ROBERT A. PAPEN

ENN PCHIT GRAMER DJU FRANSE MICHIF

A BRIEF MICHIF FRENCH GRAMMAR

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Enn Pchit Gramer dju Franse Michif

Introduction

The oral and written French taught in schools, used in the media and described in dictionaries or grammar books is usually called **Standard French** ("SF"). Since the French language was historically developed in France, most grammatical or lexical descriptions of SF refer to the educated speech of people of the greater Paris region of France. Nevertheless, other French-speaking countries, such as Belgium, Switzerland, Canada, Senegal, etc., have developed their own versions of SF. These may differ in aspects of pronunciation, grammar, or lexicon. For example, in **Standard Canadian French** ("CF"), it is acceptable to pronounce the consonant /t/ as /t^{s}/ when it is followed by a vowel such as /i/: *tigre* (tiger) can be pronounced /tsigr/ or even /t^{s}ig/. There are also differences in vocabulary (or lexicon). In European French, for example, the word for blueberry is *myrtille*, but in CF, it is *bleuet*. In **Colloquial Canadian French** ("CCF"), the type of oral French that most speakers tend to use in everyday conversations with family members, close friends, etc., as well as in MF, the word for *car* is *char*, while in European French, *char* refers either to a four-wheel animal-pulled farm cart, a decorated vehicle used in parades, or a military tank.

CCF differs in many regards from SF as described above. This type of French is just as legitimate as SF, but because of its informal usage, it doesn't have the same stature as SF, and language purists often consider it as being incorrect, improper, vulgar, slang, etc.

The scientific study of language in general, and languages in particular, is called linguistics. In linguistics, the oral language used by the majority of speakers in informal or familiar situations is called the **vernacular**. In many Métis communities in Western Canada, such as St. Laurent, Manitoba, and St. Louis, Saskatchewan, the vernacular form of French most often used, namely MF, is quite different from SF and is even somewhat different from CCF. Due to these differences, some Métis even erroneously consider MF a totally different language from French and call it simply Michif.

Where does the term **Michif** come from? The French term *métis* orginally comes from Vulgar (or Common) Latin *mixticius*, from Latin *mixtus*, meaning "of mixed origins", which eventually become *mestiz* in the Middle Ages and later the modern form, *métis*. The term was originally applied to objects whose matter was mixed, for example *fer métis* (mixed iron, which contains sulphur or arsenic). According to the *Le Petit Robert* dictionary,[1] a new meaning for the term was borrowed from Portuguese *metice*, referring to children whose parents' skin was a different colour. It eventually came to refer to children born of a European and an African or Asian parent. In New France, it was used to refer to children born of a French man and an Indiginous woman.

[1] Robert, Paul. [Josette Rey-Debove and Alain Rey (eds.)], *Le Petit Robert de la langue française*. Paris: Le Robert, 2017.

In the 16th–17th centuries, however, a rival form came to be used: *métif* or *mestif*. The reasons for these rival forms are complicated and controversial and are not within the scope of this publication. These forms came to be mostly used in Canada during the fur trade to describe persons of mixed Indigenous-French origins.

Eventually, the vowel /e/ of *métif* came to be pronounced as an /i/, so *mitif*. As well, a /t/ consonant before a vowel such as /i/ came to be pronounced as /ch/, as in *chair*. The result is *michif*. So, the form *michif* is just another way of saying *métis*. Many Métis call themselves *Michiss* or even *Méchiss* rather than Michif!

Unfortunately, there are a number of myths about the origins of MF. Some believe that the first babies born from the union of French-speaking voyageurs, free traders and employees of fur trade companies, and Indigenous women learned both the language of their mother and that of their father and began mixing them. If that were the case, MF would be far more "mixed" than it actually is. Others believe that the influence of local Indigenous languages, such as Cree or Saulteaux, is quite strong; however, as will become evident in the following pages, First Nation language influence, though it does exist, is not very prevalent, neither in the grammar nor in the lexicon. Many MF speakers believe their language is different from other French varieties, and some even insist that MF is a totally distinct language. As will become evident, due to a number of differences with regards to SF or CF, MF is definitely a distinct variety of CF; it is closest to the CCF spoken by French Canadians of the Prairies, but it is still fundamentally French in phonology (the sound system), grammar and lexicon.

There are two other language varieties that are also referred to as Michif. The best known is **Southern Michif** (also called *Heritage Michif*, *French-Cree*, *An-Crii*, *Broken Cree* or *Cri cassé*, etc.), a mixed or hybrid Cree-French language spoken by a dwindling number of elderly Métis speakers, but for a number of political, economical, social, and identity reasons, it has become THE so-called "national" language of ALL Prairie Métis. Of course, this is historically untenable, since the vast majority of Métis in the historical Red River (and later in the Old North West) were speakers of MF, not of the mixed French-Cree language, which, according to the well known Michif scholar Peter Bakker (1997),[2] was originally spoken by buffalo hunters and their families (whose descendants later often became cart drivers and eventually landless squatters on government land—the Road Allowance People), but the speakers of this language were always in the minority among the Métis. Some have stated that Southern Michif was the official bartering language among the Prairie Métis.[3] This again is not supported by historical facts, and Southern Michif was always an "insider's language", used exclusively among family and close friends. The third language variety called Michif is actually a variety of (Northern) Plains Cree with a dwindling number of words borrowed from MF and the French brought by the missionaries and nuns in the 19th century. It is mostly spoken in northwestern Saskatchewan Métis communities such as Île à la Crosse, in the Lac la Biche and (perhaps) the Lac Ste Anne areas of Alberta. This variety is usually known as **Northern Michif**.

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[2] Bakker, Peter. *A Language of Our Own. The Genesis of Michif, the Mixed Cree-French Language of the Canadian Métis*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1997.

[3] https://flms.ca/our-culture/language/

It is important to know that these three language varieties are almost mutually incomprehensible; a speaker of MF may possibly understand some of the nouns and adjectives in Southern Michif but would not understand the language in general, since the MF speaker would not understand verbs, pronouns, demonstratives, etc. Likewise, a Southern Michif speaker might understand some MF nouns and adjectives but not the verbs. A Northern Michif speaker would certainly recogonize the Southern Michif vcrb forms but would have difficulty in understanding many of the nouns or adjectives, since these are in the majority from SF.

Although the notion of **dialect** (or language variety) is somewhat fuzzy in linguistics, it is generally accepted that dialects of a single language are mutually comprehensible. Even though there are important differences between the English spoken in Londonderry, U.K. and Houston, Texas, for example, both are by and large mutually comprehensible and are considered dialects of English. On a strict linguistic basis, it is impossible to consider the three language varieties discussed above as being dialects of a single language called Michif. Rather, these three language varieties are three distinct languages (with obvious linguistic connections): MF is a variety of French (therefore part of the Romance language family, which includes Spanish, Italian, Portuguese, etc.); Northern Michif is a variety of Cree (which belongs to the Algonquian language family, along with Anishinaabemowin, Innu, Alənαpαtəwéwαkan/Alnôbadôwawôgan (Abenaki), Mi'kmaq, etc.) and Southern Michif is a bilingual mixed language that belongs to no single language family, since it is composed of two distinct language family sources, Romance and Algonquian[4]

Language and identity are intimately connected. Even though the vast majority of contemporary Métis in Canada now speak English as their first language, and much of their personal identity is therefore realized through this language, each of the three Métis languages known as Michif have become an important identity factor for a growing number of Western Canadian Métis. As the Métis National Council website states:[5]

> Michif identity lives in Michif language. It tells the story of who the Métis are. It is the cornerstone of Métis nationalism and self-determination[.]
> …
> It is a cultural birthright, a symbol of resistance, and the linguistic expression of the Métis Nation. In July 2000, the Métis Nation General Assembly formally adopted the Michif Nation Declaration, recognizing Michif as "the historical and official language of the Métis Nation: *Michif si la lawng di li Nawsyoon*."[6]

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[4] It has been claimed that Northern Michif is just as much a mixed language as Southern Michif. This position is untenable. The number of French terms in Northern Michif has never been more than 200 or so, while about 90% of Southern Michif nouns are of French origin. The two situations are therefore quite distinct. If 200 or so borrowed forms in a language make it a "mixed language", then most of the world's ~7,000 languages would have to be considered "mixed", since every world language contains borrowed forms, but none ever reaching such a high percentage as in Southern Michif.

[5] www.metisnation.ca/what-we-do/culture-heritage-and-language/language/

[6] Notice that *Nawsyoon* is considered masculine gender, since the determiner has the form *li*, which is the masculine singular form of the definite article in Michif. In French, the term *nation* is feminine, requiring

This last phrase would have one conclude that the Michif language being refered to is MF, but it is Southern Michif that is implied, as the text goes on to state:

> Michif is not simply a blend of French and nēhiyawēwin (Cree), it is its own language, born of the fur trade and the formation of a distinct Métis people. Developed by the early 1800s and spoken widely by bison hunters on the Plains, Michif reflects the ethnogenesis of the Métis themselves: not fully European, not fully First Nation, but fully Métis.

All three Michif languages are now undergoing revitalization initiatives throughout Western Canada, although Southern Michif seems to be ahead in the number of different programs offered and the amound of funding received.

In British Columbia, Métis Nation British Columbia ("MNBC") offers grants of up to $30,000 to Métis communities to support learning and teaching of Michif. This program is part of a 10-year Michif language revitalization plan, called *Aan Michif Piikishwaytaak*, funded by Heritage Canada. MNBC's Ministry of Culture, Heritage and Language has created the Amelia Douglas Institute for Métis Culture and Language ("ADI"). Its website (www.ameliadouglasinstitute.ca) offers a number of works, such as the online book *The Words of Our Ancestors. An Introduction to Michif and Indigenous Language Revitalization* (also a video series) and a *Michif Phrase Search* engine, where one can type a phrase such as "What is your name?" and equivalents in Southern Michif, Northern Michif, and MF are provided. As, well, the ADI website offers a cheat sheet of useful Michif phrases in the office (in the three languages) at www.mnbc.ca/michif-in-the-office.

Another British Columbia Métis organization, the BC Métis Federation, is also active in revitalization initiatives. Its Language and Culture Department's main goal is to help preserve MF and has developed a seasonal *Michif Newsletter* that includes weather words, cultural stories, recipes, and children's colouring pages. It also offers a MF curriculum for Kindergarten through Grade 6, including more than 100 lesson plans. It organizes a MF Mentor-Apprentice Program and has produced an online MF glossary (www.michif.ca/learn-michif-app), a list of 2,000 words and phrases with accompanying recorded audio clips.

In Alberta, the majority of Métis are represented by the *Otipemisiwak Métis Government*; its website does not mention any particular program dealing with language. The St. Albert Michif Cultural Connections organization seems to be limited to Métis culture (finger weaving, drum making, jigging, etc.). Another organization, Michif Language Awareness from Lac Ste Anne, seems to promote Plains Cree (which is referred to as Michif!) as their language. The Rupertsland Institute (www.rupertsland.org/teaching-learning/michif-language/michif-language-resources/) has a number of online offerings dealing with Métis languages: a bibliography of (mostly) academic publications on the three Michif languages with associated internet

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la as determiner. This shows that masculine/feminine gender in Michif does not necessarily conform to SF norms.

links; a number of children's videos dealing with Métis cultural features (in English); *Let's Learn Michif* videos, and an *Introduction to Michif* online course, both of these focusing on Northern Michif. Neither the University of Alberta nor the University of Calgary offers any courses on Michif.

In Saskatchewan, a growing number of elementary schools now offer Michif language programs, most of these specifiaclly involving Northern Michif (though the available information on Internet generally simply mentions "Michif"). The Wakaw School District Enhancement Program offers MF courses, and the Saskatchewan government Minister of Education Curriculum offers a curriculum for high school courses in MF. Over a dozen elementary schools offer language classes in Northern Michif. The University of Saskatchewan offers a 10-course Certificate on Southern Michif within their Indigenous Languages Program.

According the federal government's Canadian Heritage Department, the Manitoba Métis Federation and the Louis Riel Institute (www.louisrielinstitute.ca) have received nearly $15 million in funding for Michif language programs, most of this money being spent on Southern Michif. The LRI offers a variety of learning materials (mostly dealing with Southern Michif), including comic books, songs, and videos about cooking, laundry, gardening, folk stories, and more. It also offers a few illustrated children's books in MF. During summers, the LRI organizes *On the land Aañ Michif* summer immersion learning of Southern Michif. Other online offerings are a *Family Language Plan* for the revitalization of Michif in the family, including a Family Language Planning Template. The Prairies to Woodlands Indigenous Language Revitalization Circle, a grassroots community organization focused on the revitalization of Southern Michif, offers an online Southern Michif course (www.michif.org). It has also digitalized the 1983 Laverdure, Allard, and Crawford Michif dictionary.[7] where each entry is spoken by a Michif native speaker (*Michif Talking Dictionary. Li liivr di moo aañ Michif*) (www.dictionary.Michif.org/home).

In Manitoba, both the University of Manitoba and the University of Winnipeg offer a beginner's course in Southern Michif. The WHEAT Institute offers an online course on Northern Michif.

The Métis Nation of Ontario ("MNO") represents the Métis of Ontario. It claims that Michif is also spoken in the province: "Michif-Fransè is the variety of Michif French found in Ontario and has been given this specific label to distinguish it from a similar variety spoken in Manitoba, primarily in the area of Saint-Laurent".[8] The MNO website offers an online workbook *Ontario Michif Kayé Daktsivité—Un Gid dla Lawng Métis.* The workbook includes lists of words and conversational phrases, various language activities such as word games (scrambled words, puzzles, cryptograms, etc.), all written in a more-or-less phonetic orthography. A close examination of the language used in the

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[7] Laverdure, Patine, Ida Rose Allard, and John Crawford. *The Michif Dictionary. Turtle Mountain Chippewa Cree*. Winnipeg: Pemmican Publications, 1983.

[8] https://www.metisnation.org/programs-and-services/education-training/metis-languages-initiatives/.

workbook shows that it is basically the vernacular French spoken in Northern Ontario by Franco-Ontarians and shows very little resemblance to MF as spoken in the Prairies.[9]

As for academic research on Michif languages, the majority of scientific publications deal specifically with Southern Michif, very few concern Northern Michif, and we have published more than a dozen articles on MF. For those interested in finding out more about academic research on the various Michif languages, see https://michif.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/MichifBibliography.pdf.

The goal of this grammar is to analyze and describe the phonological (see definition under **Phoneme**), phonetic, grammatical, syntactical, lexical, and pragmatic features of MF, comparing them whenever possible to those of SF, CF, or to CCF, spoken in everyday informal conversations by speakers in Quebec and its diaspora (Ontario, the Prairies, etc.).

We hope that these analyses and comparative descriptions may help teachers and learners to better understand the disctinctions that exist between SF, CF, CCF, and MF.

The analyses and descriptions of MF that are proposed here are mostly based on the analyses of about 60 one- to two-hour-long interviews done by Father Guy Lavallée (RIP), a native of St. Laurent, Manitoba, during the late 1980s, with speakers of the St. Laurent community. The age of the speakers vary from teens to 90s, but the majority are adults or elders, both male and female. Lavallée included a few French Canadian speakers who live in St. Laurent as well as a number of descendants of the Breton immigrants who had arrived in St. Laurent in the early 1900s. It is important to note that most of these Bretons have now adopted MF as their native language. Father Lavallée's goal was not to describe the language per se, but to analyse the socio-ethnological aspects of the community for his Master's degree in anthropology at the University of British Columbia (Lavallée 1988).[10] He later published a slightly revised version of his thesis in 2003.[11] Father Guy graciously furnished us with copies of all the recordings, which were then transcribed on electronic support and subsequently linguistically analyzed. The great majority of the examples that are given henceforth come from these transcriptions, though others also come from fieldwork we did with MF speakers from St. Laurent, Manitoba and the St. Louis/Duck Lake/Batoche region of Saskatchewan. Even though there is a certain degree of variation in the speech of these speakers, the resemblances are far greater than the differences, and therefore, what we describe as the MF of St. Laurent is generally true for the MF spoken elsewhere. That is not to say there is not any variation among speakers of different ages, occupations, communities, genders, education, etc. Copies of the St. Laurent oral interviews are available at the Virtual Museum of Metis History and Culture website (www.metismuseum.ca/browse/index.php/1071).

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[9] Papen, Robert. The languages of the Métis in Canada, in M. Bouchard, S. Malette, and S. Pulla (eds.), *Eastern Métis. Chronicling and Reclaiming a Denied Past*. New York: Lexington Books, pp. 67-94.

[10] Lavallée, Guy. *The Metis People of St. Laurent, Manitoba. An Introductory Ethnography*. M.A. Thesis, Vancouver: University of British Columbia, 1988.

[11] Lavallée, Guy. *The Metis of St. Laurent, Manitoba: Their Life and Stories, 1920-1988*. Winnipeg: Published by the author.

Since we are dealing with grammar, we have used a number of technical linguistic terms that are not readily understood by the average reader. We have therefore added a **Glossary** after Chapter 6, in which terms not already defined in the text itself, are explained.

We wish to acknowledge Father Guy for having allowed the Manitoba Métis Federation, which partially financed his research, to provide us with the copies of Lavallée's recordings. We thank the *Centre de recherche sur le français en milieu minoritaire* of the University of Regina for a 2005 grant, which allowed us to have the recordings partially trancribed. The complete transcription of the ~60 hours of interviews was financed by the *Chaire de recherche du Canada sur l'identité métisse*, chaired by Professor Denis Gagnon of the Université de Saint-Boniface, Winnipeg, financed by the ARUC project *Identités francophones de l'Ouest canadien : définition, valorisation et transmission* (Social Sciences Research Council of Canada). Finally, *aen gran marsii* to Jenny Andrews, who spent many hours doing an excellent job of copyediting this text and to Viviane Robillard, my wife, for the Table of Contents.

Robert A. Papen, PhD, Longueuil, Quebec
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Chapter 1 Writing Michif French

1.0 Oral Versus Written Language

Fundamentally, language is a spoken phenomenon, and writing has always been a secondary feature. Indeed, until the 20th century, the great majority of the ~7,000 languages of the world had no written form, and many still do not. Nevertheless, humans have attempted to express in some written form their oral language even as early as the end of the 4th millenium (Sumerian). Of course, there are a number of ways one can use to transcribe oral language: one can transcribe whole words by the use of various symbols, such as for Chinese; one can transcribe syllables by the use of various symbols, such as for Inuit, or one can transcribe sounds by the use of various symbols (usually letters), which are called **alphabets**. There are various types of alphabets, including, for example, Cyrillic (used by Slavic languages such as Ukrainian, Russian, Serbian, etc.), Greek (used for Greek), Semitic (used for Hebrew), Arabic (used for Arabic languages), Devanagari (used for many languages of India), and so on. Most European languages now use what is known as the Roman alphabet, developed over the years of the Roman Empire, as early as the 7th century, BCE. In this alphabet, a number of letters are used to express various oral sounds (either consonants or vowels). Since the Roman alphabet consists of a limited number of letters, but the number of sounds in a given language may be greater than the number of available letters, the use of combinations of letters or of accent marks (called diacritics) became necessary. Originally, languages such as French or English were written down as early as the 9th century. Modern French was first written down in the early 16th century. At that time, the word for "water" was pronounced something like *euh-aa-o* and was therefore spelled *e-a-u* (*eau*), which represented quite well the actual pronunciation of the time. Of course, in time, this pronunciation evolved and eventually came to be pronounced in a single vowel /o/. But spelling systems evolve much more slowly than the oral language, so today, the word for "water" in French is still spelled *eau* rather than simply *o*. This makes learning how to read and write French quite difficult, and it takes many years for learners to become proficient. The same is quite true for English. Spellings like *night* or *light*, which are pronounced something *n-eye-t* and *l-eye-t* and where a *gh* sound is totally absent, reveal that originally, these words were indeed pronounced with a *gh* sound, something like *n-igh-t* or *l-igh-t*.

Linguists have developed a system of symbols to represent any possible sound produced by humans in their languages. It is called the **International Phonetic Alphabet** and includes hundreds of symbols and diacritics; for example, [æ] for the vowel sound in *cat*, [ʤ] for the consonant sound in *judge*, [ø] for the vowel sound in French *jeu*, [ɥ] for the initial sound in French *huit*, [ß] for the middle consonant sound in Spanish *sabor*, [ã] in MF *tan* (time). Of course, these symbols, precise as they may be, are not easily available on modern computers and require professional expertise to use.

1.1 Written MF

MF has always been a strictly spoken language, since it is a vernacular, handed down orally from one generation to another. Writing MF is therefore quite difficult, and the current writing system of SF is of very little use to transcribe MF. The first best known attempt to write MF was actually an attempt to write Southern Michif, which, of course, includes MF nouns, adjectives, etc. This attempt is found in Laverdure, Allard, and Crawford's *The Michif Dictionary*, mentioned in the Introduction. The dictionary is now out of print, but there is also a digital version available. Since each MF word is pronounced by a native Michif speaker and then spelled, this source is extremely valuable for learners of MF.

The spelling system used by Laverdure, Allard, and Crawford is mostly based on English spelling. Generally speaking, consonants do not pose much of a problem, although combinations of letters are sometimes used to represent a single consonant sound. For example, the final sound in *garage* is spelled <*zh*>, and <*ch*> represents the initial and final sounds in *church*. The problem is more apparent with vowel sounds. MF vowels are generally similar to SF vowels but are quite different from English ones. In MF, for example, the vowel /e/ (somewhat similar to English *eh*) is not quite the same as the vowel /e/ as in say, day, or neighbour, since in English, the vowel is complex (called a **diphthong**), terminating in a **glide**, resulting in the complex vowel [eᵢ], while this glide ending is totally absent in MF /e/. Nevertheless, Laverdure, Allard and Crawford decided to use English-type spellings for vowels, so the MF word for ace (SF *as*) is spelled <*aws*>, and the word for rosary (*chapelet* in SF) is spelled <*shaplay*>. Norman Fleury, a native speaker of both Southern Michif and MF, recognized as one of the most fluent Southern Michif speakers in the country, is the author of the *Michif Dictionary 2013*;[1] he also mostly uses the writing system developed by Laverdure, Allard and Crawford, using <ay> for /e/, <aw> for /aa/, <ow> for /o/, double vowels to indicate length (as in *zhoornii* (day)), <j> for the initial sound in *jam*, <ch> for the initial sound in *chip*, etc.

In 2016, a few Métis ladies from St. Laurent, Manitoba published a little lexicon of MF, under the title *Michif French, as spoken by most Michif people of St. Laurent*.[2] It too generally adopts the same spelling conventions proposed by Laverdure, Allard, and Crawford and spells words like the SF *langue* (language) as <*lawng*>; SF *manière* (manner) as <*manyayr*>; SF *jour* (day) as <*jowr*>. These spellings do not really reflect the actual pronunciation of the vowels of MF. All these texts also suffer from the fact that the spellings are often inconsistent. In the St. Laurent ladies' lexicon, the nasal vowel [ɑ̃], heard in the SF or MF word *an* (year), is sometimes spelled as <*awn*>, as in *lawng* (tongue; language), sometimes as <*an*> or <*en*> as in *zenfan* (children); the SF vowel /e/ is variably spelled <*ay*>, as in *frayz* (strawberry) or as<*e*> as in *me* (May). In other cases, the same letter combination can refer to two different pronunciations. For example, <*en*> can be pronounced as /enn/ as in …*ki konpren paw* (who do not understand) or as the

[1] Fleury, Norman. *Michif Dictionary 2013*.Saskatoon, Saskatchewan: Gabriel Dumont Institute, 2013.

[2] Millar, Patsy, Doris Mikolayenko, Agathe Chartrand, June Bruce, and Lorraine Coutu. *Michif French: As spoken by most Michif people of St. Laurent, MB*. Winnipeg: McNally Robinson Booksellers, 2016.

nasal vowel <an> as in *disendan*.[3] These writing systems also have a tendancy to use letters for sounds that are not pronounced, as in Fleury's Michif dictionary, where the word for "gold" is given as *l'orr*, although the final consonant is actually pronounced as a single /r/. Elsewhere, Fleury spells the equivalent of English "garage" as <*garage*> rather than <*garaazh*> and he uses <aan> to write the nasal vowel in *daans* (dance) as well as the sequence oral vowel /a/ + /n/ in *la bookaan* (smoke). Similarly, in the St. Laurent ladies' glossary, the word for "duck" (SF *canard* [kanɑʁ]; MF [kanɑr]) is variably listed as *kanawr* (p. 19) or as *kanard* (p. 25). In other cases, a single letter corresponds to two or more pronounced sounds; for example, the letter <x> is used to refer to the pronounced sequence /egz/ as in *xamin* for /egzamaen/ (exam).

