑕᑦᑕᑦ
 ni pusan wasach 'I am travelling to Seven Islands'

If the person wants to be more specific about where something is, an extra word such as ᑦᑦᑕᑦ or ᑭᑦᑕᑦ may be added:

ᑦ ᑕᑦᑕᑦᑕᑦ ᑦᑦᑕᑦ ᐃᑦᑕᑦᑕᑦᑕᑦ
 chii wapimaw michima ahkusuchiwapich
 'he saw him near the hospital'

ᑭᑦᑕᑦ ᑦᑕᑦᑕᑦᑕᑦᑕᑦ ᑦᑕᑦᑕᑦᑕᑦ ᑕᑦ
sipa michuwakinatikuch misinaikin staw
 'the book is under the table'

Often, too, the verb meaning 'is located' is used:

ᑎᑦᑕᑦᑕᑦ ᐃᑭᑦᑕᑦᑕᑦᑕᑦᑕᑦ ᑕᑦ
 nikawi iyumisinaikinchiwapich taw
 'my mother is at the Band Office.'

6. The Diminutive

To express smallness in size, the word-part, - Δ^h (-is) is added to the end of a word.

For example:

$\triangleleft \ddot{\Delta}^h$	'child'	$\triangleleft \ddot{\Delta} \dot{\Delta}^h$	'infant'
awas		awasis	

$\triangleleft \Delta^h$	'dog'	$\triangleleft \Delta : \dot{\Delta}^h$	'puppy'
atimw		atimwis	

7. Animacy and Inanimacy

Naskapi, as do all Algonquian languages, distinguishes between what linguists call animate nouns* and inanimate nouns. Usually living things such as people, animals, and plants are in the animate category, and non-living things are in the inanimate category. However, there are several exceptions to that rule. For example, the Naskapi word for 'mitts' is animate. The word for 'car' is inanimate, but the word for 'skidu' is animate.

An animate noun uses an animate verb, and an inanimate noun uses an inanimate verb:

Animate noun and verb:

σ ǂΛL° Δ'ḃ°
ni wapimaw iskwaw

'I see the woman.'

ǂΛL° σ'ḃ
wapimaw niska

'he sees the goose.'

But it is incorrect to say (Two Xs before a sentence indicate the sentence is not good Indian.):

XX σ ǂ<"C° Δ'ḃ°
XXni wapahtan iskwaw

because in this sentence, an animate noun is used with an inanimate verb.

Inanimate noun and verb:

σ ǂ<"C° ḃḃ ΔP°
ni wapahtan misinaikin

'I see the book.'

ǂ<"C° ḃḃ ΔPσḃ
wapahtam misinaikiniyu

'he sees the book.'

But it is incorrect to say:

XXσ ΔΛL° ΓPαΔP°
 XXni wapimaw misinaikin

because in this sentence, an inanimate noun is used with an animate verb.

Some words can be either animate or inanimate depending on their meaning. For example:

Γ'∩ ^d mistikw	Animate:	a tree that is growing
	Inanimate:	a tree that is cut, or a branch from a tree

Some animate nouns are:

Δδ	iyu	'person'
α<°	napaw	'man'
Δ∩ ^d	atimw	'dog'
Δ∩ ^d " ^d	atihkw	'caribou'
γΓ ^ε	samich	'snowshoes'
Δ> ^ε	wapus	'rabbit'

Some inanimate nouns are:

▷C<°	utapan	'truck'
J"ΔL°	muhkuman	'knife'
ΔΔC ^d	akutaskw	'axe'

9. The Possessive Markers

In Indian, small word-parts are added to a noun* to show who possesses, or owns, the thing. In front of a noun, the markers are as follows:

σ	ʃ	▷
ni-	chi-	u-
'my'	'your'	'his, her'

σ ʃ ʃ a Δ ʃ a 'my book'

nimisinaikin

ʃ ʃ ʃ a Δ ʃ a 'your book'

chimisinaikin

▷ ʃ ʃ a Δ ʃ a 'his book'

umisinaikina

An additional marker can be added to the end of a word to show possession of animate objects. This marker is -Δ^ʰ - (-im-). For example:

