AteliKai

A Community Reference Grammar of Labrador Inuttitut
Alana Johns, Department of Linguistics, University of Toronto
Christine Nochasak, J.C. Erhardt Memorial School, Makkovik
Nunatsiavut

Johns and Nochasak
Newfoundland and Labrador

Johns and Nochasak
Nunatsiavut Communities
Nunatsiavut

- 2,598 Official Labrador Inuit
- Language loss among youth (Andersen and Johns 2005)
Immersion and Core Inuktitut

- Nain: K-3 immersion; K-12 Core Inuktitut
- Hopedale: K & 1 Immersion; K-12 Core Inuktitut
- Makkovik: K-12 Core Inuktitut
- Postville: K-9 Rosetta Stone
- Rigolet: K-9 Core Inuktitut

- Inuit Program Specialist: Sarah Townley
- Curriculum Developer: Sophie Tuglavina

Inuit Language Teachers
- Nain: 6
- Hopedale: 6
- Makkovik: 1
- Postville: 1
- Rigolet: 1
Torngâsok Cultural Centre
Nain, October 2007

• Dictionary - Labradorimi Ulinaisigutet ($30.00)
• Young learner’s book: Atuagaga uKausinnut ($15.00)
• Unikkâlautta - stories from storytelling festival 2006 ($15.00)
• Rosetta Stone - Inuttitut Level 1 ($100.00)
Asiujitaillilugit UKausivut

Language Revitalization Plan (in preparation by the Language Strategy Committee, Nunatsiavut) Goal: 2050
Labrador Inuttitut Community Grammar Partners

- Dept. of Linguistics, University of Toronto, Alana Johns.
- Torngâsok Cultural Centre, Nunatsiavut Government, Catharyn Andersen, Director.
Community Participants

Rita Andersen, Torngâsok Cultural Centre, language support
Katie Winters, Nain Liaison. Transcribing, consulting, checking
Joan Dicker, Teacher (Nain), Story Database
Christine Nochasak, Teacher (Makkovik), grammar issues
Linguistics Graduate Student Participants

• Sarah Clarke, Ph.D. student, web design and postings.
• Richard Compton, Ph.D. student, web design and postings.
• Ewan Dunbar, Story Database
### Angiggami

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Johns and Nochasak</th>
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Katie Winters (author and reader)
Nain, Labrador June 2007

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ai Katie E. Wintersiuvunga</th>
<th>Hi. My name is Katie E. Winters.</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nainimiungutungi tamâni Nainimi inolilauKunga.</td>
<td>I am from Nain. I was born here in Nain.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AllagalâniakKunga pitjutigillugu aullaKattanigikattajavuttinik Tasiujammut.</td>
<td>I'll write a short story about our trips we have up to Tasiujak.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PannailiaKiKattavugut kisiani Kaujimagutta silakKiniammangât.</td>
<td>We start to go off only when we know the weather will be fine.</td>
</tr>
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<td>ammalu kenaujaKatsiatuagutta taKuatsavuttinik ammalu kiasalenitsavuttinik.</td>
<td>and if we have enough money for our grub and gas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farítâgiimi aullaluakattavugut unuttut Inuit avungngaliaKiKattamata.</td>
<td>We usually go on Friday because that is the time a lot of people go north.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sugusikkagumakattagaluakkunga tâvatuak uKumaitssaniagasugigannuk tigusiKattangilagut.</td>
<td>I like to take the children but when we think we will have a hard time, we don't take them.</td>
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<td>Tappâneligatta silakKijâtsiavakattavugut, pinasuagalatluta aulasagiatlatalu.</td>
<td>When we are up there, we have a really great time; we hunt and fish.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inuit Stories</td>
<td></td>
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<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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Johns and Nochasak
A Community Grammar?

- Reference grammar - not teaching grammar
- Writing oriented to community language professionals, not just linguists
- Input from community beyond data (questions, readability, etc.)
How come Inuktitut can change their words around and the sentence doesn’t change meaning?

nukappiak atâni sâp
Boy bottom-its table’s

‘The boy is under the table’

Johns and Nochasak
How come Inuktitut can change their words around and the sentence doesn’t change meaning?

nukappiak atâni sâp
Boy bottom-its table’s

nukappiak sâp atâni
Boy table’s bottom-its

‘The boy is under the table’

Johns and Nochasak
Word Order

• Word order is fairly free in Inuttitut. This contrasts with English where the word order is fairly fixed. For example, in Inuttitut the following sentence means the same thing, no matter what the order of the words.
• Kauppat silakKipat kisiani tomorrow if it is nice only
  ‘only if it is a nice day tomorrow’

• Kauppat kisiani silakKipat
• kisiani Kauppat silakKipat
• kisiani silakKipat Kauppat
• silakKipat kisiani Kauppat
• silakKipat Kauppat kisiani

Johns and Nochasak
Inuttitut words can move around without changing meaning because they have **endings** which give extra information. English words do not have endings so the words are much more fixed in place. Other languages like Inuttitut, where endings allow the words to move, are Russian and Latin. In languages around the world, it is usually the case that if the language has endings, the word order is more free.
I was teaching the students the endings; 
* mik and *nik. I taught them that *mik = one thing: 
Kimminimik takuvunga I see a dog. 
Kimmininik takuvunga. I see some dogs. 

A student asked how come: 
takuvunga anânaganinisik I see my mother 
is speaking of only one person? They asked why isn't it 
takuvunga *anânaganamik.
Grammar Piece

takuvunga Kimmimik
‘I see a dog.’

takuvunga Kimmenik
‘I see 2 dogs.’

takuvunga Kimminik
‘I see some dogs.’

This applies to all the case endings starting with $m$ ($mut$, $mi$, $mit$)

In contrast, when these cases follow a grammatical element, such as possessive endings, $nik$ must be used for the singular.


takuvunga Kimmiganik
‘I see my dog.’
Acknowledgements

• Funding from Social Science and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC) through a Northern Development grant.
• Community Grammar site <http://www.chass.utoronto.ca/~inuit/labrador/Labrador/Welcome.html>

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