The online Michif French dictionary of the St. Louis area of Saskatchwean (available as an app for mobile devices through the Apple's App Store and Google's Play Store, under the name *Michif French*) generally follows the same system and spells SF *après* (after) as *apray*, but the same vowel sound is then spelled as <*ai*> in the word for "airplane": *airoplenn*. Finally, the BC Métis Federation's online Michif French lexicon (www.learnmichif.ca/learn-michif-app) also generally follows the Laverdure, Allard and Crawford spelling system. For "bird of prey", the spelling used is *aen nwayzoo d'pray*; for "a good guy" the spelling is *aen boon yaab*; for "good evening", it is *bonn swayrii*. But again, there are many inconsistencies in this writing system, including silent letters, as in the word for "mistake": *enn footr*, whereas the pronunciation provided is clearly /enn fot/, without any /r/. For other items, the transcription given does not match the pronunciation provided: for "climb", the word given is *crinp*, whereas the pronunciation is clearly [grɛ̃p] (from SF *grimpe*). This lack of consistency is one of the major problems in all of the above texts and makes learning to read and write MF quite difficult.

1.2 A Proposal for Writing MF

In the following pages, we propose a different spelling system for MF, which attempts to represent as faithfully as possible the sounds of MF. We certainly do not wish to impose our system on anyone, and we do not think it is necessarily the best solution to the problem of writing MF. On the other hand, the system we propose does follow the primary rule for writing systems that attempt to represent in a consequent, consistant, and systematic manner the oral sounds of a given language. Spanish, for example, is one language that tries to make a given letter always represent the same sound, and the same sound to always be represented by the same letter (or combination of letters).

This is called the Sound to Letter Principle. This Principle states that once a given sound is linked to a symbol; that is, a letter (or combination of letters), that sound must always be spelled using the same assigned letter (or combination of letters). Conversely, once a letter (or combination of letters) is assigned to a given sound, that letter (or

[3] Both examples taken from the Introduction to the St. Laurent MF glossary.

combination of letters) must always be used to represent that sound and no other. Spellings are thus totally consistent with the sounds used in the language. For example, if the consonant sound /k/, as in "keen" is assigned to the letter symbol <*k*>, then a word such as *kapab* (SF *capable*) (capable) must always be spelled with an initial <*k*> and never with an initial <*c*>, or any other letter but <*k*>. Furthermore, there are no silent letters; that is, letters that do not correspond to any pronounced sound. In SF orthography, letters do not necessarily correspond to a particular sound: as mentioned earlier, the word for "water" is *eau*, but its pronunciation is simply /o/; written double consonants, as in *pomme* (apple) correspond to single pronounced consonant /m/, as in /pom/. In SF, *porte* (door), the final <*e*> is not pronounced (neither is it in MF), so there is no reason for it to be spelled out. The Sound to Letter Principle thus makes this word to be spelled as *port*. In SF and MF, the first vowel in *demain* (tomorrow) (where <*e*> ([ə]) is pronounced as [i] in MF) may or may not be pronounced: *dimaen* but *a dmaen* ((see you) tomorrow).

The Sound to Letter Principle has one major drawback. Once a Sound to Letter match has been established, it can no longer deal with regional or individual variation. For example, there is regional and individual variation on how to pronounce certain MF words, such as "cheek" (SF *joue*), "cabbage" (SF *chou*), "we" (SF *nous*), etc. Most speakers follow the SF pronunciation and say /jou/, /shou/, /nou/, etc., but some speakers pronounce the latter /no/, and "cheek" is /jo/ rather than /jou/, and other speakers consider that "cheek" can be pronounced either way. Because of this variation, the spelling system we propose offers more than one choice of spellings for a few vowels, but in general, there is a single spelling, reflecting the pronunciation of the majority of speakers, across regions and individual speakers.

1.3 Consonants

SF has eighteen consonantal **phonemes** (distinct sounds). This is equally true for MF and CF. Nevertheless, the pronunciation of these consonants in MF and CF are somewhat different from that of SF. In SF and CF (especially in Quebec), the consonant /r/ is pronounced far back in the throat (at the uvula), while in the French spoken in the Prairies, both by French Canadians and Métis, /r/ is pronounced towards the front of the mouth and is trilled (where the tongue tip vibrates very rapidly against the teeth ridge for a very brief moment). It should be added that in earlier times in Quebec, the front trilled /r/ was the most usual pronunciation, and it was only in the 20th century that the uvular /R/ became the norm. This probably explains why in MF, the trilled /r/ is used, since that is the sound the early French-speaking fur traders and journeymen used. Of course, today, many MF speakers whose base language is English tend to use the English /r/ pronunciation.

Below is the list of letters that represent the MF consonants (with their English equivalents, whenever they exist).

Table 1: MF Letters for Consonants

MF Consonant	MF Word	English Meaning	Equivalent English Sound
/p/	*paen*	bread	push
/t/	*tant*	aunt	tan
/k/	*kataen*	doll	can
/b/	*bibii*	baby	ball
/d/	*dan*	in	dull
/g/	*galet*	bannock	go
/f/	*fotro*	mink	fine
/v/	*vyeu*	old (masc.)	vine
/s/	*san*	hundred	sit
/z/	*trez*	thirteen	zebra
/sh/	*shmiiz*	shirt	shine
/j/	*jwaen*	June	measure
/h/	*haesh*	axe	heaven
/ch/	*pchi*	little	chip
/dj/	*djis*	ten	judge
/m/	*mataen*	morning	man
/n/	*not*	note	now
/nn/	*kann*	can	can
/n'/	*dimann'*	ask	ban
/ng/	*jaeng*	girlfriend	bang
/l/	*lak*	lake	lake
/r/	*rwe*	king	no equivalent sound
/w/	*wii*	yes	wet[4]
/y/	*Yer* (sometimes pronounced *iyer*)	yesterday	yet

The only two symbols to be discussed are the use of <n'>, as in *dimann'* (to ask), where the SF or CF equivalent is *demandent* /dəmãd/, and <nn>, as in *kann* [kan] (can). In MF, the final /d/ is nasalized due to the influence of the nasal vowel /an/. We write this nasal consonant as <n'>. It indicates that the /an/ sequence that preceeds is a nasal vowel heard in words such as /anfan/ (child) (see the vowel chart in 1.4.1). The use of <nn> is also needed. In the MF word for "can", if we were to spell it as <kan>, it would be a problem, since <an> represents a low nasal vowel, as in /anfan/. The solution is to use <nn>, which indicates that the vowel is oral /a/, followed by a pronounced /n/.

[4] Notice that MF has not maintained the SF semi-consonant that occurs in words like *huit*, *depuis*, *suite,* etc. and has replaced it everywhere by /w/, so MF /wit/, /dipwi/, /swit/, etc.

1.3.1 Maintenance of Pronounced /h/

A few MF speakers, as well as older Quebecois and French Canadians, have maintained the pronunciation of /h/ in words such as ***h**ash* (axe), ***h**ont* (shame), ***h**o* (high), *di**h**or* (outside), among others.

1.3.2 Final /t/

In both CF and MF, certain words have maintained the pronunciation of final /t/ in words such as *ici**t*** (SF *ici*) (here), *pantu**t*** (SF *pas du tout*) (not at all), *tu**t*** (all), *le**t*** (SF *lait*) (milk), *fre**t*** (SF *frais*) (cold), *dre**t*** (SF *droit*), (straight), *le**t*** (SF *laid*) (ugly), while "nest" is prounounced *ni**k*** (SF *nid*).[5]

1.3.3 Nasal /y/

The pronunciation of the SF consonant one hears in words such as *oi**gn**on* (onion), *si**gn**e* (sign), etc., is quite different in MF. It is usually pronounced as a nasal /ỹ/ sound and the vowel that precedes is usually nasalized as well; so 'onion' is pronounced something like /on-ỹ-on/ where /on/ are nasal vowels, without any /n/ consonant being pronounced. We write this as <onyon>.This is also the way a sequence of /ny/, as in SF *pa**ni**er* 'basket' is pronounced : /pan-ỹ-ii/, where /an/ represents a low nasal vowel (without any /n/ being pronounced) and will be spelled <panyii>.

1.3.4 Consonant Harmonization

Many MF speakers, particularly elders, use **consonant harmonization** for certain consonants. In a word that contains both a /sh/ and a /s/ sound, as in SF *sèche* (dry, fem.), the result will be *shesh*, and a word like SF *chassis* (window pane) would be pronounced *saasi* (window). At the present time, it is not possible to determine in other words whether /s/ will become /sh/ as in *shesh* or whether /sh/ will become /s/ as in *saasi*.

1.3.5 /t/ to /ch/ and /d/ to /dj/

The most characteristic pronunciation of MF is the way to realize /t/ and /d/ whenever they are found before the vowels /i/, /u/~/eu/ and the semi-consonant /y/. In such cases, /t/ becomes /ch/ and /d/ becomes /dj/: SF *tirer* (to pull) is pronounced /chiirii/; *dur* (hard) becomes /djiir/, /djur/, or /djeur/ and SF *huitième* becomes /wichem/, where /y/ is deleted.[6] It is interesting to note, however, that the vowel /e/, typically raised to /i/ or

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[5] The /nik/ pronunciation comes from old regional dialects of north-western France.

[6] As mentioned, there is speaker variation in the realization of the high-back vowel /u/. Some regularly pronounce it as in SF /u/ (or /uu/) as in SF *dur* (hard), others tend to pronounce it as /eu/, as in SF *deux* (two).

/ii/ (as in SF *été*, MF /itii/ (summer)), does not trigger the /t/ to /ch/ rule, and the word is pronounced /itii/, not */ichii/, and the word for "idea" (*idée* in SF) in MF is not pronounced as */idjii/ but rather as /idii/. It is also interesting to note that some MF speakers do not follow the /t/ to /ch/ rule and instead follow the CCF rule, which changes /t/ to /ts/ and /d/ to /dz/ and pronounce *tu* as /tsu/ and *dur* as /dzur/. This certainly shows how much variation exists between speakers of different communities!

1.3.6 /k/ to /ch/ and /t/ to /k/

Another characteristic pronunciation of MF is the way to realize SF /k/ in a few words such as SF *culotte* (trousers), which in MF is usually pronounced as /chulot/; SF *cuillère* (spoon) will tend to be pronounced (at least by some speakers) as /chuyer/, /chouyer/, or /chiyer/. Below is a partial list of words that exemplify the /k/ to /ch/ rule:

chulot (trousers; pants)
chouyer/chuyer/chiyer (spoon)
chuuv/cheuv (tub)
cheur (heart)
chukaen (each)
rachet (snowshoe)
chuyou (stovepipe)

From the above list, one may tentatively deduce that the /k/ to /ch/ rule applies only to MF front vowels (/i/, /u/, /eu/, and /e/), although the /chouyer/ pronunciation is an exception that remains to be explained satisfactorily.

For a few words, a sequence /ty/ as in SF *moitié* (half), which may be pronounced in MF as /mokii/, but the pronunciation /mochii/ is also current.

1.3.7 /ko/ to /kwa/

For a few MF speakers, a number of words containing the sequence /ko/, as in /shokola/ (chocolate), /ko/ becomes /kwa/ and is therefore pronounced /shokwala/. Some speakers say /kwashon/ for "pig", others say /koshon/. This /ko/ to /kwa/ rule seems to be an influnce from Cree.

1.3.8 Final Consonant Cluster Simplification

As in CCF, MF speakers tend to eliminate the last consonant (and sometimes the last two consonants) of a word: SF *arbre* (tree) is *arb*, *table* is *taab*, *juste* is *jus*, *piastre* is *pyas*. For words like SF *novembre* (November), the phonetic realization in MF is often /novanm/, where the the /r/ is deleted, and /b/ becomes a nasal /m/. Not all speakers follow this trend and pronounce it as /novanb/.

1.3.9 /ri/ to /or/ ~ /ar/

In some SF words containing the sequence /re/, as in, for example, *vendredi* (Friday), *reculer* (to reverse), *grenouille* (frog), **metathesis** occurs and /re/ becomes either /or/ or /ar/: *vandardji*, *arkulii*, *gornouy*.

1.4 Vowels

The articulation of vowels is much more complex than that of consonants. Consonants are produced by stopping or impeding the flow of air coming from the lungs during speech. To describe a consonant, one simply has to describe where and how in the mouth cavity the air is stopped or impeded. Vowels, on the other hand, are by definition produced without any impedience to the air flow. The different vowel sounds are therefore produced by different positions of the tongue, with or without the help of the nasal cavity (the difference between an oral and a nasal vowel). In SF, there are typically 16 vowel phonemes, although modern SF speakers tend to no longer distinguish the two nasal vowels *in* (/ɛ̃/) (as in *voisin* (neighbour)) and the nasal vowel *un* (/œ̃/) (as in *commun* (common)), both now being pronounced with the nasal vowel *in* (so *commun* is pronounced /komin/). On the other hand, the *in-un* distinction is still maintained in both CF and MF, at least in some words and for some speakers. Most MF speakers realize /in/ as a somewhat lower vowel /aen/ so "common" is pronounced /komaen/.

In SF, most speakers no longer make a distinction between a "front a" (/a/) as in *patte* (leg) and a "back a" (/ɑ/) as in *pâte* (pasta). Again, both CF and MF maintain this distinction, although in MF, the front-back distinction is also one of "short-a" versus "long-a": /enn pat/ (a leg)—where the vowel is short, versus /la paat/ (the paste/dough)—where the vowel is longer.

As expected, there is a great degree of variation in the realization of vowels sounds by MF speakers, and not everyone pronounces them the same way. Older speakers tend to be more conservative, and younger speakers may have a Western Canadian English accent when speaking MF. The major problem of spelling vowels is that there are only five vowel letters in French (<*e*, *i*, *a*, *o*, *u*>) but some sixteen vowel sounds (fifteen in MF), which means that combination of letters or other means are necessary to write out the various vowel sounds. Our spelling proposal for vowels is described below.

1.4.1 Writing Vowels

Table 2: MF Front Unrounded Vowels

MF Vowel	MF Word	English Meaning	Near Equivalent Sound in English
/i/	*vit*	quick(ly)	fit
/ii/	*lii*	they	feet
/ee/ (for some speakers only)	*mee*	May	May
/e/	*let*	letter	let
/a/	*pat*	leg	no equivalent sound

Table 3: MF Front Rounded Vowels

MF Vowel	MF Word	English Meaning	Near Equivalent Sound in English
/u/ (for some speakers only)	*kru*	raw	no equivalent sound
/eu/ (for some speakers only)	*jeudji* (some speakers pronounce it as /judji/ or /jwidji/	Thursday	no equivalent sound
/oe/ (for some speakers only)	*soer* (some speakers pronounce it as /seur/	sister	no equivalent sound

Table 4: MF Back Rounded Vowels

MF Vowel	MF Word	English Meaning	Near Equivalent Sound in English
/ou/ (for some speakers only)	*chi lou* (some speakers pronounce it as /chi lo/)	coyote	do
/o/	*mo*	word	mow
/oa/	*doarii*	pickerel	soar
/aa/	*taar*	late	far

Table 5: MF Nasal Vowels

MF Vowel	MF Word	English Meaning	Near Equivalent Sound in English
/aen/	*paen*	bread	no equivalent sound
/an/	*anfan*	child	no equivalent sound
/on/	*pon*	bridge	no equivalent sound

1.4.2 Vowel Shifting in MF

To further explain the above Letter to Sound equivalents, it is necessary to discuss the degree of vowel shifting that has occured in MF, possibly due to Cree influence. In CF, an important distinction is maintained between so-called high-mid vowels and low-mid vowels (for example, the distinction between *chez* (at) and *chais* (wine barrel); *dé* (dice) and *des* (some); *mai* (May) and *mais* (but); *jus* (juice) and *jeu* (game); *loup* (wolf) and *lot* (lot)). This distinction is not as well maintained for many MF speakers. For many, the vowel /e/ (like the English sound /ay/) is usually pronounced as /i/ or /ii/: *été* (summer) is thus pronounced as /itii/; *manger* (to eat) is pronounced as /manjii/; *blé* (wheat) is pronounced /blii/, etc. Likewise, the difference between SF *jus* (juice) and *jeu* (game) is not clearly maintained, and many speakers make no difference between the pronunciation of the two words. This is equally true for the distinction between *loup* and *lot*, many (but not all) speakers pronounce *loup* as /lo/, others as /lou/. But not all SF /e/ vowels are raised to /i/ or /ii// in MF; for example, many speakers will say /an leer/ (above); /an traveer/ (across); /apree midji/ (afternoon); /peeyi/ (country); /djifeeran/ (different); /feevriyii/ (February); and /peepeer/ (grandfather). Note that the raising of /e/ to /i/ does not affect the **affrication** of /t/ or /d/ to /ch/ and /dj/. In words such as /itii/ (from French *été* (summer)) or /edii/ (from French *aider* (to help)), /t/ does not become /ch/ and /d/ does not become /dj/ as they normally do before /i/ or /ii/ (see section 1.3.5)

1.4.3 Vowel Lengthening

In both CCF and MF, the pronunciation of certain vowels differs from that of SF. For example, the so-called "closed" vowels (pronounced with the tongue high in the oral cavity) are pronounced shorter and with less tension whenever they are in a syllable that ends in a pronounced consonant: the word *vite* (quickly) is pronounced as something like /vit/ rather than /viit/. In SF and elsewhere in the French-speaking world, all vowels tend to be pronounced somewhat longer before certain consonants, such as /z/. /v/, /j/, and /r/. This is not necessarily the case in MF. Where in CF a vowel will be lengthened in a word such as *dire* (to say), some MF speakers will to pronounce it with a short vowel, /djir/, while others use a long vowel, /ii/: /djiir/.

1.4.4 Vowels Before /r/ or Before /r/ + C

Before /r/, certain MF speakers pronounce a word such as SF *père* (father) with a "closed e" rather than with an "open e", thus will say /peer/ (something like English "peer") rather than /per/ (something like English "pear"). On the other hand, when the /e/ vowel is followed by an /r/, which is itself followed by a consonant, as in CF *couverte* (blanket), in MF, it will be pronounced /ae/ (as in English "cat") or /a/: /kouvaert/ or /kouvart/; /kouverchuur~kouvarchuur/ (roof); /saertaen~sartaen/ (certain); /paersh~parsh/ (pole).

1.4.5 Final Open E

In both CCF and MF, a final open e is often be pronounced /ae/; for example, *j'étais*, *il était*, *ils étaient* (I was, he was, they were) can become *j'itae*, *il itae*, *i z-itae*. Not all speakers say it this way–for some, the pronunciation is *j'ite*, *il ite* (or *yite*), and *i z-ite*.

1.4.6 Nasal Vowels

Although CF maintains a distinction between four nasal vowels: /in/, typically pronounced as /aen/ in MF, as in *maen* (hand); /an/, as in *anfan* (child), /un/ as in CF *chacun* (each (one)), and /on/, as in *pon* (bridge). MF does not maintain the nasal vowel /un/ and generally substitutes /aen/, so CF *lundi* (Monday) is usually pronounced /laendji/.

1.4.7 Realization of SF '*oi*'

In MF, SF /wa/ (in words such as *moi* (me), *toi* (you), *croix* (cross), *loi* (law), *poil* (hair), for example) is realized as /we/ or /waen/, meaning the SF /wa/ words above would be pronounced like /mwe/ or /mwaen/, /twe/, /krwe/, /lwe/, and /pwel/ in MF. A /v/ preceding /we/ is usually deleted, as in SF *avoir* (to have), which is typically pronounced /awer/ in MF. However, other words such SF *bois* (wood), *trois* (three), *pois* (peas), *noix* (nut) are pronounced /waa/: *bwaa*, *trwaa*, *pwaa*, *nwaa.* This pronunciation is also common in CCF.

1.4.8 Nasalization of Vowels

For many MF speakers, certain vowels are pronounced nasally whenever they are in contact with a nasal consonant, so *no* (our) is realized as /non/, *maison* (house) is /maenzon/, *nous-autres* is /non z-ot/, and so on.

1.5 /l/ Insertion

One of the most striking features of MF, which it shares with a number of CCF speakers, is the insertion of the consonant /l/ before certain verbs beginning with a vowel: *on **l**-a parchii* (we left), *on **l**-ave ryaen* (we had nothing), *sa **l**-arive* (they were arriving), *M'man **l**-a pasii dan la shanm* (Mom passed through the room). The rules for this insertion of /l/ are quite complex and not yet completely understood. For example, when the subject is impersonal *sa* (SF *ça*), one can insert the /l/ before any verb beginning with a vowel, but if the subject is anything other than *sa*, for example, *i or ii* or simply a noun, /l/ can only be inserted if the verb is *awer* (to have) or *et* (to be): *mon frer l-a arivii* (my brother arrived); *enn parson ki l-e bet* (a person who is stupid).

1.6 Liaison

The French language does not particularly like having a word with a final vowel being followed by another word begining with a vowel (this is called "hiatus" in linguistics). For example, in SF, *les amis* (the friends), the article *les* taken by itself is pronounced /le/ (something like *leh*) and *amis* by itself is pronounced /ami/. However, if both *les* and *amis* are pronounced together, the result will be *le-z-ami*, where a /z/ sound pops up between the final vowel of /le/ and the initial vowel of /ami/. In the same way, in SF *un enfant* (a child), *un* on its own is pronounced /in/ or /un/, and *enfant* is pronounced /anfan/, but pronounced together, one hears /in-n-anfan~un-n-anfan/, where an /n/ is inserted between the two words. These are called "liaison consonants". Typically, there are three main liaison consonants:

(1) /z/ in plural contexts;
(2) /n/ in nasal contexts; and
(3) more rarely, /t/, which is explained later in this chapter.

Another important aspect of French is the way syllables are constructed. In any language, spoken words are divided into syllables. By rule, syllables are built around a (single) vowel and may be preceded and/or followed by one or more consonants. So, in English, a word such as *advancing* has three syllables: ad-vanc-ing. However, the way syllables are assigned may differ from one language to another. In English, the tendancy is to divide syllables as (Consonant) + Vowel + Consonant, as above, while in French, the tendancy is Consonant + Vowel, so the equivalent French word would be syllabized as *a-van-cer* (*a-van-se*) Consequently, a sequence such as *les amis* is syllabized as /le-za-mi/, where the liaison consonant /z/ is pronounced as the initial consonant of the word *amis*.

All of this is equally true for MF. The main SF liaison consonants are also used systematically. However, since most MF speakers are completely unaware of this syllabification phenomenon, they tend to write the liaison consonant as initial consonants of the following word. For example, in the St. Laurent ladies dictionary, we have *di zenfan* (some children) and *no zenfan* (our children). Elsewhere, we also have *in enfant* (a

child). This means the word *enfan* (child) may be spelled either as *enfan*, *zenfan*, *nenfan*, or even as *lenfan*! Research has shown that by and large, liaison consonants in MF behave quite closely to the way they behave in SF or in CF. Liaison consonants are usually written in the preceding word in SF, although only pronounced in liaison contexts. In *les amis*, the "silent s" of *les* will show up as a /z/ liaison consonant (*le-z-ami*), but not in *les copains* (the chums): *le-ko-pin*). To show that these "initial consonants" are really liaison consonants and not true initial consonants, we prefer to write them with a hyphen at the beginning of the word. This allows the reader to realize that a given vowel-initial word may take on a "pop-up" consonant in certain contexts.[7]

Liaison in /t/ is much rarer in both SF and MF. In the latter, it occurs in sequences like *S'i **t**-aen n-animal* (It's an animal); *Va **t**-an!* (Go away!); *J'i **t**-okupii* (I am busy); *Ti **t**-aen shanpyon!* (You're a champion!); *I son **t**-alii an vil* (They went to town); and *S'i **t**-aen pchi **t**-anfan* (It's a little child).