σ ʃ ʃ a^ʰ 'my duck'

nisisipim

▷ C ä ʃ L 'his child'

utawasima

Sometimes the sound of -im- changes. For example, after the 'kw' sound, -im- sounds more like -um-:

ʃ ʃ 'porcupine' σ ʃ ʃ a^ʰ 'my porcupine!'

kakw

nikakum

There are a few inanimate nouns that can occur with the -im-. Two of these are:

ḡ ^h c	'firewood'	▷ḡ ^h ʌL	'his firewood'
miht		umihtima	
ʌ	'coffee'	▷ʌ ^h	'his coffee'
kapi		ukapim	

When a noun is possessed by more than one person, this is shown by adding markers to both the beginning and the end of the word. For example:

ḡ ^h ʌʌ ^h	'book'	ʌḡ ^h ʌʌ ^h	'our book (our and not your)'
misinaikin		nimisinaikin <u>an</u>	
ʌ ^h	'fish'	ʌ ^h ʌ ^h ʌ ^h	'our (yours and ours) fish'
namas		chinamasin <u>anu</u>	
ʌ ^h ʌ ^h	'hat'	ʌ ^h ʌ ^h ʌ ^h	'your (plural) hat'
kuniskun		chikuniskun <u>aw</u>	

10. Introduction to Verbs

The most important part of Algonquian languages is the verb*. The verb is the most important thing to understand in Indian because the majority of whatever is said is spoken as a verb. Sometimes a sentence can consist of a verb only, and the verb may say in one word what English needs a long sentence to say. Naskapi verbs have a great variety and expressiveness, as will be seen in the next several chapters.

Transitivity

The person or thing that is doing the action of a verb is called the subject* of that verb. Each verb has a subject. Some verbs have an object* too. The object of a verb is the person or thing that is affected by the action. In the English example, "John hit the ball", John is the subject of the verb, and "the ball" is the object.

A verb which has an object is called a transitive* verb. A verb which does not have an object (such as "John sleeps") is called an intransitive* verb. This distinction is important because the verb-endings differ according to whether they are transitive or intransitive.

Some examples of transitive verbs in Naskapi are:

ᓴᑦ ᑭᑦᑲᑦᑲᑦ
chan pasuwaw 'John shoots him'

ᑦ ᑭᑦᑲᑦᑲᑦ
ni muwaw 'I eat him'

ᑭᑦ ᑭᑦ ᑲᑦᑲᑦᑲᑦ ᑲᑦᑲᑦᑲᑦ
mani chi usitaw kuniskuniyu 'Mary made a hat'

ᑭᑦ ᑭᑦ ᑲᑦᑲᑦᑲᑦ
mani chi usitaw 'Mary made it'

Some examples of intransitive verbs in Naskapi are:

σ < °
nipaw

'he sleeps'

ʃ ʔ ʃ ʃ °
chiwi michina

'do you want to eat?'

Λ ▷ °
piun

'it is snowing'

Singular and plural.

Singular* and plural* are the terms which refer to how many persons or things are part of the subject and object. In English, we say that "I" is singular, and "we" is plural because "I" refers to myself alone, and "we" refers to more than one person. In the same way, "he" is singular and "they" is plural.

Person.

Person* is the concept that refers to the people or things who are the subjects and objects of the verb. Different languages have different ways of expressing these.

In English, we say that "I" is first-person singular and that "we" is first-person plural. "You" is second-person singular and plural. "He", "she", and "it" are third-person singular and "they" is third-person plural.

The person system in Naskapi is similar, except that the first-person plural ("we") is refined more:

- σ ʃ ° 'we(exclusive)' means: me and at least one other person, but not you.
ʃ ʃ ° 'we (inclusive)' means: me and you, and maybe others

11. Person Markers

In Naskapi, person is partly shown by word-parts which are attached to the front of the verb. Note how similar these parts are to the possessive markers.

σ-	(first-person)
ni-	
ʃ-	(second-person)
chi-	
--	(there is no prefix for
--	third-person)

The person is also shown by various word-parts on the end of the verb. They are different for each of the four types of verbs: Animate Intransitive, Inanimate Intransitive, Transitive Animate, and Transitive Inanimate.

Transitive Animate Verb Markers.

Whenever the second-person ("you") is involved in any way with the verb, the marker ʃ - (chi-) is used. The marker at the end of the verb is what tells us who or what else is involved in the action of the verb.

Using the verb "see", here are some examples:

ʃ ʒʌʃ ^a	'you see me'
<u>chi</u> wapimin	
ʃ ʒʌʃʌ ^a	'I see you'
<u>chi</u> wapimitin	
ʃ ʒʌʃʌ ^a	'you see us'
<u>chi</u> wapimanan	
ʃ ʒʌʃʌ ^a	'we see you'
<u>chi</u> wapimitin <u>an</u>	

ʃ ʒʌL° <u>chi</u> wapimaw	'you see him'
ʃ ʒʌɾ° <u>chi</u> wapimikw	'he sees you'
ʃ ʒʌLə° <u>chi</u> wapimanaw	'you (plural) see me'
ʃ ʒʌɾʌəə° <u>chi</u> wapimitinanaw	'we see you (plural)'

Examples of endings found with the first-person marker ("I") are shown below:

ʃ ʒʌL° <u>ni</u> wapimaw	'I see him'
ʃ ʒʌɾ° <u>ni</u> wapimikw	'he sees me'
ʃ ʒʌLʌ° <u>ni</u> wapimawich	'I see them'
ʃ ʒʌLə° <u>ni</u> wapimanan	'we see him'

The following are examples of Transitive Animate verbs using the third-person ("he"). Note that there is no person marker before the verb.

ʒʌL° wapimaw	'he sees him'
ʒʌLʌ° wapimawich	'he sees them'

ʃ < ʌ a a°
chi papinanaw

'we (inclusive) are
 laughing'

ʃ < ʌ a°
chi papinaw

'you (plural) are
 laughing'

Inanimate Intransitive verb markers.

Here are a couple examples of Inanimate Intransitive verbs:

ʌ ɔ°
 piun

'it is snowing'

ʃ : L°
 chimwan

'it is raining'

12. Obviative

In Naskapi, as in other Algonquian Indian languages, there is a special way to mark the second of two third-person* nouns in a sentence. Linguists call this the "obviative", and it is just a way to make clear what is being said. The ending used on animate nouns is $-\Delta$ (-a):

$a <^{\circ} \Delta \wedge L^{\circ} \Delta ' : 6 \Delta$
 napaw wapimaw iskwawa
 'the man sees the woman'

$a <^{\circ} \Delta \Delta^{\circ} a L \Delta$
 napaw muwaw namaasa
 'the man eats fish'

The ending used on inanimate nouns is $-\Delta \Delta$ (-iyu):

$a <^{\circ} 6 \sigma \Delta \Delta C^L \Gamma \rho a \Delta \rho \sigma \Delta$
 napaw kaniwa \dot{i} tam misinaikiniyu
 'the man has the book'

$a <^{\circ} \Delta^L \Delta \Delta \Delta C < \sigma \Delta$
 napaw pimpiyu utapaniyu
 'the man drives the truck'

The endings must not be mixed. It would be incorrect to put the inanimate ending on an animate noun or vice versa:

XX $a <^{\circ} \Delta \Delta^{\circ} a L \Delta \Delta$
 XXnapaw muwaiw namaasiyu

Words other than nouns also have an obviative form when they are used with a third person. In the first example below, 'tomorrow' is not in an obviative form because there is no other third person, but in the second example it is in the obviative form because a third-person ("he") is mentioned.