1.7 Comparing Two Spelling Systems

To show the difference between the spelling system we propose and the one used by the St. Laurent glossary, below is the Introduction section of *Michif French as Spoken by Most People of St. Laurent* as written by the St. Laurent authors, followed by our version of it.

St. Laurent Glossary

> Si pchi liv si powr deni in idi a suzlaw ki konpren paw not lawng Michif. Si t'in lawngaj kon pays[8] ipi on vu l'gardi powr no disendan. Michif Fransay y vyin di la lawng "Français".
>
> La plu par di not parentis sa vnay di la France ipi y l'on yu di zenfan avek li zindyin. Si zenfan law, sa s'appel li Michif.
>
> Kom l'mond sa konay, sitay paw "cool" et in michif obindon parli la lawng Michif Fransay.
>
> Ya lonten si djizay not lawng s'tay paw la bon manyayr di parli l'Fransay. Law astewr on konay not lawng, si not manyayr kon parl ipi on y bin fyayr.
>
> On vu gardi ipi ikrir la lawng Michif Fransay powr no zenfan.

[7] Both the St. Louis and the BCMF MF glossaries tend to write liaison consonants as word initial. This is also true for the Southern Michif dictionaries. This shows that SF syllabification rules are closely followed and show up in the way words are spelled.

[8] This is actually a typographical error, as the authors clearly wish to say "to lose", which should be *payr* in MF.

Our version

Si pchi liiv si pour dinii enn idii a seuz-laa [or suz-laa] ki konprenn pa not lanng michif. S'i t-aen langaj k'on per ipi on vu [or veu] l'gardii pour nou [or no] disandan. Franse michif i vyaen di la lanng "franse".

La plupaar [or pleupaar] di not parantii sa vne d'la Frans ipi i l'on yu di z-anfan avek lii z-aendjaen. Si z-anfan-laa, sa s'apel lii Michif.

Kom l'monn' sa kone, s'ite [or s'itae] pa "cool" et aen Michif obaendon parlii la lanng franse michif.

Y a lontan sa djize not lanng s'te paa la bonn manyer [or manyeer] d'parlii l'franse. La aster on kone not lanng, s'i not manyer k'on parl ipi on n-i baen fyer.

On vu [or veu] gardii ipi ikriir la lanng franse michif pour no z-anfan.

Chapter 2 Michif French Grammar: Determiners, Quantifiers, Nouns, and Adjectives

2.0 What Is a "Grammar"?

In French, when one thinks of "grammar", one tends to think of grammar books such as the *Le Bon Usage* by Maurice Grevisse and André Goosse,[1] in which one can find how to conjugate a verb, which verb tense or **mood** to use in a given context, the different agreement rules to apply, as well as a complete list of all the grammatical units of the language, such as nouns, articles, adjectives, pronouns, verbs, prepositions, etc., and how they are to be used. The rules proposed in such a grammar are based on how well known authors have used them in their writing. Some of these authors are of past centuries. The 2016 edition of *Le Bon Usage* is 1,760 pages long! The language described in such a grammar may be quite distant from how the average person actually uses the language in everyday conversations, but it does generally control how the language should be written in most circumstances. This type of grammar is usually called a **reference grammar**.

Of course, there are many reference grammars for the English language. The most extensive and complete grammar is the *Cambridge Grammar of the English Language*.[2] It covers all the key grammatical topics in detail and is essential for understanding the patterns and structures of the English language. It comes in at a hefty 1,800 pages!

Much like dictionaries, reference grammars tend to impose on everyone the (only) way the language should be used in writing, and anything that differs will be considered incorrect.

There are other types of grammars where the authors simply attempt to describe how speakers construct their speech in everyday conversations. These are called **descriptive grammars.** In such grammars, the spoken language is described, and the written language of famous authors is never used to determine whether a given sentence structure is correct or not. Typically, descriptive grammars are developed by linguists who try to describe as accurately as possible the actual speech of real speakers in real situations of various kinds, usually based on extensive audio recordings over long periods of time, with speakers chosen on the basis of gender, age, level of education, income level, language proficiency, and other social markers. Descriptive grammars are often incomplete due to lack of pertinent information. It is also possible that the linguist errs in their description, since in most situations, the linguist is not a native speaker of the language variety they are trying to describe.

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[1] Grevisse, Maurice, and André Goosse. *Le bon usage: Grevisse Langue Francaise*. Louvain-La-Neuve, Belgium: De Boeck Supérieur, 2016.

[2] Huddleston, Rodney, and Geoffrey K. Pullum. *The Cambridge Grammar of the English Language*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002.

2.1 Description of MF Grammar

This is certainly the case for MF. The description we propose in the following pages will certainly not include all of the potential grammatical aspects of MF, because the grammar of MF is still poorly studied and its description exceedingly rare. To a certain extent, descriptive grammars of CCF, a variety of CF, which is, in many regards, close to MF, are also quite rare and incomplete and are often based on the speech of certain areas, such as Montreal, Quebec City, or Ottawa or on certain types of speakers; for example, blue-collar workers.

As mentioned in the Introduction, much of the content of the following grammar is based on our analyses of the extensive recordings made by Father Guy Lavallée of conversations he had with about 50 speakers of the St. Laurent community in the 1980s, as well as based on our own recordings of various MF speakers in Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and North Dakota.

It is important to note that since MF is a variety of CCF, it generally follows the same rules, with certain specific exceptions, which will be explained as much as possible.

2.2 Determiners

In traditional French grammars, the term *déterminant* (determiner) is not often used and is usually replaced by terms such as *article*, *adjectif possessif*, *adjectif démonstratif*, *adjectif interrogatif*, etc. The term *déterminant* encompasses all of these categories. The term **determiner** is therefore a word that may vary in gender and number according to the gender and number of the noun to which it is linked and which it "determines" in a certain way.

2.2.1 Articles

In MF, as in SF, there are three types of articles:

Definite Articles

li (masc. singular) (SF *le*)[3]
la (fem. singular) (SF *la*)
lii (plural) (SF *les*)

Indefinite Articles

aen (masc. singular) (SF *un*)
enn (fem. singular) (SF *une*)

[3] Gender is discussed in section 2.3.1.

dii (plural) (SF *des*)

Partitive Articles

dju (or *di*) (masc. singular) (SF *du*)
d(i) la (fem. singular) (SF *d(e) la*)
dii (plural) (SF *des*)

In general, the use of articles in MF—as in CCF—is quite similar to what French reference grammars describe, but there are a few minor differences.

2.2.1.1 Definite Articles

The definite articles *li*, *la*, and *lii* are equivalent to the English "the". *Li* and *la* are elided (i.e., the vowel is deleted) when followed by a vowel-initial word, as in *l'ami* (the friend) and *l'ikol* (the school). Elision is usually, but not always, indicated by the use of an **apostrophe**. When plural *lii* is followed by a vowel-initial word, the "pop-up" liaison consonant /z/ appears: *lii z-ami* (the friends).

In CCF, the initial /l/ of *la* tends to be deleted if the preceding word ends in a pronounced vowel, so *la* becomes *a*. This vowel then will be amalgamated to an identic following vowel, creating a long vowel *aa*, so *a la tab* first becomes *a a tab*, which then becomes *aa tab* (to the table). This phenomenon is much rarer in MF than in CCF, but some speakers do use it.

In SF, when the definite articles *le* and *les* precede the preposition *à* or *de*, they contract: *à* + *le* become *au*, *à* + *les* becomes *aux*, *de* + *le* becomes *du*, and *de* + *les* becomes *des*. In MF, for many speakers, the equivalents are: *a* + *li* or *lii* becomes *o* (or for some speakers *ou*), *di* + *li* becomes *dju* (for some speakers, *di*) and *di* + *lii* becomes *dii*. This is an area where there is a lot of variation between speakers. A number of MF speakers do not make these contractions at all and instead use sequences such as *a li*, *a lii*, *di li*, *di lii*.

2.2.1.2 Indefinite Articles

In MF, when the indefinite article /aen/ is followed by a vowel-initial word, the liaison consonant /n/ pops up, giving /aen n-Vxx/. This pronunciation is quite close to the feminine singular form of the indefinite article /enn/ (the only difference being between a nasal and an oral vowel), and it is sometimes quite difficult to distinguish between the two. For example, when a speaker says something like *Y on baachi aen (enn?) n-opital* (They built a hospital), it is difficult to tell whether the speaker considers the word *opital* to be masculine or femine. The same seems to be true in Southern Michif. In Fleury's *Michif Dictionary 2013*, the word for "ambulance" is listed as *aen naanbulaans*, where the masculine form of the determiner is used, whereas in French the equivalent word is feminine (une ambulance). Similarly, the word for "barn" is given as *aen itab*, with the

masculine form of the determiner, whereas in French the equivalent form is feminine (une étable). It is quite possible that the feminine form /enn/ is being reinterpreted as /aen/ whenever the following noun is vowel initial.

Nevertheless, in Fleury's dictionary, the gender of many French nouns indicated by a determiner is not the same as in SF or CF; for example, he considers the word *graad* (grade) to be feminine, since he lists it as *la graad*, whereas *grade* is masculine in French. Similarily, the word *shaar* (car) is feminine, since it is listed as *enn shaar*, whereas in SF or CF it is masculine (*un char*). On the other hand, Fleury lists *li guitar* (the guitar) as masculine whereas in French the equivalent word is feminine (*la guitare*). More complete research is needed on gender assignment in MF before definitive statements can be given on the gender of specific nouns.

In SF, the indefinite (and partitive) articles are replaced by the form /d(e)/ in a negative context: *Il boit **du** lait* (he drinks milk) but *Il ne boit pas **de** lait* (he doesn't drink milk); *Il a **des** amis* (he has friends) but *Il n'a pas **d'**amis* (he doesn't have (any) friends). In MF, this rule is not necessarily followed and *I bwe pa di* (or *dju*) *let* or *Y a pa di z-ami* is frequent.

Again, in SF, the indefinite plural article *des* becomes *de* before an adjective: *J'ai acheté **des** souliers* (I bought some shoes) but *J'ai acheté **de** beaux souliers* (I bought some beautiful shoes). This rule simply does not exist in MF and in both cases, *di* is used: *J'a ashtii di soyii* and *J'a ashtii di bo soyii.*

In SF, articles precede all other noun modifiers, such as quantifiers, numeral adjectives, and so on. This is not the case for MF, where quantifiers and numeral adjectives tend to precede: *J'a kat lii z-anfan* (I have four children); *I n'ave aen pchi braen lii z-animo* (there were (quite) a few animals). This construction is most probably due to Cree or Anishinaabemowin influence, where quantifiers may freely be moved to various places in a given sentence.

2.2.1.3 Partitive Articles

Although many MF speakers do use the French partitive articles, others tend to replace them with definite articles. Thus, both *j'vu* (or *j'veu*) *awer **di** tii* and *j'vu awer **li** tii* (I want some tea) are used.

2.2.2. Demonstrative Determiners

In MF, the demonstrative determiners are:

s(*i*) or *sti* (before consonant-initial words) (SF *ce*, CF *c'te*), as in *s(i)/sti shar* (this car); *sti taas* (this cup)

st (before vowel-initial words) (CF *c't'*), as in *st'itaeb* (this barn) or *st'animal* (this animal)

si (plural) (before consonant-initial words) (SF *ces*), as in *si liiv* (these books)
si z- (plural) (before vowel-initial words), as in *si z-ami* (these friends)

The pop-up liaison consonant /z/ is used with plural *si* when the following word is vowel-initial (*si garson* (these boys) but *si z-ami* (these friends)). If needed, these forms can be reinforced with the particles *-si* (for something close by) or *-la* (for something further away). In MF, the singular *si* is usually simply /s/, as in *s'gaa* (this guy), but most often, the demonstrative will be accompanied by either *-sit* (from CCF *icitte* (here)) for something close by or by *-la* for something further away: *s'gaa-sit* (this here guy), *s'gaa-la* (that guy over there). For some speakers, *si* is replaced by *st(i)* as in *sti gaa-la* (that guy), *sti fam-la* (that woman), *st'om-la* 'that man'. One can even hear *s't'afer-la-(i)sit* (lit. that thing there here).

2.2.3 Possessive Determiners

In SF, CF, and MF, possessive determiners agree in gender and number as well as in person with the noun they modify. Below are the MF forms:

Table 6: Possessive Determiners

Person	Masc. Sing.	Fem. Sing.	Plural
1st sing.	*mon*	*ma*	*mii*
2nd sing.	*ton*	*ta*	*tii*
3rd sing.	*son*	*sa*	*sii*
1st plur.	*not*	*not*	*no*
2nd plur.	*vot*	*vot*	*vo*
3rd plur.	*leu*	*leu*	*leu*

If the forms *mon*, *ton*, and *son* are followed by a vowel-initial word, the liaison consonant /n/ will occur: *mon/ton/son* ***n-****ami* (my/your/his/her friend).

It is important to note that the feminine forms *ma*, *ta*, and *sa* become *mon*, *ton*, and *son* with the liaison consonant /n/ if the following word begins with a vowel: *mon/ton/son* ***n-****ikol* (my/your/his/her school). Likewise, *mii*, *tii*, *sii*, and *leu* will generate the /z/ liaison consonant when the following word is vowel-initial: *mii/tii/sii/leu* ***z-****ami* (my/your/his/her/their friends).

For a number of MF speakers, there is a very interesting difference in the use of possessive determiners, most probably due to influence of Cree, Saulteux, or both. In Algonquian languages, there are two types of possession: *alienable* and *inalienable*. Things we possess automatically or naturally, such as body parts, family members, and certain personal objects or animals (such as a hunting knife, a hunting rifle, or a dog) are considered inalienable. All other objects are alienable. In languages such as Saulteux or Cree, all inalienable objects must be accompanied by a possessive determiner. One

cannot speak of "a foot" or "a hand"; one must always refer someone's foot or hand. Many (but not all) MF speakers have transposed this rule into MF and will always refer to *ma maen*, never to *la maen*. One will hear, for example:

Si aen de mon n-ouk ki e t-avek aen di son n-ami
(It's one of my uncles who's with one of his friends)

Sa s'i enn ot ma nyes
(That's another of my nieces)

Mon p'pa avek kat sii jwo, y a parchi…
(My dad with his four horses, he left…)

This rule is nearly automatically applied when referring to family members:

Si aen d'mon n-ouk
(It's one of my uncles)

S'i enn ma-tant
(It's one of my aunts)

ma ma-tant
(my aunt)

2.2.4 Numeral Determiners

Numeral determiners in MF may have different pronunciations than the ones in SF: *aen* (one), *de* (two) (*deux* in SF), *trwaa* (three), *kat* (four) (*quatre* in SF), *saenk* (five), *sis* (six), *set* (seven), *wit* (eight) (*huit* in SF), *nef* (nine) (*neuf* in SF), *djis* (ten) (*dix* in SF). Other than pronunciation differences, numerals in MF are identical to those in SF.

2.2.5 Cardinal Determiners

What is true for numeral determiners is also true for cardinals: the only differences between SF and MF may be in the pronunciation of some forms : *primyii* (first) (*premier* in SF), *dezyem* (second) (*deuxième* in SF), *trwazyem* (third), *katriyem* (fourth), *saenkyem* (fifth), *sizyem* (sixth), *sech(y)em* (seventh), *wich(y)em* (eighth) (*huitième* in SF), *nevyem* (ninth) (*neuvième* in SF), *dizyem* (tenth).

2.2.6 Indefinite Determiners

Indefinite determiners are of two kinds: simple or phrasal. SF has a number of simple quantifier determiners; for example, *aucun* (no), *certains* (certain), *chaque* (each),

divers (various), *nul* (no), *plusieurs* (many), *quelque(s)* (some), and *tout* (all). MF seems only to have a few of these: *shak po* (each hide), *pluzyeur z-om* (many men), *kek (keuk* for some speakers), *shoz* (something), *tou lii jour* (every day), *okunn idii* (no idea). Whereas *tous* + *les* varies in gender in SF, as in *tous les garçons* (all the boys) and *toutes les filles* (all the girls), MF has a single form for both: *tot* (or *tout* for some speakers): *tot lii gaa*, *tot lii fiy*. MF equivalents to *nul*, *certains*, and *tel* do not exist in our data bank.

SF phrasal indefinite determiners include forms like *assez de* (enough), *autant de* (as many as), *énormément de* (a whole lot of), *davantage de* (more than), *suffisamment de* (enough of), *trop de* (too many of), *la plupart de* (most of), *un tas de* (a pile of), *plein de* (full/a lot of), and *tant de* (so many of). Not all of these seem to exist in MF. Our data bank includes: *tan di minut* (that many minutes), *plaen di pou* (full of lice), *plaen di l'ou* (full of water), *asii di pweson* (enough fish), *tro (or trou) di gaa* (too many guys), and *an mas di keschyon* (a lot of questions). MF is unique among French varieties to allow quantifiers and numerals to appear before an article: *an mas la viann'* (lots of meat), *aen pchi braen le mon'* (a few people), *Y ave tro d'la niij* (There was too much snow), *Don-mwe enn mwachii la taas* (Give me half a cup), *kat lii garson* (four sons). It should be noted that not all MF speakers allow this.

2.2.7 Interrogative Determiners

In SF, the interrogative determiners are *quel* (masc. sing.), *quelle* (fem. sing.), *quels* (masc. plur.) and *quelles* (fem. plur.). The plural forms trigger the /z/ liaison marker with vowel-initial words: *quels états?* /kel z eta/ (which states?). In MF, these four forms are reduced to the single form *kel* (some speakers pronounce /kal/). In plurals with vowel-initial words, the /z/ liaison consonant will be used: *kel z-animou?* (which animals?).

2.3 Nouns

In French, the noun is a word that includes gender (masculine or feminine) and may vary in number (singular or plural). It is usually, but not always, accompanied by a determiner, and it may serve a number of grammatical functions in a sentence, such as subject or complement to verb. It can also act as a **predicate**. As to meaning, nouns refer to beings, objects, actions, qualities, and ideas. In general, nouns in MF are not very different from those in SF, and in both, common nouns (such as *apple*, *algebra*, *table*, *dog*, etc.) are opposed to proper nouns (such as *Jerry*, *Martha*, *Canada*, etc.)

2.3.1 Gender

In MF, as in all varieties of French, all nouns must be assigned a gender, either masculine or feminine, which is communicated to the determiner (and to any modifying adjective). The majority of nouns in MF have the same gender as in SF or CCF, but not all. Since grammatical gender assignment is somewhat arbitrary, to determine what

gender a given noun in MF has, one may consult a SF reference dictionary, and the chances are quite good that the gender in SF will be the same as the gender in MF. One of the problems that many MF speakers or learners face is the fact that MF borrows quite a few nouns from English, and of course, English does not distinguish gender for most nouns. Nevertheless, nouns borrowed from English in MF must have a masculine or feminine gender assigned to them. Thus, does one say *aen* (masc.) *trok* or *enn* (fem.) *trok* (a truck); *aen hitch* or *enn hitch* (a hitch)? This is equally true for nouns borrowed from Cree or Anishinaabemowin: does one say *aen (y)aamou* or *enn (y)amou* (a bee)? In the Laverdure et al. *Michif Dictionary*, both *truck* and *(y)aamou* are listed as masculine *aen trok/aen truk* and *aen (y)amoo*. Fleury's dictionary also gives *aen truk* but does not include a determiner for *amoo*.

Moreover, as discussed in section 2.2.1.2, the indefinite article *aen*, when followed by a vowel-initial word, generates the pop-up liaison consonant /n/, so the pronunciation is /aen n-xxx/, where *aen* followed by *n-* closely resembles the feminine indefinite article /enn/, the only difference being a nasal vowel in *aen* and an oral one in *enn*, and where the vowel in *enn* is often nasalized, so that gender of the following noun is often quite difficult to determine. As well, in both colloquial CF and MF, vowel-initial masculine nouns such as *opital* (hospital) or *iver* (winter) tend to become feminine rather than masculine. All of this means that determining gender is quite complex in MF.

Unfortunately, *Michif French as Spoken by Most Michif People of St. Laurent* does not provide determiners for most nouns listed, so gender is not marked. However, the St. Louis *Michif French* dictionary app does provide determiners for most of the nouns listed, as do both *Michif Talking Dictionary: Turtle Mountain Chippewa Cree* and Fleury's *Michif Dictionary 2013*. These books are therefore somewhat useful for determining the gender of a given MF noun even though Southern Michif and Michif French are two different languages, the French part of Southern Michif is nearly identical to MF, and therefore these dictionaries provide information as to what gender should be assigned to a given MF noun.

Nevertheless, a quick look at Fleury's *Michif Dictionary 2013* shows how problematic determining the gender of a given noun may be. Under the letter A, we find the word for "abbey": *li presbiterr*, so we know that this noun is masculine (due to the presence of *li*, which is the masculine singuar form of the definite determiner), and for "arsenic", the Michif equivalent is *la pwayzoon* (poison), so due to the feminine form /la/ of the determiner, we know that this item is feminine, even though it is masculine in SF. But for entries such as "accident" or "arrowhead", the French equivalents given are simply *aksidaan* and *flaysh*, so gender is left undetermined. In any case, since *aksidaan* is vowel initial, the expected form of the definite determiner would simply be the elided form /l/ (*l'aksidaan*), and gender is therefore not marked. The same is true for entries such as *nasasyii* (accomplice), *akorrjiyoun* (accordion), *l'aas* (ace), *ton address* (address), etc. Furthermore, as pointed out earlier, the indefinite determiners *aen* (masc. sing.) and *enn* (fem. sing.) tend to be confused if the following word is vowel initial. The result is that many nouns that are feminine in SF have been reanalyzed as masculine in

Southern Michif and in MF; for example, “hour”, which is of feminine gender in SF (une heure), is listed as *aen neur* in both Fleury and the Michif French app.

2.3.2 Number

There are two numbers in French: singular and plural. They are used for nouns referring to beings or objects that can be counted. Singular number is used with a single being or thing, plural number with more than one being or thing. In French, in most cases, the question of plural is really a matter of writing, since an <s> (or sometimes an <x>) is added at the end of the word. This <s> is typically silent, except in cases of liaison, when it is pronounced /z/. Therefore, orally, there is no difference between a singular and a plural noun <église> (church) versus <églises> (churches) (both /egliz/). Obviously, the determiners that accompany the noun will show number and gender for singular noun, only number in plural nouns; i.e., *li* or *la*; *aen* or *enn*; *mon* or *ma*; *lii* or *mii*; etc. In SF, there are a number of irregular plurals, where the singular and plural forms differ, most of these having an *-al* (/al/) ending in the singular, but an *-aux* (/o/) ending in the plural : *animal-animaux* (/animal/-/animo/; “animal, animals”), *hôpital-hôpitaux* (/opital/-/opito/; “hospital, hospitals”). There are other irregular plurals, such as *œil-yeux* (/œj/-/jø/; “eye, eyes”), *ciel-cieux* (/sjɛl/-/sjø/; “sky, skies”). In MF, these irregular plurals may take different forms. Some follow the French forms, like *jwal-jwo* (horse, horses) (though some speakers use *jwal* for both singular and plural) and *animal-animo* (animal, animals), but many have only one form; for example, *opital* (hospital, hospitals), *yeu* (eye, eyes), *syel* (sky, skies), *aen shivreu/deu shivreu* (one deer/two deer).

2.4 Adjectives

Adjectives are words that describe nouns or pronouns. In other words, they describe people, places, or things; for example, a **beautiful** sky; a **pink** flower; a **great** man. Adjectives may also function as predicate adjectives, as in The sky is **blue**; The seems **uncomfortable**; It smells **lovely** etc.

In SF and MF, adjectives agree in gender and number with the noun they modify: *aen gran t-om* (a tall man); *enn grann’ fam* (a tall woman); *aen shaar ver* (a green car); *enn tab vert* (a green table). If the adjective ends in a vowel, there is no difference between a masculine and a feminine form: *aen syel bleu* (or *blu*) (a blue sky); *enn fleur bleu* (or *blu*) (a blue flower). In many cases, the masculine form of an adjective ending in a consonant, such as *red* (masc.) (stiff) or *net* (clean), the feminine form will be identical: *red* (fem.), *net* (fem.).