ᐃᐱᓕ ᓂᓃ ᐃᐅᐱᓐᓕ ᐃᓂᓂ^ᓂ
wapicha nika ituhtan wasach
 'tomorrow I will go to Seven Islands'

ᐃᐱᓂᓂ ᓂᓃ ᐃᐅᐱᓐᓕ ᐅᓕᓂᓂ^ᓂ
wapinicha chika ituhtaw utanach
 'tomorrow he will go to town'

The obviative also occurs on things possessed by or belonging to a third-person. In the following examples, note the -ᐱ (-a) ending on ᐱᐃᓂᓂ when the person mentioned is 'his child', but not when he is 'my child' because 'I' is first-person and not third-person:

ᐅᓕᐃᓂᓂ
 utawasima
 'his child'

ᓂᓕᐃᓂᓂ^ᓂ
 nitawasim
 'my child'

13. Preverbs

A lot of meaning is carried by small additions to the verb. These word-parts are called "preverbs" and they are found between the person-marker and the verb. A sample of preverbs is shown here, with a few of the many meanings they can have.

<	'would, should, might'	ʃ < ʔ C L ^o
pa-		ch <u>ipa</u> <u>witamaw</u> 'you should tell him'
L ʃ	'bad, wrong'	L ʃ ɔ C ^ʔ
machi-		ma <u>chitutam</u> 'he does wrong'
ʃ ^ʔ C	'big, alot'	σ ʃ ^ʔ C ɔ ^ʔ ʔ ^e
mista-		ni <u>mista</u> <u>tuschan</u> 'I work alot'
σ C ɔ	'know how to' (acquired ability)	σ σ C ɔ ʔ ^ʔ ʔ ^e
nitau-		ni <u>nitau</u> <u>pimpion</u> 'I know how to drive'
ʃ ʃ	'finish'	ʃ ʃ ʃ ʔ ^e
chisi-		ch <u>ichisi</u> <u>piun</u> 'it finished snowing'
ɔ ʔ ^ʔ	'too much'	σ ʃ ɔ ʔ ^ʔ ʃ ʃ ʃ ^e
usam-		ni <u>chiusam</u> <u>michisun</u> 'I ate too much'

Between the preverbs and the person-marker is another type of word-part. These word-parts have meanings which refer in some way to time. (Some people think these word-parts should be included in the category of preverbs.)

Here is a sample:

ʃ
chi- (past tense)

b
ka- (future tense)

ʃb
chika- (future tense for third-person)

ʌ
wi- intention, habit, desire

14. Commands

The verbs that have been given in examples so far only represent one set of forms. There are two other major sets of forms. One of these, commands, is when you tell someone to do something. The command form does not have any person-markers. Here are some examples.

Δ Γ wichi	'help him'
Δ Γ Δ wichii	'help me'
Γ mi	'give it to him'
< Γ Γ Δ pachimii	'give it to me'
α b σ < akaa nipa	'don't sleep'
Δ ^ Λ L astima	'come please'

15. Conjunct

"Conjunct" is the name given to the third major group of verb forms. In some sentences the conjunct form is used because it helps another verb in the sentence:

◁▷▷▷Δ^c ʃʌʃ
awiupuwit chipiyu 'he runs fast'

ʃ Δ▷"C° ▷C° ʃʃ ʃʌL^c Δʃʃʃ
 chi ituhtaw utanach chachi wapimat wichawakina
 'he went to town to see his friend'

Sometimes the conjunct form is used to describe a noun. In the following sentence, 'who was following me' describes 'that man':

na na<^c ʃaʃ▷^c ʃʃ Δʃʃ^d
 na napaw kanasaut nichu imikw
 'that man who was following me talked to me'

The conjunct verb form is also used in questions that need more than L<^u (mawach) or ʃ"Δ (nihi) for an answer. That is, questions that ask <<^c (awan), C°C (tanta), CΔʌ (taispi), ʃ:ʃ^c (chakwan), etc, need a conjunct verb form:

CΔʌ ʃ° ʃ Cʃʃ^c 'when will he come back?'
taispi min cha takusit

C°C ʃ Δ▷"C° 'where did he go?'
tanta ka ituhtat

There are many other uses of conjunct verb forms. These verbs are very important, but it is beyond the scope of this book to discuss them in detail.

There are different types of conjunct verb forms, but they all have a few things in common. No conjunct form uses person-markers before the verb. All the persons referred to are shown by the end marker:

Δ◁ΛL ^c wiapimat	'he sees him'
Δ◁ΛΓ ^b wiapimik	'I see him'
Δ◁ΛΓ ^c wiapimit	'he sees me' or 'you see him'
Δ◁ΛΓC ^e wiapimitan	'I see you'
Δ◁ΛΓΔ ^e wiapimiin	'you see me'

The differences between the conjunct forms come at the beginning of the word. Some begin with ◁ - (a-):

◁◁ΛL ^c <u>a</u> wapimat	'he sees him'
◁◁"◁ ^c <u>a</u> nituh <u>t</u> wat	'he listens to him'

Others change the first vowel of the verb:

Δ◁ΛL ^c <u>w</u> iapimat	'he sees him'
◁◁"◁ ^c <u>n</u> atuh <u>t</u> wat	'he listens to him'
Γ◁Γ ^b <u>s</u> iachik	'I love him'

.16.. Negatives

Every sentence may be either positive ("it happened") or negative ("it did not happen"). In Indian a statement may be made negative by adding eL (nama) (which is often pronounced simply as 'ma') before the action:

$\sigma \quad \text{w}\Delta\text{L}^\circ$
ni wapimaw
'I see him'

$\text{eL} \quad \sigma \quad \text{w}\Delta\text{L}^\circ$
nama ni wapimaw
'I do not see him'

$\rho \quad \text{y}\Delta\text{L}^\circ$
chi saimaw
'you know him'

$\text{eL} \quad \rho \quad \text{y}\Delta\text{L}^\circ$
nama chi saimaw
'you do not know him'

If, however, you want to say that the action did not happen some time in the past, another word-part must be added besides the eL (nama):

$\sigma\rho \quad \text{w}\Delta\text{L}^\circ$
nichī wapimaw
'I saw him'

$\text{eL} \quad \sigma \quad \rho \quad \text{w}\Delta\text{L}^\circ$
nama ni uschi wapimaw
'I didn't see him'

$\sigma\rho \quad \text{y}\rho'$
nichī sachikw
'he loved me'

$\text{eL} \quad \sigma \quad \rho \quad \text{y}\rho'$
nama ni uschi sachikw
'he didn't love me'

When verbs are in the conjunct form or in the form for commands (see the explanation of these in chapter 14), the negative form is not eL (nama), but Δb - (akaa-, often pronounced "kaa-"):

$\text{w}\Delta\text{L}^\circ$
wapimat
'he sees him'

$\Delta b \quad \text{w}\Delta\text{L}^\circ$
akaa wapimat
'he doesn't see him'

$\text{e}\rho''\rho'$
natuhtuwat
'he listens to him'

$\Delta b \quad \text{e}\rho''\rho'$
akaa natuhtuwat
'he doesn't listen to him'

17. Tense

In Naskapi, you know when an event took place by syllables that come before the verb. If the event took place in the past, ʃ (chi) comes before the verb:

σ ʃ σ < ʳ
ni chi nipan 'I slept'

ʃ Δ ɔ " ʳ
chi ituhtaw 'he went'

ʃ ʃ < " ɔ ʳ
chi chi pahtuwaw 'you heard him'

If the event will take place in the future, ʃ (ka) is put in that position when you talk about 'I' or 'you':

σ ʃ σ < ʳ
nika ka nipan 'I will sleep'

ʃ ʃ ʳ
chi ka man 'you will cry'

But ʃʃ (chika) is used to show the event will take place in the future when talking about 'he':

ʃʃ Δ ɔ " ʳ
chika ituhtaw 'he will go'

ʃʃ σ < ʳ
chika nipaw 'he will sleep'

Tense can also be marked on conjunct verb forms (see chapter 15 for an explanation of 'conjunct'), but different word-parts are used. For the past tense,

6 (kaa) is placed before the verb:

6 σ < 5^a
kaa nipayan 'I slept'

6 < " > 4^c
kaa pahtuwat 'he heard him'

6 4 ^ L^c
kaa wapimat 'he saw him'

For something happening in the future, ʃ (cha) is placed before the conjunct verb form:

ʃ 4 ^ Γ^b
cha wapimik 'I will see him'

ʃ L ʔ^a
cha mayin 'you will cry'

18. Questions

Yes-no questions.