For some masculine forms of an adjective ending in a nasal vowel such as *gran* (tall, big), and for some speakers, the feminine form in MF will maintain the nasal vowel, but a nasal consonant will be added at the end: *gran* (masc.) but *grann’* (fem.). This is due to the fact that in SF, the final consonant is /d/ (grande), but in MF, this consonant may become nasalized (i.e. pronounced as /n/) due to the influence of the nasal vowel. Other speakers maintain the SF pronunciation /grand/. Not every masculine form of

adjectives behave this way: *vilaen* (masc.) (ugly, bad) but *vilenn* (fem.); *plaen* (masc.) (full) but *plenn* (fem.); *bon* (masc.) (good) but *bonn* (fem.). The feminine form of certain adjectives is not necessarily obvious: *luur* (masc.) (heavy) but *lurd* (fem.); *pchi* (masc.) (little, small) but *pchit* (fem.); *grii* (masc.) (grey) but *griiz* (fem.); *gro* (masc.) (fat, large) but *gros* (fem.); *sho* (masc.) (hot) but *shod* (fem.); *fre* (masc.) (fresh) but *fresh* (fem.). Finally, some adjectives completely change forms from masculine to feminine: *bo* (masc.) (handsome, beautiful) but *bel* (fem.).

The majority of adjectives in SF and in MF follow the noun they modify. However, there is a closed list of adjectives that precede the noun they modify:

jen (masc. & fem.) (young)
vyeu (or *vyu*) (masc.)/*vyey* (fem.) (old; also husband/wife)
bo (masc.)/*bel* (fem.) (pretty, handsome, beautiful)
bon (masc.)/*bonn* (fem.) (good)
gran (masc.)/*grann'* (fem.) (tall, big)
pchi (masc.)/*pchit* (fem.) (small, little)
gro (masc.)/*gros* (fem.) (fat, big)
jalii/jolii (masc. and fem.) (pretty)
move (masc.)/*movez* (fem.) (bad, wrong)
nouvo (masc.)/*nouvel* (fem.) (new)
miyeur (masc. & fem.) (better)

2.4.1 Degree Adjectives

Certain adjectives may take on a *comparative* or *superlative* degree. In a comparative situation, a quality attributed to a noun is greater than than the quality attributed to another noun; for example, John is **taller** than Jim (is tall). In this case, the comparative form "taller" indicates that the the tallness of John is greater than the tallness of Jim. In SF and in MF, the comparative degree of an adjective is expressed syntactically rather than morphologically (meaning that words are added to the sentence rather than adding letters to a word to make a comparative statement). In English, we add the suffix *-er* at the end of the adjective, which is a morphological change.

Examples in MF

Bachis il i plu gran ki Pyer.
John is taller than Peter.

S'ti shmiiz-laa el i plu pchit ki l'ot.
That shirt is smaller than the other.

Mon trok il i plu gro ki sula d' mon wezaen
My truck is bigger than my neighbour's.

In a superlative comparison, the quality of a noun is the highest or lowest of all other qualities; for example, John is the **best** player on the team; Mary's hair is the **blondest**; That horse is the **slowest** of all. In SF and in MF, superlatives are also expressed syntactically rather than morphologically. The superlative construction adds a definite determiner in front of the comparative adjective *plu/pli* (more) or *mwaen* (less):[4]

Examples in MF

Bachis il i li plu gran di tot.
John is the tallest of them all.

Mon jwal il i li pli vit.
My horse is the fastest.

[4] The use of *li mwaen/la mwaen* is extremely limited in MF. There is a single occurrence of *li mwaen* in the whole Lavallée corpus.

Chapter 3 Pronouns

3.0 Pronouns Generally

Pronouns are words that vary in gender and number. Personal and possessive pronouns also vary in person. Certain pronouns (such as personal, relative, and interrogative) vary according to their function. Pronouns do not have inherent gender or number but take on gender and number of the nouns they represent or replace; i.e., its antecedent.

There are **personal**, **possessive**, **demonstrative**, **relative**, **interrogative**, and **indefinite** pronouns.

3.1 Personal Pronouns

Personal pronouns designate beings and objects marking grammatical person. They may have various functions, such as subject or complement of a verb or preposition : ***J'*** *manj* (I eat); *I'**m'**paarl* (He's speaking to me), *Vyaen avek **mwe*** (Come with me).

3.1.1 Subject Pronouns

MF subject pronouns are highly varied. Table 7 shows the various forms in MF. They will be discussed individually.

Table 7: Subject Pronouns

1st sing.	*ji ~ j ~ Ø*
2nd sing.	*ti ~ t ~ chu*
3rd sing.	*il ~ i ~ y ~ sa ~ el ~ a ~ Ø*
1st plur.	*nou ~ no ~ on ~ (nou z-ot) on*
2nd plur.	*vou ~ vo ~ (vou z-ot) vou*
3rd plur.	*il ~ i ~ y ~ sa ~ (eu z-ot) i*

3.1.1.1 First Person Singular Subject Pronoun

The base first person singular subject pronoun form is **ji** (SF *je*), as in *Ji we* (I see), but it is most often simply reduced to /j/, *J'we*. If the pronoun is immediately followed by a voiceless consonant, /j/ will be pronounced as /sh/, but for parsimony, the

spelling remains /j/: *J'sii paa* (I don't know). In some cases, the first person subject pronoun may even be deleted (indicated by Ø in Table 1): *Kone pa* (I don't know); *M'an vyaen* (I'm coming).

3.1.1.2 Second Person Singular Subject Pronoun

The base second person singular subject pronoun form is **ti** (SF *tu*), as in *Ti se pa* (You don't know), but it is most often simply reduced to /t/, as in *T'i t-aen smat* (You're a smart-ass), *T'va wer* (You'll see). Some speakers prefer the form /chu/. As in CCF, *ti* can be used impersonally, as in *Pour alii a Brandon, ti pran ton shaar…* (To go to Brandon, you take your car/one takes one's car…).

3.1.1.3 Third Person Singular Subject Pronoun

The base third person subject pronoun form is ***il*** (SF *il*), as in *Il i fou* (He's crazy), but it usually takes on various forms such as /i/, as in *I s'an vyaen* (He's coming). The /i/ form typically is reduced to /y/ if it immediately precedes a vowel-initial word, as in *Y a vnu* (He/She came). Notice that many MF speakers do not make any difference in gender between *i(l)* (masc.) and *el* (fem.), sometimes pronounced /al/ or simply /a/, but some do: *Al/El/A a vnu* (She came). In fact, in such a sequence, the /l/ of the pronoun is often deleted resulting in a sequence *A a vnu*, pronounced /aavnu/. Many speakers (but not all) even use the indefinite pronoun *sa* (SF ça) for third person singular (or plural), as in *S'ti jenn-laa, sa va pu a l'ikol* (That young one (over there), he no longer goes to school); *Djo pi Mari, sa von s'maryii s't'itii* (Joe and Mary, they will get married this summer). In a number of cases, once the antecedent has been clearly identified, the third person pronoun may be omitted, as in *Pyer y s'an vyaen pi _ va no djiir kose fer* (Peter, he is coming and _ will tell us what to do). Notice that in *Djo pi Mari, sa von s'maryii s't'itii*, the verb *von* does not agree in number with its subject *sa* but with the antecedent of *sa*, namely *Djo pi Mari*. This agreement rule seems to be quite variable, as some speakers would rather say *Djo pi Mari, sa va s'maryii s't'itii.*

3.1.1.4 First Person Plural Subject Pronoun

The base form for the first person plural subject pronoun is ***on***, as in *On va y-alii aa mes* (We'll go to Mass). In more formal circumstances, some speakers may use the form *nou* or *no* (SF *nous*), but its use is rather rare. In some cases, *on* can be emphasized with an added *z-ot* (lit. 'other') *nou/no z-ot*: *Nou z-ot, on em sa la byer* ((As for) us, we like beer).

3.1.1.5 Second Person Plural Subject Pronoun

The base form of the second person plural subject pronoun is ***vou ~ vo*** (SF *vous*), as in *Vou pouvii pa yalii* (You can't go). For the first person plural, *vou ~ vo* may be

emphasized with *z-ot*: *vou z-ot*, as in *Vou z-ot vou pouvii parchiir* (You (all), you can leave). In SF, the *vous* form is typically used when addressing a stranger, a superior, etc. In MF, this is not necessarily so, and speakers tend to use the *ti* form even with strangers or superiors.

3.1.1.6 Third Person Plural Subject Pronoun

The base form for third person plural subject pronoun is ***il*** (SF *ils*), but it is most usually shortened to ***i***, as in *I son paa laa* (They're not here/there). For the third person singular, the pronoun *i* is pronounced /y/ when it is immediately followed by a vowel-initial form: *Y on paa manjii* (They haven't eaten). Many MF speakers tend to use the pronoun *sa* instead of *i(l)*: *Tom pi Louwi, sa l'on parchi an vil* (Tom and Louie went to town). Again, notice that the auxiliary verb *on* (SF *ont*) has a plural form. This means that the verb agrees in number, not with the pronoun subject *sa*, but with its antecedent *Tom pi Louwi*; *Lii jans di Winipeg, sa vyenn o lak l'itii* (The folks from Winnipeg, they come to the lake in summer), where the plural form *vyenn* agrees with *lii jans di Winipeg* rather than with the grammatical subject *sa*.

As mentioned earlier, an intrusive /l/ can often be inserted in certain discursive contexts. The rule(s) for inserting this /l/ are still not quite well understood. The same can be said for omitting the third person pronoun. In the following example, a man has lost a fox he had tied with a chain. The omitted pronoun can refer to the man, as in the first and last omission, but it refers to the fox in the second and third omissions:

Y an n-a perdju henn tot avik la shen. __ l'a jamaen trouvii. __ l'a kasii sa shen opre di bwe. __ parchi avek la shen. __ l'a jamaen trouvii…
(He lost one completely with the chain. __ never found it. __broke its chain near the woods. __ left with the chain. __ never found it…)

3.1.2 Direct Object Personal Pronouns

Table 8: Direct Object Pronouns

1st pers. sing.	*mi ~ m*
2nd pers. sing.	*ti ~ t*
3rd pers. sing.	*li ~ l ~ la*
1st pers. plur.	*nou ~ no*
2nd pers. plur.	*vou ~ vo*
3rd pers. plur.	*lii*

Direct object pronouns are pronouns which are the recipients of a direct action on the part of the verb, as in, for example, *I'**m'**we* (he sees me); *J'**l'**em* (I like him/her/it), *On va **lii z-**anweyii* (we will send them). Generally, direct object pronouns in MF function like those in CCF, which in turn typically follow the rules of SF. Notice that direct object pronouns are placed to the left of the verb, whereas full direct object nouns are placed to the right : *J'lii li liiv* (I am reading the book) but *J'li lii* (I'm reading it). In English, both object nouns and pronouns follow the verb.

There is some variation for third person singular direct object pronouns: a few speakers may use the singular feminine form *la* (SF *la*) when referring to a feminine entity, while the majority of speakers use the masculine *l(i)* form for either gender: *J'**la** manj, la pom* or *J'**li** manj, la pom* (I'm eating the apple).

The first, second, and third person plural object pronouns will trigger a /z/ liaison consonant in the appropriate contexts: *I **nou z-**anvii aen pchi braen* (He envies us a bit), *On **lii z-a** vu yer* (We saw them yesterday).

Again, there is quite a lot of speaker variation in the phonetic realization of some of the pronouns. One speaker may say something like *J'lii veu* (I want them) but another may say *J'ii veu*, where the initial /l/ of the pronoun is deleted. Both are acceptable in MF.

3.1.3 Indirect Object Pronouns

Indirect object nouns in SF are those that require the preposition *à* (to) as in *Je donne le livre **à Paul*** (I give the book to Paul/I give Paul the book). Indirect object pronouns can replace indirect object nouns but do not require the presence of the preposition *à*: *Je **lui** donne le livre* (I give him the book). MF generally follows SF as to form and function, except for third person singular and plural, where SF *lui* becomes *li ~ i ~ y* in MF and SF *leur* becomes *leu ~ lii ~ y*.

Table 9: Indirect Object Pronouns

1st pers. sing.	*mi ~ m*
2nd pers sing.	*ti ~t*
3rd pers sing.	*li ~ i ~ y*
1st pers. plur.	*nou ~ no*
2nd pers. plur.	*vou ~ vo*
3rd pers. plur.	*leu ~ lii ~ y*

The first person indirect object pronoun form is basically ***mi*** (SF *me*) but it is most often reduced to ***m***. The same is true for the second and third person indirect pronouns where ***ti*** is reduced to ***t*** and ***li*** is reduced to ***i*** and is usually pronounced /y/ when followed by a vowel-initial word, as in *Wilii y a donii son liiv* (Willy gave him/her his/her book). Some speakers avoid the third person plural form *leu* and use the direct object form *lii ~ i* instead: *M'a i donii* instead of *M'a leu donii* (I'll give (it) to him/her/them).

As in SF, the direct and indirect object pronouns may combine, as in *Bachis va* ***mi l'****donii* (John will give it to me); *I va* ***no lii*** *prann'* (He's going to take them from us). In these combinations, the indirect object is to the left of the direct object, except with two third person objects, where it is the opposite order: *J'va* ***li leu*** *donii* (I'm going to give it to them). But many MF speakers avoid these pronoun combinations and will express them in a different way: *M'a* ***l'****donii* ***à eu z-ot*** (I will give it to them). (See section 3.1.5 for a discussion of stressed personal pronouns and section 4.3.2 for the use of *m'a*.)

3.1.4 Reflexive Personal Pronouns

Reflexive pronouns are used when the action of the person involved is done to that same person, as in "I hurt **myself**" or "They gave **themselves** a high-five". In SF, the reflexive pronouns are similar to the direct object personal pronouns, except for the third person singular, where reflexive is *se* rather than the direct object form *le*/*la*.

Table 10: Reflexive Pronouns

1st sing.	*mi ~ m*
2nd sing.	*ti ~ t*
3rd sing.	*si ~ s ~ z*
1st plur.	*si ~ s ~ z*
2nd plur.	*vou ~ vo*
3rd plur.	*si ~ s ~ z*

Some examples of reflexive pronouns in MF are:

I s'an vyenn.
They're coming.

J'm'a fet mal.
I hurt myself.

No z-ot, on s' kone paa.
We don't know each other.

I von s' wer.
They'll see each other.

3.1.5 Stressed Personal Pronouns

In English, personal pronouns object of a preposition have the same form as when they are object of a verb: "He gave **me** the ball" and "He sent the ball towards **me**". The object form of the pronoun is also used if a personal pronoun needs to be stressed in the discourse: "**Me**, I don't care!" In both SF and MF, a special form of the personal pronoun is used when object of a preposition or if in stressed position: *I vyaen avek mwaen.* (He's coming with me); *Sa, s'e pour lwi.* (That is for him); *Mwe, sh'se paa!* (Me, I don't know!); *Lwi, s't'aen manteur!* (Him, he's a liar!). In MF, the forms are similar (except for a few details) to the SF form:

Table 11: Stressed Personal Pronouns

1st sing.	*mwe ~ mwaen*
2nd sing.	*twe*
3rd sing.	*lwi* (masc.); *el* (fem.)
1st plur.	*nou ~ no*
2nd plur.	*vou ~ vo*
3rd plur.	*eu ~ eus ~ eu z-ot*

The first person singular is either *mwe* or *mwaen*, depending on the speaker (SF *moi*): *Y a anweyii la let a mwaen, paa a twe!* (He sent the letter to me, not to you!); *S'i-chi pour lwi?* (Is it for him?); *I veu paa y-alii avek eus/eu z-ot* (He doesn't want to go with them); *El, j'la kone paa!* (As for her, I don't know her!). For "myself", "yourself", "himself", etc., in MF, one adds the suffix *-mem* to the stressed pronoun: *mwaen-mem*, *twe-mem*, *lwi-mem*, *el-mem*, etc.

3.2 Adverbial Pronouns

In SF, there are two so-called adverbial pronouns: *y* and *en. Y* is locative, as in *J'y vais* (I'm going there) while *en* is partitive, as in *J'en veux* (I want some). Both occur in MF, as in the following: *J'i va* (I'm going there); *J'an veu* (I want some). In SF, the common expression *il y a* (there is/are) is rendered variously in MF as *y a*, *i n'a*, *n'a*.

In MF, there are a number of verbs or verbal expressions that employ the adverbial pronouns *i* (reduced to /y/ before a vowel-initial word) and *an* as an integral part of the verb itself: *s'an-n-alii* (to go); *s'an vniir* (to come); *s'an rtournii* (to go back); *y awer* (there is); *s'i prann'* (to undertake); *On y-ale a l'ikol* (We used to go to school); *I s'an serve di chain saw* (He used the chain saw).

3.3 Possessive Pronouns

Possessive pronouns in English are: "mine", "yours" (sing.), "his", "hers", "ours", "yours" (plur.) and "theirs". The analysis of possessive pronouns in MF is still partial and requires further study. What is stated below is therefore a work in progress. There seems to be two distinct ways of expressing possessive pronouns. The most common one is by using the preposition *a* (SF *à*) + a stressed personal pronoun:

S't'a mwaen (spoken slowly, *Si-t a mwaen*).
It's mine

S't'a twe.
It's yours (sing.).

S't'a lwi.
It's his.

S't'a el.
It's hers.

S't'a no z-ot.
It's ours.

S't'a vo z-ot.
It's yours (plur.).

S't'a eu z-ot.
It's theirs.

The second way of expressing possession with pronouns is somewhat controversial and needs to be further analyzed, as pertinent data is presently lacking. According to an Elder speaker of St. Laurent, one can say *s'l'a twe* for "it's yours". This construction can be analyzed two ways from a SF point of view:

(1) *S'i l'a twe* (*c'est à toi* (it's yours), with the deletion of *i* (3rd person singular of et (to be)) and the intrusion of /l/ in MF); or
(2) *cela à toi* (this (is) yours) (with the fusion of both the final *a* of *cela* and the preposition *à*).

The first is more logical. The same Elder also provides the form *Si la d'mwaen* for "It's mine". A possible SF source could be *cela de moi* (this (one) of me), but it is not entirely clear.

It seems that the SF possessive pronouns such as *le mien* (masc. sing. 1st pers.) (mine), *le tien* (masc. sing. 2nd pers.) (yours), *le sien* (masc. sing. 3rd pers.) (his), etc. are not known to most MF speakers.

3.4 Demonstative Pronouns

In English, demonstrative pronouns are identical in form to the demonstrative determiners: this, that, these, and those, as in "I want this/that/these/those". The pronoun "one" can always be added: "I want this one", but "this" then becomes simply a demonstrative determiner rather than a pronoun.

Again, not much is known about demonstrative pronouns in MF. In SF, they are distinguished according to gender and number and take on a proximate suffix *-ci* or distal suffix *-là*: *celui-ci* (this one here), but *celui-là* (this one there); *celui-ci* (masc. sing.) (this one here) versus *celle-ci* (this one here) (fem. sing.). MF demonstrative forms are as follows: *sula* (this one here/there)[1] and *suzla* (these ones here/there). It seems that one can also say *sula icit* (this one here) and *suzla isit* (these ones here).

There is also the general demonstrative pronoun *sa* (SF ça), as in *Sa l'i pa prop* (This/that's not clean); *Sa l'a arivii* (It happened); *Sa s't'a no z-ot* (That's ours). As mentioned in section 3.1.1.3, *sa* is regularly used as a third person (sing. or plur.) subject pronoun, as in *Sa von vniir a swer* (They will come tonight).

SF has three more demonstrative pronouns: *ce* (it); *ceci* (this); and *cela* (that). MF certainly has the equivalent of SF *ce*, usually rendered as /s/, as in *S'i pas posib* (It's not possible); *S'i t-a koz k'i paar* (It's because he's leaving); *S't'isit* (It's here).

At the present time, the form *ceci* is highly unlikely, since in MF, it would theoretically be reduced to *si*, and this form has not been noted for that particular meaning. It is also not clear whether *cela* can occur in MF and whether an utterance such as *J'em pa sla* (I don't like that) is possible; it would most probably be said *J'em pa sa* (I don't like it).

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[1] Presently, it is not known whether *suzla* can refer to both masculine and feminine entities or whether a special feminine form exists. More research is needed here.

3.5 Relative Pronouns

Relative pronouns introduce relative clauses. In English, there are many relative pronouns; for example, "who" (when referring to people in subject position): "I don't know who went"; "whom" (referring to people in object position): "He chooses whom he likes"; "that" (for things): "the house that Jim built"; "which": "I know which I want"; "what": "I know what I want"; and "whose": "the house whose owners I know burned down".

In SF, there are also a number of relative pronoun forms: *qui* (for subject, as in *Je sais qui est là* (I know who is there)); *que* (for object, as in *Le livre que j'ai lu* (the book that I read)); *dont* (for partitive, as in *le livre dont il a lu un extrait* (the book of which he read a passage); *lequel* (that which) (masc. sing.)/ *laquelle* (that which) (fem. sing.)/*lesquels* (that which) (masc. plur.)/*lesquelles* (that which) (fem. plur.); and locative *où* 'where'.

MF has simplified all of these forms to a single one: *ki* (often reduced to /k/).

J'se k(i) a vnu.
I know who came.

l'om k'a veu
the man (whom) she wants

Some speakers double this *ki*: *Ti kone-ti ki ki a vnu*? (Do you know who came?). The object pronoun is also often deleted, as in *lii z-afer __ t'a dan ta shop-la* (the things you have in your shop).

In MF, the locative relative pronoun is typically *ivou* (or *ivo*) as is *M'a vou djiir ivou i von y-alii* (I'll tell you where they'll go); *I m'on paa djii ivou y on mouvii* (They didn't tell me where they moved). Some speakers will rather say *i m'on paa djii ivou* ***s'k'*** *y on mouvii*.

SF also has the relative pronoun *(de) quoi*, as in *Je sais de quoi tu parles* (I know what you're talking about); *Dis-moi quoi faire* (Tell me what to do). In MF, this pronoun is replaced by *(di) kose* (from SF *quoi c'est*): *J'se (di) kose ti paarl* (I know what you're talking about); *I veu paa djiir kose ki l'baad* (he doesn't want to say what's bothering him).

3.6 Interrogative Pronouns

In English, interrogative pronouns are, of course, used in questions, as in "Who do you like?"; "Whom are you talking about?"; "What is the matter?"; "Which do you want?"; "Whose did you take?"; "Why did you leave?"; "When do you leave?", etc.

MF has developed a complex series of interrogative constructions, some of which are also known and used in CCF, but not all interrogative sentences involve interrogative pronouns. These types of questions will be discussed in a later chapter. In MF, the interrogative pronouns are:

Table 12: Interrogative Pronouns

subject	*(a)ki (k(i)) ~ kise ki*
direct object (animate)	*ki (k(i)) ~ kise k(i)*
direct object (inanimate)	*ke s (k(i)) ~ kwa s/(k(i)) – kwa/ko se (k)*
indirect object (animate)	*ki (k(i))*
indirect object (inanimate)	*kwa (s') ~ kose (k')*
object of preposition	*kwa (k) ~ kose (k')*
Adverbial Pronouns	
how?	*kuman ~ kumaa (s) (k) (e-s)*
how much/many?	*ko(n)byaen (s) (k)*
what?	*kose (k')*
when?	*kan (k)/(t'es) ~ kans ki-se k(i)*
since when?	*dipi kan*
where?	*ivou ~ ivo (s) (k)*
from where?	*d'ivou ~ d'ivo*
why?	*purkwe (se (k(i)) ~ pour ki se fer*

The MF equivalent of "who?" (where the interrogative pronoun is subject, referring to an animate being) is, according to our data, *ki* (SF *qui*) or *a-ki*, as in *(A)ki vou z-a montrii dansii la djig*? (Who taught you to dance the jig?). Presently, it is not known why an /a/ may be added to *ki*. This *a-ki* construction has only been noted in the MF of St. Laurent, and it we do not know if it exists elsewhere. An extra *k(i)* may also be added (it is then a relative pronoun), as in *A-ki* ***ki*** *kone Jul?* (Who knows Jules?). Another way of asking this question is: *Ki s'e ki kone Jul?* (in CF, *Qui c'est qui connaît Jules?*).