To form a question In Indian that can be answered by σ^{Δ} (nihi) or $L^{\dot{\Delta}}$ (mawach), $-\Delta$ (-a) is added to the end of part of the verb:

Γ^{Δ} Γ° chiwi min	'you want to drink'
Γ^{Δ} Γ° chiwi min <u>a</u>	'do you want to drink?'
$\sigma <^{\circ}$ nipaw	'he is sleeping'
$\sigma <^{\dot{\Delta}}$ nipaw <u>a</u>	'is he sleeping?'
Γ $\sigma b \Gamma^{\circ}$ chi nikamunaw	'you (plural) are singing'
Γ $\sigma b \Gamma^{\circ}$ chi nikamunaw <u>a</u>	'are you (plural) singing?'
Γ $< \Gamma^{\Delta}$ $\Delta \Gamma^{\circ}$ chi pachia imitin	'could I talk to you?'

Another way to ask a question is to add L^{Δ} (mai-) before the verb:

L^{Δ} Γ° $\Delta \Gamma^{\circ}$ <u>mai</u> chikachi imitin	'may I talk to you?'
---	----------------------

Content questions.

Questions requiring more than a $\sigma^{\prime}\Delta$ (nihi) or $\Delta^{\prime}\Delta^{\prime}$ (mawach) answer are formed in another way. A word that shows what information is wanted is found at the beginning of the sentence (such as $\Delta^{\prime}\Delta^{\prime}$ (awan), $\Delta^{\prime}\Delta^{\prime}$ (chakwan), or $\Delta^{\prime}\Delta^{\prime}$ (taispi)). This is followed by the conjunct form of the verb (see chapter 15 for an explanation of 'conjunct'):

$\Delta^{\prime}\Delta^{\prime}$ $\Delta^{\prime}\Delta^{\prime}$ $\Delta^{\prime}\Delta^{\prime}$
tanta waituhtain

'where are you going?'

$\Delta^{\prime}\Delta^{\prime}$ $\Delta^{\prime}\Delta^{\prime}$ $\Delta^{\prime}\Delta^{\prime}$ $\Delta^{\prime}\Delta^{\prime}$
taispi min cha takusit

'when will he come back?'

$\Delta^{\prime}\Delta^{\prime}$ $\Delta^{\prime}\Delta^{\prime}$ $\Delta^{\prime}\Delta^{\prime}$
chakwan ka miin

'what did you drink?'

19. Unspecified Subject

Indian has some special verb forms that are used when the subject is not known or just is not mentioned, as in these sentences:

σ ἄΓδ^α 'I am seen'
ni wapimikun

ἄΛῆς 'he is seen'
wapimaakanu

These can also be used in making general statements, such as "There is dancing" or "There is drinking":

ῆ σΓα^ς 'there is dancing'
ka niiminanuch

ῆ ΔΓΛΔΓα^ς 'there is a meeting'
ka uchimauminanuch

GLOSSARY

The words defined in this glossary are marked with an asterisk (*) in the text.

Animate-

A label for a category of nouns* that usually are living things, such as people, animals, plants, although there are some exceptions. One test to find out if a noun is animate is to ask, "is it correct to use $\dot{\text{w}}^{\text{a}}\text{p}^{\text{i}}\text{maw}$ with it, or $\dot{\text{w}}^{\text{a}}\text{p}^{\text{a}}\text{h}^{\text{t}}\text{am}$?" If $\dot{\text{w}}^{\text{a}}\text{p}^{\text{i}}\text{maw}$ is right, then it is animate. (For more information, see chapter 7 on animacy.)

Animate is also a label for verbs* that are used with animate nouns, such as $\dot{\text{w}}^{\text{a}}\text{p}^{\text{i}}\text{maw}$ in the example above.

Commands-

When someone tells another person to do something, as in

$\dot{\text{w}}^{\text{i}}\text{c}^{\text{h}}\text{i}$	'help him'
wichi	

See chapter 14 on commands for more information.

Content questions-

A question that requires information in the answer other than 'yes' or 'no'. For example, questions that ask when something happened, or what happened, or why, are all content questions because they cannot be answered with 'yes' or 'no'.

Exclusive we-

See the definition under we*.

Inanimate-

A label for nouns* that are not animate* (see the definition of 'animate' above). If $\dot{\text{w}}^{\text{a}}\text{p}^{\text{a}}\text{h}^{\text{t}}\text{am}$ is correct to use with the noun, it is inanimate. Inanimate is also a label for the verbs* that are used with inanimate nouns*, such as $\dot{\text{w}}^{\text{a}}\text{p}^{\text{a}}\text{h}^{\text{t}}\text{am}$.

Inclusive we-

See the definition under we*.

Intransitive verb-

A verb* that does not have an object*. Look at the following examples:

ᑭ ᐃᐅᐅᐃᑦ 'I am running'
ni wiupuin

ᑭ ᐸ ᐱᑦ 'you are laughing'
chi papin

See chapter 10 (Introduction to Verbs) and the definition of object for more information.

Markers-

Small word-parts attached to a word to change or add to its meaning in some way.

Negative-

A negative statement is one that says an event did not take place.

Noun-

A word that is usually a person, place, or thing, such as:

ᑭ ᐸᑦ 'man'
napaw

ᐃᑦᑦ 'language'
imun

ᐃᑦᑦᑦᑦ 'Indian-land'
iyuaschii

Object-

The object of a verb* is the thing that is affected by the action. In the following sentence:

ᑭ ᐅᐸᑦᑦᑦ ᐸᑦᑦᑦᑦ 'John sees the ball.'
chan tuwaniyu wapahtam

ᐅᐸᑦᑦᑦ (tuwan) is the object because that is what John sees.

Obviative-

A label for the markers* attached to the second of two third-person nouns* in a sentence. In the following examples, -ᐃᑦ (-iyu) and -ᐸ (-a) are the markers:

ᑭ ᐅᐸᑦᑦᑦ ᐸᑦᑦᑦᑦ 'John sees the ball.'
chan tuwaniyu wapahtam

ᑭ ᐃᑦᑦᑦᑦ ᐸᑦᑦᑦᑦ 'John sees the woman.'
chan iskwawaa wapimaw

See chapter 12 on obviative for more information.

Person-

A system used to tell us what people are involved in the verb*:

First-person refers to 'I' or 'we'

Second-person refers to 'you'

Third-person refers to 'he, she, it, they'

Plural-

A label used when talking about more than one thing or person, as in f'ā< (chiwapa) 'buildings'. First-person* plural means 'we', etc. For more information, see chapters 8 and 10.

Positive-

A statement saying that something did happen (the opposite of negative*).

Preverb-

Preverbs are small word-parts attached just before the verb* to change or add to the meaning of the verb. See chapter 13 for more explanation.

Singular-

Singular means there is only one person or thing being referred to. 'He' is third-person singular, 'they' is third-person plural*. 'House' is a singular noun*, 'houses' is plural.

Subject-

The subject is who or what is doing the action of the verb*. In the sentence, "John hit the ball", 'John' is the subject.

Tense-

Tense is the part of a verb* that refers to the time of the action. Some simple tenses are past, present, and future tenses.

Transitive verb-

A transitive verb is a verb which has an object*. In the example, "The boy hit the ball", the word 'hit' is a transitive verb because it has an object: 'the ball'. See chapters 10 and 11 for further explanation.

Unspecified subject-

When the subject* of the sentence is unknown or is not mentioned, it is said to be unspecified. In the example, "the ball was hit", who or what hit the ball is not mentioned, and so it is said to be unspecified. Chapter 19 has more information on this.

Verb-

Verbs are words expressing action or states of existence. For example, in the sentence "The boy ran", 'ran' is the verb, and in the sentence, "The book is yellow", 'is yellow' is the verb.

We -

In Naskapi, the first-person* plural* ('we') is divided into these two parts:

- 1) When you mean 'us but not you', you use the 'exclusive we', represented by ᑎᑎᑎ (niyan).
- 2) When you mean 'you and me, and maybe others', you use the 'inclusive we', and it is represented by ᑎᑎᑎᑎ (chiyanu).