When the interrogative pronoun refers to an animate being in direct object position, the form is *ki*, to which may be added another *k(i)*, as in *Ki* ***k'****t'a vu?* (Whom did

you see?). An alternative way of asking this type of question is *Kise k' t'a vu?* (in CCF, *Qui c'est que t'as vu?*, which is a shortened form of *Qui est-ce que c'est que t'as vu?*).

If the pronoun refers to an inanimate thing or idea in direct object position, the form is highly variable, depending on the speaker and the discursive context: *Kes (ki) t'a vu?* (What did you see?), but also *Kwa (k') t'a vu?* or *Kwa/kose (k') t'a vu?*

When the interrogative pronoun is in indirect object position, referring to an animate being, the following pronoun is used : *A ki (k(i)) t'a parlii?* (To who(m) did you speak?). When referring to an inanimate object or idea the form is either *kwa* or *kose*, as in *A kwa/kose ti pans?* (What are you thinking of?). The same forms are used when the interrogative pronoun is object of a preposition, as in *Dan kwa/kose i va met sa?* (In what will he put that?).

The adverbial interrogative pronoun constructions are equally complex in MF. For "how", most speakers use *koman* (though for some speakers, it is *kouman*, and for still others, it is *komaa/koumaa*) or *koman/kouman/komaa s'k'*, as in *koman vo z-et?* (How are you (plur.)?); *Komaa sa vaa?* (How are you?), *Koman ti dji saa an Michif?*(How do you say that in Michif?); *Koman s'k' y'a fet sa?* (How did he do that?); *Koman t-es k'y a fet sa?* (How did he do that?).

"How much" or "how many" are expressed as follows: *ko(n)byaen*, as in *Ko(n)byaen sa kout?* (How much does it cost?); *Ko(n)byaen lii z-anfan k't'aa*? or *Ko(n)byaen k't'a lii z-anfan?* (How many children do you have?). Some speakers may also say *Ko(n)byaen s' k(i)*, as in *ko(n)byaen s' ki vo?* (How much is it worth?).

The MF equivalent to interrogative "what" is *kose* (from CF *quoi c'est*), as in *Kose ti fe?* (What are you doing?); *Kose ti pans?* (What are you thinking?), *Kose k'y a fet?* (What did he do?).

For "when", MF uses the following forms: *kan (k')* as in *Kan k' i paar?* (When does he leave?) or *kan t-es (ki)*, as in *Kan t'es ki va m'donii mon n-arjan?* (When is he going to give me my money?) as well as *kan s'ki se k'*, as in *Kan s'ki se k'ti t'souvyaen s't'afer-la?* (When is it that you remember of that there business?).

"Since when" is usually said *dipi kan (k')*, as in *Dipi kan k't'a vnu?* (Since when did you come/arrive?).

"Where" in MF is an old CCF expression *ivoù* (SF *où*), which is pronounced either *ivou* or *ivo* in MF: *Ivou (s') k'i va?* (Where is he going?). Some speakers use a truncated form *'s'k'* (probably from *où ce que*), where *où* has been deleted, as in *S'k'il e?* (Where is he?); *S'ki t'a mi la taas?* (Where did you put the cup?). "From where" is *d'ivou ~ d'ivo*, as in *D'ivou ti vyaen?* (Where do you come from?).

Finally, "why" is *pourkwe* or *pourkwa*, to which may be added *se (k')*, as in *Pourkwe ti t-alii an baa?* (Why did you go down(stairs)?); *Pourkwa se k'y a rvnu baek?* (Why did he come back?).

3.7 Indefinite Pronouns

Our knowledge of indefinite pronouns in MF is sparse, since they seem to be quite rare. We believe the following exist, at least for some speakers:

parsonn (SF *personne*) (no one) : ***Parsonn*** *i kabab djiir sa.* (No one can say that.)
kekaen (SF *quelqu'un*) (someone): *Y a* ***kekaen*** *isit ki san mouve.* (There's someone here who smells bad.)
keukzaen/keukzenn (SF *quelques-uns/quelques-unes*) (a few): *keukzaen on parchi apre* (a few left after)
ot ~ out ((an)other): *Sa s't'aen* ***n-ot***. (That's another.)
(a)ryaen (SF *rien*) (nothing): *J'a pa* ***ryaen*** *vu*//*J'a pa vu* ***aryaen***. (I didn't see anything/I saw nothing.)
Tout ~ tot (all/everything):*J'lii veu* ***to(u)t****!* (I want them all!); ***To(u)t*** *sonte laa.* (All were there.)
hen 'one' : *J' n-an vu* ***henn****!* (I saw one!).[2]

[2] It is not presently known if in MF the SF indefinite pronouns *certains* (some/a few), *le même* (the same), *plusieurs* (many), and *quelque chose* (something) also exist. The BC Métis Federation lexicon does provide the entries *shakain* for SF *chacun* and *pleusieur* as in *pleusieur zanimaal faroosh qui soon tait saamii* (Many wild animals that are friends). Notice here how the morphology of the verb /sonte/ (were) has been misanalysed as *soon tait* and that the pop-up liaison consonant is written as <s> rather than <z>. As well, the orthography for "that" is SF orthography *qui* rather than *ki*. The BC Métis Federation MF equivalent for "something" is the noun *shouz* (thing).

Chapter 4 Verb Conjugations, Tenses, Aspects, Moods and Voices

4.0 Overview of MF Verbs

In SF, verbs are much more complex than in English, since they may vary in form according to **person**, **number, gender**, **conjugation class**, **tense**, **aspect,** and **mood.** Moreover, a verb can be in an **infinitive** or **participle** form as well as in a **reflexive** form. All of this makes verbs quite difficult to learn. In dictionaries, verbs are always listed under their infinitive form. Generally, MF verbs follow SF forms, but since they are originally (and still mainly) oral, there is a difference between the SF written conjugations and MF conjugations. In SF grammars, verb conjugations are traditionally based on written forms and on the endings of the infinitive and are listed under four main types:

(1) infinitives ending in -*er* (which are mostly regular);
(2) infinitives in -*ir*;
(3) infinitives in –*re*
(4) infinitives in -*oir*

Unfortunately, this way of classifying verbs gives rise to a great number of irregular conjugations. A more descripive way of classifying verb conjugations is to class them according to the number of oral stems a given verb may have in the present tense. The number of stems may vary from a single one to as many as three. It is important to note that MF has simplified many so-called SF "irregular" verbs and are therefore "regular".

4.1 Verb Classes

Generally, MF infinitives (and conjugations) are divided in three classes. **Class I, Type A verbs** have a single **stem** for all persons; for example, *manjii* (to eat) (SF *manger*):

Table 13: Class I, Type A Verbs

manjii (to eat)

1st pers. sing.	*j(i) manj*
2nd pers. sing.	*t(i) manj*
3rd pers. sing.	*i manj/sa/el/a manj*
1st pers. plur.	*on manj*
2nd pers. plur.	*vou (z-ot vou)* ***manjii***
3rd pers. plur.	*i/sa manj*

There is a single verb stem (***manj-***) and two suffixes: /ii/ for second person plural and Ø (nothing) for all other persons. If the verb is vowel initial, the personal pronouns are usually elided (the /i/ of *ji* and *ti* is dropped), and an intrusive /l/ may be added for the other persons. **This conjugation is for present tense** (explained in section 4.3). The majority of MF verbs conjugate like *manjii*: *emii* (to love/like); *portii* (to wear/carry); *restii* (to live); *parlii* (to speak); *shantii* (to sing); *rigardii* (to look); *arivii* (to arrive); *dansii* (to danse); *jigii* (to jig); *kontii* (to tell stories/count); *komansii* (to begin); *vizitii* (to visit); *travayii* (to work); *nitweyii* (to clean); *edii* (to help); *braayii* (to weep/cry); *kopii ~ koupii* (to cut); *sotii ~ soutii* (to jump); *toshii ~ toushii* (to touch); and many, many more. **All verbs borrowed from English are conjugated according to Class I, Type A verbs**: *mouvii* (to move); *shaynii* (to shine); *drayvii* (to drive).

Class I, Type B verbs also have a single stem, but their infinitive ends in *-ir* rather than *-ii*.

Table 14: Class I, Type B Verbs

***kourir* (to run)**

1st pers. sing.	*j(i) kour*
2nd pers. sing.	*t(i) kour*
3rd pers. sing.	*i/sa/el/a kour*
1st pers. plur.	*(nou z-ot) on kour*
2nd pers. plur.	*(vou z-ot) vou* ***kourii***
3rd pers. plur.	*(eu z-ot) i/sa kour*

Other verbs that conjugate according to Class I, Type B verbs are *kouvrir* (to cover) and *ouvrir* (to open).

Class II, **Type A** verbs have their infinitive ending in *-ir* and have two stems: one for second and third person plural, which ends in /s/, and another for all other persons.

Table 15: Class II, Type A Verbs

***finiir* (to finish)**

1st pers. sing.	*j(i) finii*
2nd pers. sing.	*t(i) finii*
3rd pers. sing.	*i/sa/el/a finii*
1st pers. plur.	*(nou z-ot) on finii*
2nd pers. plur.	*(vou z-ot) vou* ***finisii***
3rd pers. plur.	*(eu z-ot) i/sa* ***finis***

Other verbs conjugated like *finiir* are *obiyiir* (to obey), *shweziir* (to choose), *puniir* (to punish), *baachiir* (to build), *riyusiir* (to succeed), and *konet* (to know).

Class II, **Type B** verbs also have two stems (just like Class II, Type A verbs), but the final consonant for the second and third person plural is unpredictable:

Table 16: Class II, Type B Verbs—*doarmiir* (to sleep)

1st pers. sing.	*j(i) doar*
2nd pers. sing.	*t(i) doar*
3rd pers. sing.	*i/sa/el/a doar*
1st pers. plur.	*(nou z-ot) on doar*
2nd pers. plur.	*(vou z-ot) vou* ***doarmii***
3rd pers. plur.	*(eu z-ot) i/sa* ***doarm***

Table 17: Class II, Type B Verbs—*serviir* (to serve)

1st pers. sing.	*j(i) ser*
2nd pers. sing.	*t(i) ser*
3rd pers. sing.	*i/sa/el/a ser*
1st pers. plur.	*(nou z-ot) on ser*
2nd pers. plur.	*(vou z-ot) vou* ***servii***
3rd pers. plur.	*(eu z-ot) i/sa* ***serv***

Other verbs that conjugate like *serviir* are *djiir* (to say) and *sawer* (to know).

Class III, **Type A** verbs have their infinitives ending in the nasal consonant /n/. These verbs have three stems: one for the three singular persons and the first plural person, a second for second person plural, and a third for third person plural:

Table 18: Class III, Type A Verbs—*vann'* (to sell)

1st pers. sing.	*j(i) van*
2nd pers. sing.	*t(i) van*
3rd pers. sing.	*i/sa/el/a van*
1st pers. plur.	*(nou z-ot) on van*
2nd pers. plur.	*(vou z-ot) vou* ***vandii***
3rd pers. plur.	*(eu z-ot) i/sa* ***vann'***

Verbs that conjugate like *vann'* include, but are not limited to, *disann'* (to go down), *rann'* (to render), *atann'* (to wait), *riponn'* (to answer), and *aprann'* (to learn).

Class III, **Type B** verbs also have three stems, but these differ from Class III, Type A verbs in that the stems are unpredictable:

Table 19: Class III, Type B Verbs—*voulwer* (to want)

1st pers. sing.	*j(i) veu ~ vu*
2nd pers. sing.	*t(i) veu ~ vu*
3rd pers. sing.	*i/sa/el/a veu ~ vu*
1st pers. plur.	*(nou z-ot) on veu ~ vu*
2nd pers. plur.	*(vou z-ot) vou* ***voulii***
3rd pers. plur.	*(eu z-ot) i/sa* ***veul***

Table 20: Class III, Type B Verbs—*vniir* (to come)

1st pers. sing.	*j(i) vyaen*
2nd pers. sing.	*t(i) vyaen*
3rd pers. sing.	*i/sa/el/a vyaen*
1st pers. plur.	*(nou z-ot) on vyaen*
2nd pers. plur.	*(vou z-ot)vou* ***vnii***
3rd pers. plur.	*(eu z-ot) i/sa* ***vyenn***

Table 21: Class III, Type B Verbs—*fer* (to make)

1st pers. sing.	*j'fe*
2nd pers. sing.	*t(i) fe*
3rd pers. sing.	*i/sa fe*
1st pers. plur.	*(nou z-ot) on fe*
2nd pers. plur.	*(vou z-ot) vou* ***fet ~ fizii***
3rd pers. plur.	*(eu z-ot) i/sa* ***fon***

Among the verbs that have three stems are: *pouwer* (to be able to), *diwer* (to owe/to have to), *tiniir* (to hold), *riviniir* (to come back), *aprann'* (to learn), *konprann'* (to understand), *bwer* (to drink), *riir* (to laugh), and *manchiir* (to lie).

The verbs ***awer*** (to have), ***et*** (to be) and ***alii*** (to go) are irregular in their conjugations:

Table 22: *awer* (to have)

1st pers. sing.	*J'a*
2nd pers. sing.	*T'a*
3rd pers. sing.	*i/sa/el (l') a*
1st pers. plur.	*(nou z-ot) on n-a*
2nd pers. plur.	*(vou z-ot) vou (l')* ***avii***
3rd pers. plur.	*(eu z-ot) i/sa (l')* ***on***

Table 23: *et* (to be)

1st pers. sing.	*j'i ~ shu*
2nd pers. sing.	*t'i*
3rd pers. sing.	*i/sa/el/al (l') i*
1st pers. plur.	*(nou z-ot) on n-i*
2nd pers. plur.	*(vou z-ot) vou z-****et***
3rd pers. plur.	*(eu z-ot) i/sa* ***son***

Table 24: *alli* (to go) and *s'en alii* (to go)

1st pers. sing.	*j'vaa*	1st pers. sing.	*j'm'an vaa*
2nd pers. sing.	*t(i) vaa*	2nd pers. sing.	*ti t'an vaa*
3rd pers. sing.	*i/sa/el/a vaa*	3rd pers. sing.	*i/sa/el/a s'an vaa*
1st pers. plur.	*(nou z-ot) on vaa*	1st pers. plur.	*(nou z-ot) on s'an vaa*
2nd pers. plur.	*(vou z-ot) vou z-****alii***	2nd pers. plur.	*(vou z-ot) vou vou z-an* ***n-alii***
3rd pers. plur.	*(eu z-ot) i/sa* ***von***	3rd pers. plur.	*(eu z-ot) i/sa* ***s'an von***

4.2 Impersonal Verbs

Impersonal verbs have a single form: the third person singular. Impersonal verbs in English also have a single form, and the pronoun is always "it": "It rains in the fall"; "It's snowing"; "It's hot"; "It's cold". In SF and MF, the pronoun is ***i***: *I jel* (It's freezing); *I fe shou* (It's hot); *I fe fret* (It's cold); *I va mouyii* (It's going to rain); *I mouy* (It's raining); *I niij ~ neej* (It's snowing); *I vant* (It's windy); *i fou ~ fo* (it's necessary/to have

to)[1]. In a few expressions, the impersonal pronoun is *sa*, as in *sa pran* (it's necessary/to have to): *I fou/sa pran ti paar* (You have to leave).

SF has two impersonal expressions *il y a* (there is/are) and *il y en a* (there are some). MF has a number of variants of these expressions: *y a*, as in *Y a an mas di monn'!* (There are lots of people!), /n/, as in: *N'a pa!* (There are none), *y an n-a*, as in *Y an n-a ankor* (There is more).

4.3 Verb Tenses

The verb tables in section 4.1 are all conjugated in the Present tense. This tense describes actions that are occuring at the same time the speaker is producing the sentence. But, of course, MF has ways of describing actions in the past, in the future, or in a conditional context, as in "I would buy your car if the price were right", and in MF as in SF, one can describe an action that is or was progressing as one speaks.

4.3.1 Past Tense

To express an action in the past, MF uses a **compound tense**. The Compound Past tense in MF is built with the auxiliary verb *awer* (to have) and a verb form called the **past participle** (see under **Participle** in Glossary). In SF, some verbs such as *arriver* (to arrive), *venir* (to come), *naître* (to be born), etc. require the auxiliary verb *être* rather than *avoir*: *Je suis arrivé* (I arrived), *Tu es venu* (You came), *Il est né* (He was born). MF has simplified this and uses the single auxiliary *awer*. For example, to say something like "He ate the whole cake", one would say *Y **a manjii** tot li gaato*, where the third person singular form of the auxiliary verb *awer* (***a***) is followed by the past participle *manjii* (in SF *mangé*). The conjugation for the past tense of a Class I verb like *manjii* is as follows:

Table 25: Past Tense of Class I Verbs

1st pers. sing.	*j'a manjii*
2nd pers. sing.	*t'a manjii*
3rd pers. sing.	*y a manjii*
1st pers. plur.	*(nou z-ot) on n-a manjii*
2nd pers. plur.	*(vou z-ot) vou **z-avii manjii***
3rd pers. plur.	*(eu z-ot) i/sa **l'on manjii***

[1] Some speakers and in some circumstances omit the subject pronoun, as in *Fo partiir* "We have to leave".

Table 26: Past Tense of *awer* and *et*

1st pers. sing.	*j'a u*	*j'a itii*
2nd pers. sing.	*t'a u*	*t'a itii*
3rd pers. sing.	*y/el a u*	*y/el a itii*
1st pers. plur.	*(nou z-ot) on n-a u*	*(nou z-ot) on n-a itii*
2nd pers. plur.	*(vou z-ot) vou z-avii u*	*(vou z-ot) vou z-avii itii*
3rd pers. plur.	*(eu z-ot) i/sa l'on u*	*(eu z-ot) i/sa son* (*t-*)*itii*

In MF, the form of the past participle is most often (but not always!) identical to the form of the infinitive. Below are the past participle forms of some of the verbs described in previous sections:

Past Participle of Some Verbs

emii (loved/liked)
travayii (worked)
koupii (cut)
kontii (told (story))
nitweyii (cleaned)
toushii/toshii (touched)
komansii (begun)
edii (helped)
vnu (come)
jwii (played)
fet (made)
bu (drunk)
vizitii (visited)
braayii (cried)
kouru (run)
fini (finished)
djii (told)
vu (seen)
lu (read)
parchii (left)
rsu (received)
pu (able)
voulu (wanted)
itii (was)
konu (known)
ikrii (written)
d'mandii (asked)
vandju (sold)
aplii (called)
elvii (raised)
jitii (thrown)
(s'an (n-)) alii (gone)
biitii (beaten)
u ~ eu (had)
jwii (played)
tonbii (fallen)

4.3.2 Future Tense

SF and CF have two ways of expressing an action or situation in the future: the Simple Future tense and the Compound Future tense, as in *J'aimerai* (simple future) (I will love/like) and *Je vais aimer* (compound future), (I will love/like), whose construction involves the use of the semi-auxiliary verb *aller* followed by the infintive form of the verb intended. MF uses only this verbal construction to express any future action or situation. Below is the conjugation for Compound Future tense in MF:

Table 27: Future tense of *ikriir* (to write)

1st pers. sing.	*j'vaa/m'a ikriir*
2nd pers. sing.	*ti vaa ikriir*
3rd pers. sing.	*i/sa/a vaa ikriir*
1st pers. plur.	*(nou z-ot) on vaa ikriir*
2nd pers. plur.	*(vo z-ot) vou **z-alii** ikriir*
3rd pers. plur.	*i/sa **von** ikriir*

Notice that for first person singular, there are two ways of conjugating the verb: *j*(*i*) *vaa* + infinitive or *m'a* + infinitive. Both these forms also exist in CCF. The *m'a* form comes from French *je m'en vais* (+ infinitive), which becomes *je m'en vas* and then is shortened to *m'a* (+ infinitive).

4.3.3 Past Imperfective Tense/Aspect

SF has a particular tense, usually called the Imperfect, that combines reference to past time with a reference to a continuing or repeated event or state; for example, "I was eating" or "I used to eat". This contrasts with the Past tense, which refers to a single completed event: "I ate". Even though in SF, the Imperfect is considered a tense, it actually encodes aspectual information in addition to past time reference. In this sense, it is best to call it Past Imperfective, although in English, one most often refers to this form as **Past Progressive**.

MF has maintained the Past Imperfective tense to express continuing or repeated events or states. The conjugation of Past Imperfective verb classes are as follows:

Table 28: Past Imperfective of Class I Verbs

1st pers. sing.	*j'eme*
2nd pers. sing.	*t'eme*
3rd pers. sing.	*i/sa (l) eme*
1st pers. plur.	*(no z-ot) on n-eme*
2nd pers. plur.	*(vou z-em**yii***
3rd pers. plur.	*i/sa (l) eme*

Some speakers vary in the pronunciation of the verb ending: *e* ~ *ae*. For Class II verbs, the verb stem is the same throughout the conjugation

Table 29: Past Imperfective for Class II Verbs

1st pers. sing.	*j(i) finise*
2nd pers. sing.	*ti finise*
3rd pers. sing.	*i/sa finise*
1st pers. plur.	*(no z-ot) on finise*
2nd pers. plur.	*(vou z-ot) vou fini**syii***
3rd pers. plur.	*i/sa finise*

For verbs such as *dimandii* (to ask), the conjugation is:

Table 30: Past Imperfective of *d(i)mandii*

1st pers. sing.	*j'd(i)mande*
2nd pers. sing.	*ti d(i)mande*
3rd pers. sing.	*i/sa d(i)mande*
1st pers. plur.	*(no z-ot) on d(i)mande*
2nd pers. plur.	*(vou z-ot) vou d(i)man**djii***
3rd pers. plur.	*i/sa d(i)mande*

Table 31: Past Imperfective of *alii* (to go) and *s'an n-alii* (to go)

1st pers. sing.	*j'ale*	1st pers. sing.	*j'm'an n-ale*
2nd pers. sing.	*t'ale*	2nd pers. sing.	*ti t'an n-ale*
3rd pers. sing.	*i/sa ale*	3rd pers. sing.	*i/sa s'an n-ale*
1st pers. plur.	*(nou z-ot) on n-ale*	1st pers. plur.	*(nou z-ot) on s'an n-ale*
2nd pers. plur.	*(vou z-ot) vou z-**alyii***	2nd pers. plur.	*(vou z-ot) vou vou z-an **n-alyii***
3rd pers. plur.	*(eu z-ot) i/sa ale*	3rd pers. plur.	*(eu z-ot) i/sa s'an n-ale*

In the Present tense, Class III verbs have three possible stems, but this is not necessarily the case for these verbs in the Past Imperfective. For example, for the verb *bwer* (to drink), in the present tense, there are the stems *bw-*, *buv-* and *bwev-*, but in the past imperfective, there is a single stem for all persons: *buv-*. This is also the case for verbs like *voulwer* (to want), where the single stem is *voul-*; *vann'* (to sell), where the single stem is *vand-*, *(v)wer* (to see), where the single stem is *vway-*, *pouwer* (to be able to) has a single stem *pouv-*, and so on. Other Class III verbs have two stems in the Past Imperfective, but they are not the same as for the Present: *jwii* (to play) has *jw-* and *jouy-*.

The past imperfective of *awer* and *et* are particular to MF:

Table 32: Past Imperfective of *awer* (to have)

1st pers. sing.	*j'ave*
2nd pers. sing.	*t'ave*
3rd pers. sing.	*i/sa/el/a (l)ave*
1st pers. plur.	*(nou z-ot) on (l)ave*
2nd pers. plur.	*(vou z-ot) vou (l)av**yii***
3rd pers. plur.	*i/sa (l)**onve***

Table 33: Past Imperfective of *et* (to be)

1st pers. sing.	*j'ite*
2nd pers. sing.	*t'ite*
3rd pers. sing.	*i/sa/el/a (l)ite*
1st pers. plur.	*(nou z-ot) on (l)ite*
2nd pers. plur.	*(vou z-ot) vou (l)it**yii***
3rd pers. plur.	*i/sa (l) **sonte***

There is variation in the conjugation of *fer* (to make) as follows:

Table 34: Past Imperfective of fer (to do/make)

1st pers. sing.	*j' fize*
2nd pers. sing.	*ti fize*
3rd pers. sing.	*i/sa/a/el fize*
1st pers. plur.	*(nou z-ot) on fize*
2nd pers. plur.	*(vou z-ot) vou fiz**yii***
3rd pers. plur.	*i/sa (l) **fonze** ~ fize*[1]

4.3.4 Pluperfect Tense

In some contexts, a past tense of the past imperfective is required. In English, one can say "I was eating", but if this type of action took place further in the past, a **pluperfect tense** would be required, as in "I had been eating". French, as well as MF, also have a pluperfect tense: *J'ave manjii* (I had eaten); *I ave vnu* (He had come); *I onve jwii* (They had played), etc. The pluperfect tense is therefore formed by conjugating the

[1] The reader will have noticed that the third person plural form for *awer*, *et*, and *fer* are *onve*, *sonte* and optionally *fonze*, respectively. These regularized forms, based on the Present tense form *on*, *son* and *fon* + /t/ (or /z/) + the Past Imperfect ending /e/ are also known in some varieties of North American French. *Sonte* is known in most CCF varieties as well as in New England, Louisiana, and Missouri French; *onve* is equally known in CCF but is much rarer. It is regularly used in Louisiana and Missouri French; *fonze* does not seem to be known in CCF, but it is used in both Louisiana and Missouri French varieties.

auxiliary *awer* for the appropriate person in the past imperfective, followed by a past participle.

4.3.5 Conditional Tense

There is very scant data available on **Conditional** tenses in MF. In English, the Conditional Present is "I would leave", "You would leave", etc., often shortened to "I'd leave" and "You'd leave". There is also a **Conditional Past**, as in "I would have left", "You would have left". In French, there is also a **Conditional Present**, as in *J'aimerais*, *Tu aimerais*, *Il aimerait*, *On aimerait*, *Vous aimeriez*, and *Ils aimeraient*. The Conditional Past is *J'aurais aimé*, *Tu aurais aimé*, etc.

Despite limited data, it seems the Conditional tense does exist in MF. Instances of *J'divre* (I should), *I divre* (He should), and *A divre* (She should) lead us to believe the conjugation would be:

Table 35: Present Conditional Tense of *divwer* (should)

1st pers. sing.	*j'divre*
2nd pers. sing.	*ti divre*
3rd pers. sing.	*i/a/sa/el/a divre*
1st pers. plur.	*(nou z-ot) on divre*
2nd pers. plur.	*(vou z-ot) vou **divriyii***
3rd pers. plur.	*i/sa (l) devre*

We also have noted the existence of *J'are voulu* (I would have wanted), so the **Conditional Past** also exists. Notice the form of the auxiliary /are/ (SF *aurait*). On this basis, we propose the following:

Table 36: Present Conditional Tense of *awer* (to have)

1st pers. sing.	*j'are*
2nd pers. sing.	*t(i) are*
3rd pers. sing.	*i/a/sa/el/a are*
1st pers. plur.	*(nou z-ot) on are*
2nd pers. plur.	*(vou z-ot) vou z-**aryii***
3rd pers. plur.	*i/sa (l) are*

4.4 Subjunctive Mood

In French, certain verbs, such as *falloir* (to have to), *vouloir* (to want), and *exiger* (to require), require the subjunctive mood in the subordinate clause, as in *Il faut que tu **partes*** (You have to leave) and *Ils veulent que vous **mangiez*** (They want you to eat). In MF, most verbs in Subjunctive mood have been simplified to the **Indicative**, as in:

*I voudron pa k'on **pran** li diseu.*

They won't want us to come up on top. (In French, one would expect the Subjunctive form *prenne*.)

I fole pa k'i ***von*** *plu lwaen ki sa.*
They didn't need to go farther than that. (In French, one would expect the Subjunctive form *aillent.*)

I m'on dji k'i' ore falu ki j' ***fe*** *vnir aen gaa.*
They told me that it would have been necessary that I had a guy come (over). (In French, one would expect the Subjunctive form *fasse*.)

On the other hand, the following equally occur: *I fo tou l'tan k'i* ***sway*** *kontan* (They always have to be happy), where the form **sway** is the third person plural subjunctive form for *et* (to be) or *I poura m'djiir kwa s'e i fodra ki j'****fas*** (He could tell me what I will have to do), where ***fas*** is the present subjunctive (first person singular) form of *fer* (to do). Because of the rarity of subjunctive forms in MF, we do not provide any conjugation tables for it, and more research is needed in this area.

4.5 Imperative Mood

MF has maintained the Imperative mood of SF. Imperatives are used in commands and are addressed to a second person, singular or plural, or collectively to a first person plural as in English: "Let's go!". As in SF, MF imperatives are identical to second person singular and plural of the Indicative Present tense but without subject pronouns:

Manj ton gato! Eat your cake!

Fet atansyon! Be careful (plur.)!

Fe pa sa! Don't do that! (sing.)

L'vii-vou! Get up (plur.)

Lev-twe! 'Get up (sing.)

Va paa la! Don't go there (sing.)

Nitwey ta shanm! Clean your room (sing.)

For the collective first person plural, MF also uses the first person plural form; for example, *Alon!* (SF *Allons!*) (Let's go!); *Alon jwii!* (Let's go play!); *Parton tot swit!* (Let's leave immedietaly!).

4.6 Aspectual Verbal Expressions

As in CCF, MF has a number of aspectual verbal expressions used to express the way an action is about to be made, has been made, is usually made, etc. The sequence *(t)apre* + infinitive expresses an action that is taking place at the time of speech: *J'apre manjii* or *J't-apre manjii* (I am eating (as I speak)); *Lii bibii son t-apre braayii* (The babies are crying (right now)). The construction *pour* + infinitive expresses an action that is about to take place, as in *Ji pour parchiir* (I'm about to leave); *Y ite pour alii travayii me i s'a fet mal aa janm* (He was about to go to work but he hurt his leg). Another aspectual verbal construction is *an traen di* + infinitive (to be in the process of), as in *I t-an traen d'shantii* (He's (in the process of) singing); *J't-an traen d'ikriir* (I'm (in the process of) writing).

4.7 Copular Expressions

As in French, MF has what are called **copular expressions**, where the verb *et* (to be) is followed by an adjective or adverb. This construction also exists in English, as in "I am happy/cold/hungry/fast". Here are some examples:

J'i kontan.
I'm happy.

T'i fret?
Are you cold?
Y e vit.
He's fast.

I son kapab.
They're able.

On n-e oblijii.
We're obliged.

4.8 Passive Voice

Active voice sentences are sentences where the subject (agent and subject) is performing the action described by the verb on the patient (and object), as in "The dog bit me", where "the dog" is both subject and agent, and "me" is the patient and object. Passive voice sentences are those where the object/patient becomes the subject but remains the patient, as in "I was bitten by the dog", where "dog" is now object of the preposition "by". Passive sentences in MF are constructed around the reflexive verb *si fer* followed by the infinitive of the verb in question: *I s' fon atakii par lii yamou* (They're (being) attacked by the bees); *Lii z-ilev si son fet piniir par la metres d'ikol* (The students were punished by the school teacher); *Ji m' swi fet frapii par un trok* (I was hit by a truck). For the moment, it is impossible to determine to what extent MF speakers use the passive voice, but it certainly exists. More research is required here.

Chapter 5 Prepositions, Adverbs, and Conjunctions

5.0 Prepositions

Prepositions constitute a class of invariable words and are nearly always followed by a complement. Prepostions can be simple or complex; for example, in MF, *a* (to), *dan* (in), *avek* (with), and *par* (by) are simple while *an d'sour* (underneath), *an ho* (above), *an baa* (below), *jisk a* (up to), and *an n-arier* (behind) are complex.

When certain prepositions are followed by definite determiners *li* or *lii*, they form a contracted determiner: *a* + *li* or *a* + *lii* become /o/, as in *J'm'an va o baar* (I'm going to the bar); *Eu z-ot, sa paas leu z-iver o z-ita* ((As for them), they spend their winters in the States). As well, *di* + *li* may become *dju* and *di* + *lii* may become *dji* for some speakers, but certainly not for all, who rather tend to say *di li/d'li*, *di lii/d'lii*: *J'veu dju beur ~ j'veu di beur ~ j'veu d'li beur* (I want some butter).

5.1 The Meaning of MF Prepositions

In the following table, prepositions are listed according to the meaning they express:

Table 37: MF Prepositions

Meaning	Preposition	Example	English
Spacial	*a*	*M'an va a Brandon*	I'm going to Brandon
	dan	*Me sa dan l'sak*	Put it in the bag
	disu	*Lii liiv son disu la tab*	The books are on the table
	an d'sour	*Lii liiv son an d'sour la tab*	The books are under the table
	an n-aryer	*Va an n-aryer*	Go behind
	divan	*I son divan mwaen*	They're before me
	ant	*Me twe ant Mari pi Ann*	Place yourself between Mary and Ann
	shi	*On va shi twe*	We're going to your place
	apre	*Lii moush son t-apre no z-ot*	The flies are after us
	kont	*La pel i kont la port*	The shovel is against the door
	lwaen d(i)	*I res lwaen d'la vil*	He lives far from the city
	araa	*Le trok i araa la shed*	The truck is close by the shed
	A traver	*A traver li bwaa-la*	Across the woods there

	jisk'a	*I va marshii jiska l'ikol*	He'll walk up to the school
	li lon d(i)	*Li lon d'la mer, s'i bon*	Along the sea is nice
	pre d(i)	*Il i pre d'mwaen*	He's close to me
	prosh d(i)/dju	*J'res prosh dju lak*	I live close to the lake
	a peu pre	*S't a peu pre deu mil*	It's about two miles
Temporal	*a*	*Ariv a neuv eur*	Arrive at nine
	dan	*I va vniir dan djis minut*	He'll come in 10 minutes
	pandan	*pandan l'Karem*	During Lent
	pour	*Rest isit pour deu z-eur*	Stay here for two hours
	apre	*Paar apre no z-ot*	Leave after us
	avan	*I va vniir avan midji*	He'll come before noon
	a lantour d(i)	*S't'a lantour d(i) midji*	It's about noontime
	jisk'a tan k(i)	*Jisk'a tan k'i ariiv*	Up until he arrives
Cause, Goal, Means, Manner	*par*	*I s'e fet frapii par aen shaar*	He was hit by a car
	pour	*J'travay pour l'arjan*	I work for the money
	avek	*I travay avek sii maen*	He works with his hands
	a koz	*Il i mor a koz li kanser*	He died because of cancer
	san	*Y a parchi san manjii*	He left without eating
	kont	*M'a gajii kont twe*	I will bet against you
Possession	*a*	*L'jwal a Mari*	Mary's horse
	dju ~ di ~ d'l(a)	*La port dju ~ di shaar; la klii d'la port; la port d'l'ikol*	The car's door; the door's key; the school's door
Quantity	*pre d(i)*	*J'kane pre di deu mil quarts*	I used to can nearly 2,000 quarts
	san	*san djiir li shaple*	without saying the rosary

In MF, many English prepositions have been borrowed, such as "on", "off", "out", etc., as in Me la radyo on (Put on the radio); Y e rvnu back (He came back); Li refrii l'a kaalii out (The referee called him out), where the preposition becomes an adverb.

5.2 Prepositions Can Have Multiple Meanings

A number of prepositions can have multiple meanings depending on the context; for example, *S't'**a** twe* (It's yours) (ownership); *I fe fret **a** Winnipeg* (It's cold in

Winnipeg) (spacial); *M'a y-alii* ***a*** *pyii* (I'll go on foot) (manner); and *Vyaen t'an a neuv eur* (come at nine) (temporal).

5.3 Prepositional Verbs

Certain verbs in MF require a following preposition (this is not a complete list!):

Verb + a

aprann' a: *Y apran a liir.*
He's learning to read.

d(i)mandii a: *J'a d'mandii a Pyer.*
I asked Peter.

pansii a: *Sh'pans a Mari.*
I'm thinking of Mary.

aportii a: *I aport souvan di prezan a sa jaeng.*
He often brings gifts to his girlfriend.

djiir a: *Ko se t'a dji d'fer a Pyer?*
What did you tell Peter to do?

konet a: *J'la konese paa a el.*
I didn't know her. (For some speakers only!)

Verb + d(i)

konchinwii d(i): *Sh'konchinu d'travayii.*
I continue working.

djisidii d(i): *On a djisidii d'parchiir.*
We decided to leave

eseyii d(i): *J'esey d'edii.*
I try to help.

finiir d(i): *Li bibii y a fini d'susii.*
The baby has finished suckling.

oubliyii d(i): *I oubli d(i) s'lavii avan d's'koushii.*
He forgets to wash himself before going to bed.

si souvniir d(i): *I s'souvyaen pa d'sa.*
He doesn't remember that.

Verb + par

komansi par: *Ya komansii par manchiir.*
He began by lying.

5.4 Adverbs

Adverbs are invariable words that modify verbs, adjectives, prepositions, other adverbs, parts of sentences, and entire sentences. Their function is to indicate time, manner, place, frequency, purpose, degree, and a whole range of other possible meanings. There are also conjunctive adverbs that behave like conjunctions in that they can link two parts of sentences or phrases, as in "I don't want to go; **besides**, I'm not feeling well". Adverbs can be simple or complex: *d(i)maen* (tomorrow), *souvan* (often), *vit* (quickly), *yer* (yesterday), etc., but *a pi pre* (approximately), *avan-t-yer* (day before yesterday), *kek paar* (somewhere). Some adjectives may function as adverbs, as in *manjii sho* (to eat (while it is) hot).

Adverbs in MF are generally identical to those of SF, and there are literally hundreds of them. They can be classified according to their meaning. Below are a few examples, along with their semantics and an English equivalent:

Table 38: MF Adverbs

Meaning	Adverb	English Equivalent
Affirmation	*wi*	yes
Negation	*paa*	no, not
	non	no
	pantout	not at all
	jame	never
	(a)ryaen	nothing
	p(l)u	no more
Consequence	*alor*	then, so
	(*sa*) *fek*	then, so, therefore
	osi	as well, also
Quantity	*a pi/peu pre*	approximately
	asii	enough
	an mas	a lot, lots, much
	mwaen	less, fewer
	plus	more
	preski	nearly
	kaziman	nearly
	tre	very
	tro	too much

	bokou	a lot
	iot ~ tout	all
	otour di	around
Comparison	*byaen*	well
	myeu	better
	(aen) peu	(a) little
	mwaen	less
	osi/otan (ki)	as much
	li plu + adjective	the most
	li mwaen	the least
Location	*o d'seu*	over, on top
	an d'sour	under, below
	dihor	outside
	an d(i)dan	inside
	d(i)van	in front of
	daryer/an n-aryer	behind
	lwaen	far
	prosh	near
	a kotii	next to
	araa	next to
	kek paar	somewhere
	isit	here
	laa	there
	li lon di	alongside
	alantour	around
	otour	around
	partou	everywhere
Order	*dabor*	first
	answit	next
	apre	after
	an n-avant	before
	ant	between
	an n-aryer	behind
Probability	*p't'et baen*	perhaps
	oubaendon	or else
Possibility	*sa d'ler*	it seems
Time	*asteur*	nowadays
	ankor	again
	ojourdwi	today
	b(y)aento	soon
	d(i)maen	tomorrow
	apre d(i)maen	after tomorrow
	yer	yesterday
	avan-t-yer	day before yesterday
	jame	never

	lontan	a long time
	souvan	often
	kek fwaa	sometimes
	lontan	a long time
	taar	late
	d'bonn eur	early
	an r'taar	late
	plu taar	later
	toujour	always
	avan	before
	baento	soon
	dija	already
	taleur	later
Manner	*baen*	well
	kaziman	nearly
	a mwachii	half way
	move	bad(ly)
	myeu	better
	itou	also, as well

A productive way of forming adverbs in both SF and MF is to add the suffix *-man* (SF *-ment*) to certain adjectives or past participles. Below is a shortened list of adverbs in *–man* collected from the Lavallée St. Laurent corpus:

Table 39: MF Adverbs in -man

sipariman (separately)	*otriman* (otherwise)
telman (so much)	*sertenman* (certainly)
kaziman (nearly)	*kouraman* (frequently)
vreman (truly)	*saenpliman* (simply)
selman (only)	*konpletman* (completely)
justiman (justly)	*trankilman* (quietly)
dousman (softly, slowly)	*probabliman* (probably)

5.4.1 Placement of Adverbs

The placement of adverbs in both SF and MF is complex. If the adverb modifies a simple verb, it generally follows: *I marsh vit* (He walks quickly). Things get complicated if the verb is compound (i.e., an auxiliary verb + past participle): if the adverb is short, if it is a manner or measure adverb (*tro*, *asii*) as well as for some time adverbs (*souvan*, *toujour*), then the adverb follows the auxiliary: *El a souvan parlii d'twe* (She often spoke of you).

Negation adverbs such as *paa* (not) or *jame* (never) immediately follow simple verbs and follow auxiliaries in compound verbs: *J'em paa la konfichuur* (I don't like jam); *Y a jame v'nu* (He never came). Adverbs that modify whole sentences to situate them spatio-temporally are generally placed at the head or at the end of the sentence: *Y on parchi yer* or *Yer y on parchi* (They left yesterday or Yesterday they left). Adverbs that modify an infinitive follow it: *I veu manjii taleur* (He wants to eat later), while adverbs that modify an adjective or another adverb precede: *S'i baen bo* (It's really nice); *S'i tro lwaen* (It's too far).

5.5 Conjunctions

Conjunctions are invariable words that join two groups of words, phrases, or sentences. They can be either simple or complex: *me* (but); *ou* (or); *(i)pi* (and); but *pars k(i)* (because); *sof k(i)* (on the other hand); *(ou)baendon* (or).

There are two types of conjunctions:

(1) coordinating; and
(2) subordinating.

Coordinating conjunctions link two words, phrases, or sentences; for example, *Pyer ipi Tom son kouzaen* (Peter and Tom are cousins); *I voule y-alii me y ite tro malad* (He wanted to go, but he was too sick). Subordinating conjunctions introduce a subordinate clause: *J'kre baen k'i fo parchiir* (I believe we have to leave); *On va jwii mem s'i fe nwer* (We'll play even if it's dark). The most common coordinating conjunctions in MF are *(i)pi*, *me*, and *(ou)baendon*.

5.5.1 Coordinating Conjunctions

Coordinating conjunctions have different meanings. Below are a few possible meanings:

Table 40: Meaning of Coordinating Conjunctions

Addition	*(i)pi*	*Pyer ipi Tom son kouzaen* Peter and Tom are cousins
Choice or restriction	*ou(baendon)*	*Ti veu-chi d'la galet ou(baendon) di krep?* Do you want bannock or pancakes?
Cause	*a koz ki*	*Y a parchi a koz ki e taar* He left because it's late
	pars ki	*Y a parchi pars ki e taar* He left because it's late
Comparison	*kom*	*On travay kom di shyaen!* We're working like dogs!

Condition	*si*	*M'a t'donii san pyas si t'i kapab riparii ma mashin* I'll give you 100 dollars if you can fix my machine
Opposition	*me*	*I veu byaen y-alii me i peu paa* He's willing to go but he can't
Time	*avan ki*	*Fo dijinii avan k'i ariv* It's necessary to eat before he arrives

5.5.2. Subordinating Conjunctions

Subordinating conjunctions introduce a subordinate clause that depends on the main clause; for example, *k(i)* as in *J'veu **k**'i va kriir la vash* (I want him to go get the cow); *J'pans **k**'on dwe yalii* (I think we have to go).

Table 41: Meaning of Subordinating Conjunctions

Cause	*a koz k(i)*	*A koz ki s'e aen tret.* Because he's a traitor.
	pars k(i)	*Pars k' y a d'larjan.* Because he's got money.
	a mwaen k(i)	*A mwaen k' sa vyaen plu gro.* Unless it gets bigger.
	pour k(i)	*Pour k' ji paas la.* In order for me to pass there.
Temporal	*kan (k(i))*	*On va sorchiir kan (ki) i fe bo.* We'll go out when it's nice.
	dipwi (k(i))	*On dize li shaple depwi k'j'mi rappel.* We said the rosary ever since I remember.
	osi to k(i)	*Osito k' y a d'la konpitichyon.* As soon as there's competition.
	avan k(i)	*Avan k' li pchi gaa li pran.* Before the little guy takes it.
	jiska k(i)	*Jiska k' la vyand e kwit.* Until the meat is cooked.
Manner	*kom si*	*Kom si s'ite yer.* As if it were yesterday.
	plito k(i)	*Plito ki d'et siryeu.* Rather than being serious.
Condition	*si*	*On va restii a (la) maenzon si i mouy.* We'll stay home if it rains.
Comparison	*kom s(i)*	*I jou d'la gitar kom si yite aen pro.* He plays guitar as if he were a pro.
Opposition	*mem s(i)*	*I va yalii a la pesh mem s'i fe fret.* He'll

		go fishing even if it’s cold.

Chapter 6 Syntax and Discourse

6.0 What Is Syntax?

In linguistics, syntax is the study of **sentence structure**: how words combine to form phrases, clauses, and sentences. For example, "The cat sat on a mat" has correct syntax in English, while "Cat the on mat sat a" has incorrect syntax. Syntax therefore determines correct word order, determines internal structure of complex sentences, regulates subject-verb agreement, and more.

The syntactic rules of a language are often based on formal or written language, and these rules do not always apply to free, informal speech. Nevertheless, French (and therefore MF) can be said to be a Subject-Verb-Object ("SVO") language in that in a simple declarative sentence, the subject will come first, followed by the verb, the object (if there is one) coming last, as in *Jean voit Marie* (John sees Mary), where *Jean* is the subject, *voit* is the verb, and *Marie* is the object. Syntax also determines how groups of words are constituted into **constituents**. For example, in the sentence "The tallest students often play basketball at school", "the tallest students" forms a noun-phrase ("NP"), "often play basketball" forms a verb-phrase ("VP") and "at school" forms a prepositional-phrase ("PP"). Together, these three phrases form the sentence.

A particular feature of syntax is **movement.** For example, in the interrogative sentence "What did you eat?", the object "what" has been moved from its normal post-verbal position to the head of the sentence. Another example is the movement of object pronouns in French. In a sentence such as *Jean le voit* (John sees him), the object pronoun, which syntactically follows the verb, since French is a SVO language (*Jean voit le*), is moved to a pre-verbal position. Another example of movement is called "subject raising". In a sentence such as *Jean semble être malade* (John seems to be sick), the subject of *être malade* is *Jean*, but according to the SVO pattern, it should appear directly before its verb-phrase *être malade*. It has been "raised" (or moved to a higher verb in the sentence (*semble*).

Since MF is a dialect of French, the vast majority of the syntactic rules of French also apply to MF, and it is not our intention to detail them here, since most available printed French grammar texts will provide the necessary information. Nevertheless, MF does have a number of syntactic structures that are not found in SF, many of these being the result of Algonquian influence. We will discuss some of them below.

6.1 Possession and Genitive Constructions

SF expresses possession either by the use of possessive determiners: *mon enfant*, *ton enfant*, *son enfant*, etc. (my, your, his/her child) or by the construction *X de Y*, as in *la maison de Paul* (lit. the house of Paul) (Paul's house), where the order is possessed object + *de* + possessee. The same order is used to express the **genitive** as in *clair de lune* (lit. *light of moon*) (moonlight). While MF also uses this order to express the genitive, as in

pan d'arey (earring), *li kat di jwiye* (the Fourth of July), and *lii dan di biibii* (baby teeth), some speakers have a different order to express **possession**, where the order is possessee + possessive determiner + possesed object, as in *Pyer son jwal e t-aen koureur* (Peter's horse is a racehorse), instead of SF *le cheval de Pierre est un cheval de course.* This construction is a calque (copy) of the Cree possessive construction. In Cree, "John's shoes" would be said *Djaan o-maskisin*, where *o-* is a third person possessive prefix (equivalent to "his"). In MF, one can say *Jan si soulyii*.

In section 2.2.3 (on Possessive determiners), we discussed the fact that in MF, as in Plains Cree, inalienable beings or objects, such as kinship terms, body parts, familiar objects, etc. must always be determined by a possessivc determiner. So, one cannot just say **frer* (brother); one must say whose brother it is: *mon frer* (my brother), *son frer* (his brother), and so on. These two possessive construction can combine and so one can hear constructions such as *mon per son n-onk* (my father's uncle) or *mon difaen per sa maenzon-la* (my deceased father's house).[1]

CCF has another way of expressing possession, which MF also uses. Instead of the construction *X de Y* as in *la maison de Pierre* (Peter's house), the preposition *à* is used (so *X à Y*) : *la maison à Pierre*. In MF, one can have *la maenzon a Pyer*, *la vash a Loui* (Louis's cow), *la rob a Mari* (Mary's dress), and so on.

6.2 Interrogative Constructions

In section 3.1.10, we saw that in St. Laurent, Manitoba, an /a/ can be added to the subject interrogative pronoun *ki*, as in *A ki t'a montrii dansii la djig?* (Who taught you to dance the jig?). This construction seems particular to St. Laurent; at least, we have not heard it used elsewhere.

In MF, the most typical way of asking direct or indirect questions is similar to CCF; i.e., by the use of a declarative construction (SVO) but with a rising intonation pattern: *Sa reste isit avan*? (They used to stay here before?); *I ite asi gro, lwi, aen*? (He was pretty fat, him, no?), *Pi, mon peper, i parle soteu?* (So, my grandfather, he spoke Saulteux?).

Two other ways of asking questions is by:

(1) adding the suffix *-chi* to the verb, with rising intonation: *I ave-chi di z-animo?* (Did they have animals?);[2] or

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[1] *mon difaen per* is also a calque from Cree. In Cree, mention of a deceased person must always be accompanied by the suffix *-ipan* (deceased). MF has borrowed this construction but uses the adjective *difaen* (SF *défunt*) (deceased) instead.

[2] The *-chi* interrogative marker comes from French *-ti* (which has become *-tu* in most CCF varieties). It is interesting to note that Plains Cree has borrowed the French -ti interrogative marker (pronounced /tsi/), which is also used in Southern Michif and also pronounced /chi/.

(2) beginning the sentence with *esk(i)*, as in *Eski ti va parchiir apre?* (Are you going to leave after?).

In St. Laurent (at least), there are two other ways of asking questions. If the question involves a choice, as in "Do you remember if he left for one day, two days, a week or even longer?", one adds the term *oubaendon* (lit. 'or else'; from French *ou bien donc*): *T'an souvyaen-ti s'il parte pour enn journii, deu jour, enn smenn, oubaendon?*; *A kwa ti jouwe kan t'ite a Ideal, ptet dihoar, oubaendon?* (What did you play at when you were at Ideal, maybe outside?).

One may use the expression *e baen* (so), as in *Ton per s'e maryii deu fwe ... avek ki la primyer fwe e baen?* (Your father marred twice … with whom the first time?). This *e baen* can be placed in different parts of the sentence: *Ton gran-peer e baen kouman i s'aple?* (What was your grandfather's name?). It is important to note that there seems to be no pause nor any intonation change before or after *e baen*.

6.3 Relative Clauses

In section 3.1.9, we discussed the various relative pronouns used in MF. Compared to SF, MF has a much simpler system, and the relative object pronoun *k(i)* (SF *que*) is often deleted, as in *lii z-afer __ t'a dan ta shop-la* (the things you have in your shop).

There are two main types of relative clauses: **restrictive** and **explicative.** Restrictive relative clauses restrict the extension of the term that it modifies, and deleting the relative clause largely modifies the meaning of the message. For example, *Aen n-om ki travay foar va ganyii plus d'arjan.* (A man who works hard will earn more money.), where *ki travay foar* is a restrictive relative clause, modifying and extending information on the noun *aen n-om*. Removing the relative clause changes the meaning of the whole sentence: *Aen n-om va ganyii plus d'arjan.* (A man will earn more money.). Restrictive relative clauses are typically produced with no intonation changes and no momentary stopping in the speech flow. Explicative relative clauses do not restrict the extension of the term it modifies, and deleting the clause does not really modify the gist of the message. For example, *Jan, ki travay pour no z-ot, e parchi an vil.* (John, who works for us, left for town.). The explicative relative clause *ki travay pour no z-ot* merely adds some incidental information, and its deletion does not change the essential meaning of the message. In writing, explicative relative clauses are typically accompanied by commas before and after the clause. In speech, the intonation pattern is modified and a brief pause before and after the clause indicates that it is an explicative relative and not a restrictive one.

6.4 Discourse and Discourse/Narrative Analysis

If syntax studies how sentences are formed, **discourse** studies how sentences work together to communicate ideas. The meaning of a given discourse depends not only on the words being used but also on who is speaking, to whom, where, when, and why.

For example: *Can you open the window?* is grammatically a **question** but discursively, it is a **request** for someone to do something.

Discourse goes beyond sentences and involves paragraphs, conversations, interviews, narratives, speeches, texts, and more. It includes how ideas are introduced, developed, and connected. In conversations (a form of discourse), it involves how speakers take turns. Discourse also implies a certain degree of cohesion in the linguistic links, such as pronouns, conjunctions, etc. For example, in the sequence "Mary arrived late. She apologized.", there is **cohesion** between "Mary" and the pronoun "she" of the second sentence. There would not be cohesion—and therefore incomprehension on the part of the listener—in a sequence such as "Mary arrived late. He apologized.". Another aspect of discourse is that it must make sense as a whole, which is technically called **coherence**.

The study of discourse is called **discourse analysis**, and it examines the structure, function, and context of language in communication. It focuses on how words, phrases, and interactions contribute to constructing meaning and how these linguistic choices relate to broader social, cultural, or political frameworks. This type of analysis can be applied to both spoken and written forms of communication, including interviews, conversations, social media posts, advertisements, policy documents, etc.

A specific type of discourse analysis is **narrative analysis**. This type of analysis explores how stories and narratives are constructed to convey identity, experience, or moral messages. This approach examines the sequence, structure, and purpose of storytelling. Narrative inquiry uses field texts, such as stories, autobiography, journals, field notes, letters, conversations, interviews, family stories, photos (and other artifacts), and life experience as the units of analysis to research and understand the way people create meaning in their lives as narratives.

6.5 Difference Between Written and Spoken Text

There are a number of important differences between written and oral texts. Generally, when someone speaks, the speaker does it spontaneously, in real time; the speaker does not have much time, if any, to plan their production, and it is often difficult to correct or come back on what has been said. When someone writes, the writer has time to think about what to say, to plan the content as well as the form of the message. The writer can correct, erase what has been written, and write a new sentence. Oral speech is filled with hesitations, fillers such as "uh", "hmm", etc., repetitions, sentence fragments, and so on, while written texts are much better organized and devoid of elements typical of oral speech. However, oral speech possesses means of expression that written speech has difficulty in rendering. For example, intonation and the whole range of speech melody is difficult to express by punctuation in writing. Finally, oral syntax may be quite different from written syntax. One may easily hear a spoken statement such as: "The ol' man, a motorbike, no way", while in writing, one might expect something like: "My father does not want me to have a motorcycle".

Grammar books and dictionaries typically do not describe the kind of syntactic structures common in spoken speech, since they are based on written data. If one relies solely on the grammatical rules of written texts to analyse the grammaticality of oral productions, one will necessarily judge a great number of oral sentences to be ungrammatical, even though they are perfectly acceptable in oral speech. In light of the unpredictability of spoken texts, there exists no reference grammar of oral speech in any known language, making analyzing any stretch of spoken material rather difficult.

6.6 MF Text Analysis: Red River Resistence and Battle of Batoche

In 1984, one year before the 100th aniversary of the 1885 Métis Resistance against the army of the Canadian Federation, which ended in the Métis defeat at the Battle of Batoche, a journalist working for the Saskatchewan radio/television station of the French-language Radio-Canada network interviewed a number of Saskatchewan Métis for a projected broadcast dealing with these historic events. We were able to obtain copies of tapes of some of these interviews, and we transcribed one of them in view of analyzing a number of structural and pragmatic aspects.

The interview we chose is with a well known Métis and French-language activist from St. Louis, Saskatchewan, Médéric McDougall. He was born in 1903, at St. Louis de Langevin, Saskatchewan, and died in 1989. He was the founder of the Métis Society of Saskatchewan, a long-time employee of the Municipality of St. Louis, a school trustee for many years, a member of the village Council, and president of the local chapter of the *Association culturelle franco-canadienne*. He received the Order of Canada in 1986. He was the grandson of Alexandre McDougall and of Maxime Lépine (on his mother's side), two men who were active in the 1885 Resistance at Batoche.[3]

Originally, we had transcribed the interview in SF, but we have decided to use our spelling system for MF in what follows.[4] The interview deals with McDougall's personal point of view of the historic events that took place at Red River in 1869–1870 and to a lesser extent of those at Batoche in 1885. Below the transcription, we offer an English version, and we analyse a number of features of the text. To facilitate referencing, each line of the transcription is numbered.

Lii troub

1 Baen, j'poura djiir ki, a propo di kwa s'e ki s'a paasii an djizwit-san-swasant-i-djis o
2 Manitoba, ki s'ite k'lii Michis voule awer leu drwaa d'teraen, i sa a d'l'er ki, kom j'li
3 z-a konpri – d'apre kwa s'ki nou z-on dji kan k'on l'ite jenn – k'li gouvernaman voule
4 pa akseptii, pi son randju asii foar k'i l'onve foarmii aen gouvernaman provizwer k'sa

[3] Lawrence Barkwell (ed.), "Métis Dictionary of Biography, vol. M" (2019), available at: www.academia.edu/38980969/Metis_Dictionary_of_Biography_Volume_M.

[4] In 2002, an earlier French-language version of this analysis was published as:
Papen, Robert. « Les troub' : analyse linguistique d'un texte oral en français des Métis » in *Cahier franco-canadiens de l'Ouest*, Numéro spécial *La question métisse entre la polyvalence et l'ambivalence identitaires*, vol 14, no. 1-2, Presses universitaires de Saint-Boniface, pp. 61-88.

l'aple. Toujour baen k'sa a rvirii ki l'on yu dju troub.

Li gouvernaman ave anweyii dii z-arpanteur, pi toujour baen, sa voule pa lii z-akseptii. Y an n-ave parmi seuz-la ki sonte baen malkomoad. Y ave henn nomii *Scott* ki nou diz ki…i voule s'rann' met. I voule s'moakii dii Michis. I voule djiir ki…apre k'i l'onve pri prisonyii…pi l'ave pa peur ki l'arivra ryaen pars k'i sonte tro laash. Sa fe, toujour baen k'i lii z-ave fe asii d'troub pi k'i s'moake asii d'eu z-ot k'i l'on djisidii d'awer enn kour. Sa a d'l'er k'i l'on djisidii k'i sra fuziyii.

Toujour baen k'i on voulu blaamii Riel pour sa. Pour mwe, j'dira k'Loui Riel ite pa li sel a blaamii, pars k'i ite an tet dju gouvernaman provizwer, kom j'konpran, me s'i lii z-ot k'on djisidii di l'fuziyii. Y an n-ave pluzyeur la-d'dan. J'kone pa tout lisel ki y ave la-d'dan me j'an kone henn k'ite la…son non : Anbrwez Lipin, pars ki shu aen desandan d'Lipin. Sa fe…an tan d'ger, on dire k'si k'i ariv dju troub, s'e sa ki ariv. Y an n-a ki s'fon fuziyii! Pars k'apre sa, y on pandju Riel, pi j'pans ki…l'onve fe baen dii z-istwer a propo di *Scott*. Pi la apre sa, sa pann' Riel! J'pans ki s'ite piir d'pann' Riel pars ki lwi…pour mwe…y a toujour eseyii vreman d's'aranjii san awer dju janr di *bloodshed*, kom k'i diz. Sa fe, j'pansra k'Loui Riel ite pa si koupab ki sa!

Toujour baen k'sa a mal rvirii. Y a foulu k'Riel pi Anbrwez Lipin k'i s'sov dju Manitoba pars k'i l'oron iti mi an prizon. Pi mem, j'pans k'i l'onve mem djisidii di pann' Anbrwez Lipin. Me y ave parchii lwi osi, pi kan k'i l'a rivnu, baen i l'on paasii aen prose, kom j'konpran. Pi la, toujour baen k'i l'on djisidii di l'laashii, d'i doanii sa libertii me k'y ave pardju si drwe. Y ave pa d'teraen, y ave pardju sii drwe d'vot, pi tou sa. Sa fe k'i s'ave an-alii dan la Saskachiwann…a Foarjet, Saskachiwann. S'i la k'y a ilvii sa famiy.

Sa, s'ite a propo dju troub di Saen Boanifas…di Winipeg. I apre sa, sa a kalmii…Pi j' dira ki di d'la, mi paran on mouvii d'Winipeg a Batoash; an katri-vaen-deu, kom ki j' konpran.

Sa fe la, apre sa…bean l'troub di Batoash a v'nu. I la ankoar, lii Michis di Batoash, Saen Loran, Saen Loui, voule eseyii awer dju teraen…pour awer dju teraen…pour awer leu plas a rizidii. Pi la, li gouvernaman lii z-ikoute pa. Sa fe k'i on fe d'mandii Loui Riel. Si j'a baen konpri, y ave kat k'i l'on itii l'wer, pi i l'on djisidii d'vnir prann' leu paar a Batoash. Toujour baen k' kan i l'a arivii par isit, i l'on u enn asanblii. Pi la baen, i l'on djisidii k'sa foule k'sa fas keukshoz pars k'sa voule awer dju teraen pour restii. Pi la, li gouvernaman fidiral, dan l'tan d'*John A. Macdonald*, ki ite l'gouvernaman konservateur, i lii z-a pa akseptii. I s'okupe pa d'eu z-ot. Sa fe sa l'arvirii a la faen k'i l'on eu dju troub. La ribelyon a arivii pi y a u dii jan ki s'son fe chuwii a propo d'sa…

English Version

Well, I could say that, concerning what happened in 1870 in Manitoba, is that the Métis wanted their property rights and it seems that, as I understood them—according to what they told us when we were young—that the government didn't want to accept, and they were strong enough that they had formed a provisionary government, which is what they called it. In any case, it turned out that they had troubles.

The government had sent out surveyors, and anyways, they didn't want to accept them. There were some among them that were quite troublesome. There was one named Scott that they tell us… he wanted to be master; he wanted to make fun of the Métis. He wanted to say that… after they had taken him prisoner… and he wasn't afraid that anything would happen, because they were too cowardly. Anyways, he bothered and mocked them enough that they decided to hold court. It seems that they decided that he would be executed.

In any case, they wanted to blame Riel for that. In my opinion, I would say that Louis Riel wasn't the only one to blame, because he was at the head of the provisionary government, as I understand, but it was the others who decided to execute him. There were quite a few among them. I don't know everyone that were among them, but I do know one who was there… his name is Ambroise Lépine, because I'm a descendent of Lépine. So, in war time, one could say that if trouble arises, that's what happens. There are some that are executed! Because after that, they hanged Riel, and I think that… they made up a lot of stories about Scott. Then after that, they hanged Riel! I think it was worse of having hanged Riel, because he… as far as I'm concerned… he always really tried to find a solution without having any kind of bloodshed, as they say. So, I would think that Louis Riel wasn't all that guilty!

In any case, things turned out badly. Riel and Ambroise Lépine had to flee Manitoba, because they would have been put in prison. And even… I think they had even decided to hang Ambroise Lépine. But he had left as well, and when he came back, well, they prosecuted him, as I understand it. And then, in any case, they decided to free him, to give him his liberty but that he had lost his rights. He had no land; he had lost his right to vote and all that. So, he went to Saskatchewan… to Forget, Saskatchewan. It's there that he raised his family.

That was about the troubles in Saint-Boniface… in Winnipeg. And after that, things calmed down. And I would say that from there, my parents moved from Winnipeg to Batoche, in '82, as I understand.

So, after that, well, trouble in Batoche came up. And again, the Métis of Batoche, Saint-Laurent, Saint-Louis, wanted to try to obtain land… to get land… to have a place to live. And then, the government wouldn't listen to them. So, they asked for Louis Riel. If I understood correctly, there were four that went to see him, and they decided to go take their part at Batoche. In any case, when he arrived around here, they had an assembly. And then, well, they decided that they had to do something, because they wanted land to

live on. And then, the federal government, in the time of John A. Macdonald, which was the Conservative government, didn't accept them. It didn't bother with them. So, it turned out in the end that they had troubles. There came to be a rebellion, and there were people who got killed about that.

6.6.1 Grammatical Analysis

From a grammatical point of view, there are a number of differences from what one would expect in SF, but which are typical of MF. For example, the third person possessive determiner form (lines 2, 34, 35) is *leu* instead of SF *leur*. This form is also typical in CCF. As well, the demonstrative pronouns are different from those in SF: *seuz-la* (line 7) instead of SF *ceux-là*, where a distinct feminine form (*seuz* instead of SF *celles*) is used to refer to masculine entities. This is typical of MF, where genders are often confused. What is interesting, however, is that usually, it is a masculine form that replaces a feminine form, while in this particular instance, the feminine replaces the masculine.

As for other pronoun forms, one will notice that the SF first person plural personal pronoun *nous* is replaced by *on* (line 16). This is typical of all colloquial varieties of French. The SF impersonal pronoun *ça*, equivalent to English "it" or "that" quite often replaces a SF third person personal pronoun (*il* or *ils*), as in lines 4, 5, 6, 18, 37, and 38. This use of *ça* as a personal pronoun is also known in CCF, but in this case, it always has a somewhat negative interpretation, as in *Les jeunes d'aujourd'hui, ça sait pas écrire!* (The young people today, they don't know how to write!), which is not the case in MF. This use of *ça* as a neutral personal pronoun is also well known in French varieties of Western Canada. In lines 18 and 37, however, the verbs do not agree with their subjects *sa*, as expected, but rather with the referents of *sa*, referring to specific groups of persons in both cases: *sa pann'* (SF *pendent*) (they hanged) and *sa fas keukshoz* (SF *fassent quelque chose*) (they had to do something). This semantic rather than grammatical agreement seems specific to MF.

In lines 10 and 39, we have the compound plural personal pronouns *eu z-ot* (SF *eux-autres*), which is typical of all varieties of CCF (along with *nou z-ot* (we), *vou z-ot* (you, plur.)). In lines 10 and 24–25, the indirect object pronouns *leur* (*k'i lii z-ave fe asii d'troub* and *lui* (*i l'on pasii aen prose*) are replaced by the direct object pronouns *lii* (SF *les*) or *le* (reduced to *l'*). Again, this feature is typical of CCF varieties.

Prepositions are mostly similar to SF ones, except for the pronunciation: *an* (SF *en*); *dii* (SF *des*); *pour* (SF *pour*); *a* (SF *à*); *dan* (SF *dans*), etc. Conversely, in lines 30 and 41, there is the doubled form *di d'la* and *di d'sa*, typical of CCF *de d'là*, *de d'ça.* As for conjunctions, MF often uses complex forms where the complementizer *k(i)* (SF *qu(e)*) is added, as in lines 3 *kan k'* (when), 16 *si k'* (if), 20 and 30 *kom k'* (as), and 24 *kan k'* (when). These complex forms do not seem to be systematic, since in line 36, there is the simple conjunction *kan* (SF *quand*) (when) without the complementizer. These complex froms are also regularly used in CCF.

SF *ce qui* or *ce que* 'that (which)' is usually replaced by *kwa s'i*, as in lines 1 and 3. Again, these forms are well known in many CCF varieties. Another feature typical of CCF is the multiplication of the complentizer *ki* (SF *que*) in a single proposition. For example, in lines 22–23 (*I a folu **k'**Riel pi Anbrwez Lipin **k'**i s'sov dju Manitoba*). The second ***k'*** would be superfluous in SF.

It is perhaps in the verb forms that MF most distinguishes itself from other CCF varieties. In general, the driving force behind these forms is regularization of irregular SF forms. For example, SF auxiliary verbs *avoir* and *être* in compound past tense are reduced to forms of *avoir* (*awer* in MF), as in lines 1 (*s'a pasii*), 24 (*i ave parchi*; *i l'a rivnu*), 27 (*s'ave an-alii*), 29 (*sa a kalmii*), 32 (*l'troub di Batoash a vnu*), and 40 (*la ribelyon a arivii*). The replacement of *être* (*et*) by *avoir* (*awer*) is not systematic, however since in lines 40–41, we find *ki s'**son** fe chuwii*. First person singular of *awer* is usually *a* rather than SF *ai*, thus reducing the paradigm to three oral forms instead of five in SF (*a*, *avii*, *on* versus *ai*, *a(s) avons*, *avez* and *ont*). The Conditional is typically replaced by the Future, as in lines 1 (*j'poura djiir*), 11 (*k'i sra fuziyii*), 12 (*j'dira*), 23 (*k'i l'oron iti mi an prizon*), etc., and the SF Pluperfect is replaced by the Compound Past, as in line 4 (*i son randju asii foar*) rather than the expected *z-ite* (SF *étaient rendus assez forts*), and a Compound Past is replaced by a Pluperfect in lines 17–18 (*l'onve fe baen dii z-istwer*).

Verb roots are often modified to make them more "regular". For example, in line 22, there is the form *I a foulu* (based on the SF Present tense form *il faut*, which is realized as *i fou* in MF) rather than the expected form *falu* (SF *fallu*). Likewise, in line 37 we find *sa foule k'sa fas keukshoz* rather than the expected *sa fale* (SF *fallait*).

If analogy plays an important role in the regularization of verb forms, sometimes it creates more complicated and "irregular" forms. The most striking examples of this are the forms for third person plural imperfect of SF *être* and *avoir*, which are *étaient* and *avaient* respectively, but which become *sonte* and *onve* in MF, both being based on the SF present tense forms *sont* and *ont*. As discussed in footnote 1 in chapter 4, the forms *sonte* and *onve* are also known in other North American French varieties, but are much less regularly used in most of them (especially *onve*), except in Louisiana and Missouri French, where they are as systematic as in MF.

Another interesting feature, which is both phonetical and grammatical, is the insertion of the sound /l/ in a number of circumstances, as in lines 3, 4, 4–5, 5, and elsewhere: *k'on **l**'ite jen, ki **l**'onve foarmii aen gouvernaman, k'sa **l**'aple, ki **l**'on yu dju troub*. In all cases, this intrusive /l/ occurs between two separate words, the first being vowel final and the second vowel initial. This type of insertion is also well known in several varieties of North American colloquial French. It is optional, however, since there are a number of cases where there are contiguous vowels without any insertion, as in lines 2 (*s**a** **a** d'ler*), 5 (*s**a** **a** rvirii*), 13 (*pars k'**i** **i**te*), and 16 (*s'e sa k**i** **a**riv*). It is obvious that for the insertion to take place, the second word has to be a verb, but it seems not be a sufficient condition, since in lines 2, 5, 13, and 16, the second word is indeed a verb, yet there is no insertion. It seems that that insertion of /l/ is limited to the verbs *avoir* and *être*, if and **only if** the subject is a noun, but if it is a pronoun, the insertion can take place

as long as the verb is vowel initial. More research is needed to explain the precise functioning of this insertion rule.

6.6.2 Syntatic Analysis

As mentioned in section 6.5, the syntax of written and oral texts is quite different. The former allows the writer to plan ahead, correct, and revise, while in oral texts (excluding written speeches), the speaker has very little time to plan ahead, since they are in "real" time. Of course, the speaker can correct the utterance, but these corrections mostly deal with lexicon and rarely with grammar. This most probably explains why many syntactic rules proposed in reference grammars rarely apply to oral texts, and why oral texts may often appear confusing, where *non sequiturs* (abrupt changes of subject), repititions, incomplete sentences, hesitations, and so on are frequent. As an example of this, the very first sentence of the above narrative is inordinately long and complex (lines 1–5). Here is a clause-by-clause breakdown of the sentence :

- The principal clause (*j'poura diir*… (I could say…)) is followed by a stranded complementizer *ki* (that), followed by a comment containing a prepositional phrase *a propo di*… (about which…)), to which is embedded another clause introduced by a complex conjunctival construction containing a verb (*di kwa s'e*… (lit. that, which is…)), introducing the clause *ki s'a pasii an djizwit-san-swasant-i-dis o Manitoba.*
- The original complementizer *ki* is then repeated, introducing the subordinate clause *s'ite* (lit. that it was), followed by a second subordinate clause introduced by another complementizer *ki*, *ki lii Michis voula awer leur drwaa d'tiraen* (that the Métis wanted to have their land rights).
- This is then followed by a personal comment, which is itself comprised of two clauses: *kom j'li z-a konpri* (as I understood them) and *d'apre kwa s'ki nou z-on d'ji* according to what they told us), the second clause containing another subordinate clause *kan k'on l'ite jenn* (when we were young).
- This is then followed by another repitition of the complementizer *ki*, which introduces a compound subordinate clause, the first clause being *li gouvernaman voule paa akseptii* (the government did not want to accept), the second clause is itself composed of a main clause and a subordinate clause, to which is added a sidebar *pi son randju asii foar* (and [they] had become strong enough) and *k'i l'onve foarmii aen gouvernaman provizwer* (that they formed a provisionary government), followed by the sidebar *k'sa l'aple* (which they called it).

This type of syntactic complexity would normally be unacceptable in most written texts.

6.6.3 Lexical Analysis

Somewhat surprisingly, there are very few direct English borrowed forms in the narration: line 20, "bloodshed" and line 30, *on mouvii* (from the English "to move").

Furthermore, the borrowed form "bloodshed" is what Poplack[5] defines as "flagged", in that the speaker provides a comment (*kom k'i diiz* (as they say)), implying that he is perfectly aware that he is using a borrowed form. In the literature, these forms are often not even counted as being real borrowings, since they are conscious. The other borrowed form *on mouvii* (they moved) is grammatically assimilated to French, since it takes on the expected form of the auxiliary *awer* (/on/) and the expected participial ending /ii/. On the other hand, the narrative contains many lexical calques (word for word translations of English), as in lines 2 (*drwa d'teraen* (land rights)), 5 and 22 (*sa a rvirii* (it turned out)), 5 (*troub* (troubles)), 11 (*i l'on djisidii k'i sra fuziyii* (they decided he would be shot)), 13 (*i ite an tet dju gouverniman* (he was at the head of government)), 25 (*i l'on djisidii di l'laashii* (they decided to release him)), 32 (*l'troub di Bataosh a v'nu* (the troubles at Batoche came)), 34 (*leu plas a rizidii* (their place to reside)), and 38 (*pour restii* (to remain)). This type of influence from English is typical of many bilingual French-English speakers in Canada where English seems to be dominant.

6.6.4 Discourse Analysis

In general, the narrative is coherent in that the main topic, the troubles occurring in the Red River colony in the late 1860s and in the North West in 1885, is handled chronologically and mostly maintained throughout. Events and actions follow cause and effect; for example, the creation of a provisionary government is due to inaction on the part of the Canadian government, the execution of Scott is due to his unacceptable behaviour with regards the Métis, etc. Nevertheless, the narrator regularly makes a number of **non sequiturs**, as in lines 12 through 21, where he digresses about the fact that Riel was blamed for Scott's execution but that instead, it was a group of Métis who had made the decision. He then makes another non sequitur in discussing the fact that one of the men in the group was Lépine and that he was his descendant. This type of comment reduces the general coherence of the discourse. In lines 10–11, the pronoun *i* refers to the members of the provisional government, but in line 12, the same pronoun refers to unspecified persons who blame Riel for the execution of Scott, while in line 17, *i* refers to the jury at Regina who found Riel guilty of treason and sentenced him to hang. The disjointed use of personal pronouns harms the cohesion of the discourse.

It is to be remembered that the narrative is a response to a question that the journalist asked Médéric McDougall, namely whether, when younger, he had been told about the political troubles that had occurred in Manitoba and later in Saskatchewan. This explains why the first sentence begins with a first person pronoun: ***J**'poura djiir ki, a propo de kwa s'e ki s'a pasii en djizwit-san-swasant-i-djis o Manitoba* and that throughout the text, personal comments such as *kom j'li z-a kompri – d'apre kwa s'ki nou z-on dji kan k'on l'ite jen*; *Pour mwe, j'dira k'Loui Riel ite pa li sel a blaamii…* are mixed with factual ones like: *lii Michis voule awer leu drwaa d'teraen* and *i l'onve foarmii aen gouvernaman provizwer*. Throughout, the narrator points out that he had not been a direct witness to the events, with sidebars such as *d'apre kwa s'ki nou z-on dji kan*

[5] Poplack, Shana. *Borrowing. Loanwords in the Speech Community and in the Grammar*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2018.

k'on l'ite jen. He very frequently specifies that what he is narrating depends on what he understood when told of the events, with comments such as in lines 2–3, 13, 25, 30–31, and 35 : *kom j'kompran*; *si j'a baen konpri*.

Although the narrator follows the events chronologically, he tends to insert topics that are not necessarily in line with the main topic; i.e., the troubles occurring in the Red River colony and at Batoche. For example, in lines 22 to 28, McDougall shifts his attention to Ambroise Lépine and goes on to discuss his escape to the United States with Riel, his return to Manitoba, the court's decision to release him but with loss of his civil rights and his land. This disruption in the main topic weakens the coherence of the whole narration. McDougall errs in stating that Lépine moved to Saskatchewan to raise his family. In actual fact, Lépine's wife deceased shortly after his return to Manitoba, and he decided to join his sons' families who had settled in Saskatchewan.

It is interesting to note that McDougall's recollection of the events leading to the Battle of Batoche (lines 32 to 41) are somewhat more sketchy and impersonal.

S'tout!

GLOSSARY

The definitions below contain information gleaned from various internet sources too numerous to list.

Affrication: Affrication occurs when the release of a stop consonant (such as /t/ or /d/) is realized with a brief turbulence (or burst) of air which is heard as a friction. In English, the affricate consonants are /ch/, as in "church" and /dj/ as in "judge". Both these affricates also exist in MF, as in /pchi/ "little" and /mardji/ "Tuesday".

Apostrophe: A mark (typographically, a raised comma < ' > or < ' >) used to indicate the omission of letters or numerals, as in English "it's". It is also used in the possessive, as in "Peter's wife" and in a number of contractions, as in "can't" (for cannot), "won't" (for will not), and "I'll" (for I will). In French, the apostrophe replaces a deleted (or elided) vowel before a word beginning with a vowel or mute *h*, as in *j'aime* (I like/love), *l'homme* (the man), *puisqu'il* (since he).

Aspect: Aspect in linguistics refers to the way in which the temporal structure of an event, action or state is viewed or expressed. Aspect is distinct from **tense** (see definition), which refers to the time at which an event occurs. While tense is concerned with locating an event in time relative to the moment of speaking, aspect is concerned with how the event is distributed or viewed in time. Simple aspect expresses a fact (Tom <u>eats/ate/will eat</u> tofu; The game <u>starts/started/will start</u> at seven). Perfect aspect expresses a completed action, event or state (Tom <u>has/had/will have eaten</u> tofu; The game <u>has/had/will have ended</u> at nine). Progressive aspect expresses an ongoing action, event, or state (Tom <u>is/was/will be eating</u> tofu; The game <u>is/was/will be lasting</u> too long). Perfect Progressive aspect expresses the end of an ongoing action, state, or event (Tom <u>has/had/will have been eating</u> tofu; The game <u>has/had/will have been ending</u> late). In French, both tense and aspect can be combined in certain tenses. For example, the Past Imperfective (Imparfait) tense, as in *Je lisais le livre* (I was reading the book) expresses an ongoing action (aspect) in the past (tense).

Coherence: In linguistics, coherence is what makes a text semantically meaningful. It is specially analyzed in text linguistics and discourse analysis. It relates to the logical and conceptual organization; i.e., the degree to which the parts of the discourse make sense together in the minds of the audience. This depends partly on how well the various parts of a text or discourse fit together to form a clear and comprehensible whole. Some of the mechanisms that ensure coherence are *topic maintenance* (maintaining a clear topic throughout), *organization* (the way information is ordered, chronologically, by importance, or in terms of cause and effect), *inference* (where addressees need to fill gaps in the discourse based on general knowledge of the world and the context of the communication), and *relevance* (where irrelevant details disrupt coherence and confuse the audience).

Cohesion: If coherence is the logical bridge between ideas in a text or discourse, ensuring that it makes sense overall, cohesion focuses more on the specific linguistic ties

that connect individual elements. Cohesion refers to the way different parts of a text connect with each other, making it a unified whole. It involves the use of linguistic devices such as pronouns, conjunctions, and lexical ties to link sentences and paragraphs, ensuring that the meaning flows smoothly from one part to another. This concept is crucial in understanding how meaning operates at the levels of word, sentence, and discourse.

Colloquial Canadian French: CCF refers to the informal, everyday French spoken by many French-speaking Canadians in casual conversation. It is not a single standardized variety but rather a group of spoken forms that vary by region, social group, and context. The best-known form is colloquial Québécois French, but other varieties exist, including Acadian French, Chiac, Franco-Ontarian French, Western Canadian French, Michif French, etc. Some typicial characteristics of CCF include pronunciations such as the complex (glided) vowels heard in words such as *fête* (feast), pronounced [fa^{i}t], *saute* (jump), pronounced [so^{u}t], etc. *Père* (father) pronounced as [pær] in Acadian French but as [per] in Western Canada, etc. CCF has a great number of vocabulary and expressions that are absent in formal speech, such as swear words (*tabarnak, câlisse, sainte viarge, hostie*), words or expressions such as *achaler* (to bother), *bobette* (underwear), *vidanges* (trash), *bouette* (mud) *blonde* (girlfriend); English borrowings such as *pinotte* (peanut), *chum* (boyfriend), *slotche* (slush), *papermane* (peppermint), etc. Items such as *bailler* (to give), *barachois* (lagoon), *chalin* (lightning), *frolic* (work bee), *galance* (swing), etc. are typical of Acadian French, while words such as *flouque* (fluke), *carreau* (quarter section), *labour d'été* (summer fallow), *grade* (school grade), *spare* (spare tire) are mostly heard in Western Canada. Words unique to Michif French are *rababou* (stew), *bizaine* (gopher), *chicaque* (skunk), *sinicroute* (seneca root), *grand bois* (forest), and *hart rouge* (red willow).

Common noun: Common nouns name the general people, places, things, animals, and ideas we talk about every day. Words like "teacher", "city", "book", "dog", and "courage" do not name one specific person, place, object, animal, or quality. They name a general category, which is why they usually stay lowercase inside a sentence and are capitalized only at the start of a sentence. They can be modified by articles, determiners, and adjectives. They can be concrete or abstract. Concrete nouns refer to physical objects that can be seen, touched, or sensed. Abstract nouns represent intangible concepts like feelings, qualities, or ideas. Concrete nouns can be countable and have plural forms, such as "book"/"books", "car"/"cars", etc. Uncountable nouns cannot be counted individually and often lack a plural form, such as "air", "milk", "furniture", and "knowledge".

Compound tense: Compound tenses are verb forms that use auxiliary verbs (also called helping verbs) to express more complex meanings like completed actions, ongoing actions, or actions relative to another point in time. In English, they consist of one or more auxiliary verbs, such as "have", "be" or "will" and a main verb in its past or present participle form (see the entry for **Participle**). Here are some typical examples of compound tenses in English: "I have left"; "You are going"; "He has been working"; "We had eaten"; "She was leaving"; "They had been playing"; "I will be talking"; "He will have finished"; "We will have been working".

In French, compound tenses are built on an auxiliary (*avoir* or *être*) + a main verb in its past participle form: *J'ai mangé* (I ate) is the Passé composé; *J'avais mangé* (I had eaten) is the Plus-que-Parfait; *J'aurai mangé* (I will have eaten) is the Futur Antérieur, and *J'aurais mangé* is the Conditionnel Passé. Most verbs conjugated in compound tenses use *avoir* as the auxiliary. In these verbs, the past participle agrees in gender and number with the object of the verb only if it is placed before the verb: *les lettres que j'ai écrit**es*** (the letters I wrote). Compound verbs using *être* as an auxilary belong to a limited list of verbs; these are typically verbs of motion and of change of state, as well as all reflexive verbs, such as in *Je suis arrivé* (I have arrived); *Tu étais parti* (You had left); *Elle s'est blessée* (She wounded herself). Past participles with the auxiliary *être* agree in gender and number with their subject.

In some varieties of French, there exists a unique form of the Past, called the Passé surcomposé. It consists of the Passé composé of the auxiliary + a past participle, as in *Lorsque j'ai eu mangé, je suis retourné au travail* (When I had eaten, I returned to work). MF does not seem have this past tense.

MF has more or less completely abandoned the use of *et* (SF *être* (to be)) as auxiliary and mostly conjugates compound tenses solely with the auxiliary *awer* (SF *avoir*). Since participle agreement rules with *avoir* are mainly a question of writing, MF has eliminated most of them.

Conditional tense: The conditional tense (some call it a mood) is used in hypothetical situations in which the result depends on whether a situation happens or not. A conditional tense can express what actually happens, will happen, could happen, might have happened, or we wish would have happened in a particular situation. In English, conditionals are always in the "result" clause of an "if clause", as in "If I had a lot of money, I could attend the World Cup final". The same is true for French: *Si j'avais beaucoup d'argent, je pourais assister à la finale de la Coupe du monde*. In French, the "if clause" is usually in the Imperfect tense. In both languages, the "result clause" can be moved in front of the "if clause", as in "I could attend the World Cup final if I had a lot of money".

Conjugation class: Conjugation is the creation of various forms of a verb from its principal parts by means of inflection; i.e., alteration of form according to the rules of the grammar. In English, a verb such as "eat" can be conjugated to form the verb forms "eat", "eats", "ate", "am/are/is/was/were/will be eating", "have/has/will have eaten", etc. While English conjugation is relatively simple, French, as well as other languages such as Spanish, Italian, Arabic, and others, have much more complex conjugations, each verb having dozens of conjugated forms. In French, verbs may be inflected for person, number, tense, aspect, or mood. Conjugation class refers to a group of verbs that share a similar conjugaton pattern. Traditional French conjugation classes are based on the ending of infinitives (see definition under Infinitive): *-er*, as in *aimer* (to love/like), *-ir,* as in *finir* (to finish), *-re*, as in *vendre* (to sell), and *-oir*, as in *apercevoir* (to perceive). Verbs that do not follow standard conjugation patterns are said to be irregular.

Consonant harmonization: Consonant harmony is a process in which non-adjacent consonants within a word agree in a specific articulatory feature, such as place of articulation or nasality, while intervening segmants like vowels typically remain unaffected. Consonant harmony is usually limited to consonants that are already very similar to each other. In Athapaskan (Na-Dené) languages, consonant harmony is quite prevalent and affects hissing and hushing consonants (/s/ vs /sh/, /ts/ vs /tch/, etc.) where all consonants in a word (including prefixes and suffixes) must be either hissing (alveolar) or hushing (palatal). Here is an example from Western Apache, a Dené language spoken in southwestern USA: *si-tāā* (a slender flexible object is in position); *si-ziid* (liquid matter is in position); but *shi-jaa* (three of more solid rigid inanimate objects are in position), where the presence of /j/, a palatal consonant, changes alveolar /s/ to alveo-palatal /sh/.

Dialect: A dialect is a variety of language spoken by a particular group of people. This may include standardized varieties as well as vernacular, unwritten, or non-standardized varieties. The dialects of the same language are mainly distinguished from each other by differences in phonology, morphology, syntax, and vocabulary. A standard dialect (often called a standardized language) is supported by institutions such as government, educational establishments, and media. It is usually referred to as the "correct" form of the language, and it is described in published grammars, dictionaries, and textbooks. Non-standard dialects also have complete grammars and vocabulary. There is no universally accepted criterion for distinguishing two different language from two dialects of the same language, and the difference between dialect and language is therefore somewhat subjective and depends on someone's frame of reference. For a language variety to be considered a dialect, the linguistic distance between the two varieties must be low, and dialects of a single language are mutually comprehensible to variable extent; however, this definition has often been criticized, especially in the case of a dialect continuum, which contains a sequence of varieties, where each is mutually intelligible with the next but may not be mutually intelligible with distant varieties. For example, the English of Newfoundland may be quite intelligible to speakers of Ontario or British Columbia English but may be less intelligible to speakers from rural Texas or Mississippi and even less intelligible to speakers of Cockney, Brummie, Geordie, or Scouse in England.

Diphthong: When pronouncing vowels, speakers typically hold their tongue in fixed positions. These are called monophthongs, where a single vowel sound is produced while a single burst of air in a syllable is let out. In pronouncing diphthongs, speakers move their tongue and parts of their mouth from one position to another. This means the sound shifts from one vowel sound to a different one within the same syllable. The sounds of /ou/ in "out", /oy/ in "boy", /i/ in "light", /ew/ in "new", /ai/ in "pain", /ow/ in "cow" are all diphthongs. We hear these complex vowel sounds as single vowels in a given syllable. Continental French does not have diphthongs nor does Standard Canadian French; however, Colloquial Canadian French speakers typically pronounce diphthongs in words such as in *fête* (feast), *grosse* (fat/large (fem.)), *tâche* (task), *côte* (coast/rib), etc. Most MF speakers do not pronounce these vowels as diphthongs but as monophthongs.

Gender: In linguistics, grammatical gender is a system that categorizes nouns into classes typically labeled as masculine, feminine, and sometimes neuter. For instance, in languages like Spanish or French, adjectives must agree in gender with the nouns they modify. Both have assigned gendered articles and pronouns (as in French articles *le* (masc.) versus *la* (fem.) (the) or the pronouns *il* (masc.) (he) versus *elle* (fem.) (she)).

Genitive: In grammar, the genitive case is the grammatical case that marks a word, usually a noun, as modifying another word, also usually a noun, thus indicating an attributive relationship of one noun to the other noun, as in "the light of day", "a group of men", and "the city of Rome". Possessive grammatical constructions, including the possessive case as in "Mae's book", may be regarded as subsets of the genitive construction; however, a possession relationship differs from a genitive one. In "children's songs", there is no possession; they are songs <u>for</u> children. In "Picasso's paintings", there is not necessarily possession, since it can mean paintings <u>by</u> Picasso. In French, both possession and genitive constructions are expressed as Possessee + *de* + Possessor, as in *le cheval de Pierre* (possession) or *le clair de lune* (genitive).

Glide: In linguistics, a glide is a sound that is phonetically similar to a vowel sound but functions as a syllable boundary rather than the nucleus of a syllable. There are onglides, which are the initial, weaker part of a complex vowel (diphthong), as in English [j] in the word "few" ([fju:], and there are offglides, which are the final, weaker part of a diphthong, as the [ɪ] sound of the [ɔᶦ] diphthong in English "toy". Standard French does not have diphthongs, but in Colloquial Canadian French, particularly in Quebec, non-high vowels are typically diphthongized, as in *fête* (feast/birthday), pronounced [faᶦt], *pâte* (pasta), pronounced [pɑᵒt], *côte* (coast/rib), pronounced [koᵒt], etc. Most MF speakers do not pronounce these words with diphthongs but as monophthongs (simple vowels).

Infinitive: Infinitives are a form of verb that allow the word or a group of words to be used as a noun, adjective, or adverb. Every type of verb can be put into the infinitive form, even phrasal verbs. In English, infinitives are formed by adding the word "to" before the base form of the verb, as in "to run". The purpose of infinitives is to discuss an action in general instead of a specific instance of the action being done. They function in sentences as nouns, as in "To play piano is difficult"; adjectives, as in "Would you like something to drink?", or adverbs, as in "He is strong enough to lift this". In French, infinitives are an impersonal mood, which permit one to express the general idea of an action or state without making reference to a given person or to a precise moment in time. Infinitives can be the subject of a sentence, as in *Jouer du piano est mon rêve* (To play the piano is my dream), the predicate infinitive of a subject, as in *Mon rêve, c'est de jouer du piano* (My dream is to play the piano), and object of a verb, as in *J'aime jouer du piano* (I love to play the piano).

International Phonetic Alphabet: Linguists use the International Phonetic Alphabet ("IPA") to represent the precise sounds of spoken language with a system of symbols. Developed in the late 19th century by the Franco-British International Phonetic Association, the IPA provides a consistent and standardised way to transcribe the sounds

of speech, regardless of the language. Each symbol in the IPA corresponds to a specific sound, or phoneme. This makes it particularly useful in linguistics, language teaching, lexicography, and other language specialties. There are two basic types of symbols: letters and diacritics (marks that change the sound-values of the letters to which they are added). For example, linguists will transcribe the English word "pat" either as /pæt/ or as [pʰæt̪]. Slashes are used to signal phonemic transcription—sounds that are functional in the language, such as the difference between English /p/ in "pin" and /b/ in "bin". Brackets are used to represent more precise phonetic transcription. In [pʰæt̪], the raised diacritic [ʰ] indicates that the consonant [t] is aspirated (accompanied with a burst of air) and the lowered diacritic [̪] indicates that the final consonant is pronounced in the alveolar ridge area of the mouth (behind the front teeth).

Metathesis: The permutation of sounds or syllables inside a word. For example, "calvary" instead of "cavalry"; "pasketti" instead of "spaghetti"; and "purty" instead of "pretty".

Mood: A grammatical feature of verbs where certain verbal inflections allow speakers to express their attitude towards what they are saying; for example, a statement of fact, as in "John is eating" or a command, as in "John, eat!". In French, the Indicative mood is used for factual statements as in *Jean mange* (John eats/is eating); *Il est parti à six heures* (He left at six); the Subjunctive mood is used mainly in dependent clauses after certain complex conjunctions, as in *Je dois partir pour que je puisse arriver à temps* (I have to leave in order that I arrive on time); *Je viendrai te voir, à moins que tu sois occupé* (I will come visit you unless you are busy); after a number of verbs expressing affectivity or subjectivity, as in *J'aimerais qu'il soit plus poli* (I would like him to be more polite); *Je doute que ce soit possible* (I doubt it be possible); *Nous sommes surpris qu'il ait gagné* (We are surprised he won). The Imperative mood is used for commands, prohibitions or requests.

Non sequitur: (Latin for "does not follow"). A statement that does not follow logically from or is not clearly related to anything previously said. For example, in the following dialog:
Speaker A: I'm worried about her health
Speaker B: I have a flat tire.
Speaker B's comment does not logically follow and is not clearly related to Speaker A's comment.

Northern Michif: Northern Michif (also referred to as Michif-Cree) is spoken primarily in the northwestern Saskatchewan Métis communities of Île à la Crosse (Sâkitawâhk), Green Lake, Beauval, Buffalo Narrows, Patuanak, Canoe Narrows, Cole Bay, Jans Bay, Dillon, Pine House, and Turnor Lake, as well as in Lac la Biche and perhaps Lac Ste Anne in Alberta. There are also Northern Michif speakers in British Columbia. Basically, it is a dialect of Northern Plains Cree with a limited number of words borrowed from Michif French and the French spoken by Catholic missionaries and nuns in the 19th century (often called Mission French). Northern Michif is fundamentally different from Southern Michif in all linguistic aspects. Phonologically, Northern Michif maintains Cree

/c/ ([tˢ]) where Southern Michif has /ch/ ([ʧ]); Southern Michif has maintained the Cree distinction between long-e (/e:/) and long-i (/i:/) while in Northern Michif these vowels have melded into /i:/, as do all dialects of Northern Plains Cree. In Northern Michif, /k/ between two vowels is voiced (it becomes [g]), while this does not occur in Southern Michif. There are also morphological differences between the two Michif languages; for example, in Southern Michif, many French nouns or verbs have been incorporated into Cree verbal morphology, as in *labu-iwan* (it is muddy) or *Lijali-ihkee-w* (She is decorating him/her (lit. She is making him/her pretty)), where *jali-* is from French *joli* (pretty). This does not occur in Northern Michif. The borrowed lexicon from French is also distinct from Southern Michif. In Southern Michif, 90% of nouns are from French while French borrowed forms in Northern Michif are less than 200, and many of these have been replaced by English words by younger speakers. Furthermore, in Northern Michif every term borrowed from French has a Cree equivalent but not in Southern Michif. Lexical items are equally different. For example, the equivalent of "ammunition" is *lî kahrrtosh* (according the the spelling in the Northern Michif Dictionary),[6] from French *cartouche* (cartrage), but it is *lamunisyoon* or *la monisyoon*, from French *la munition* (ammunition) in Southern Michif; garment is *aen frok*, from French *froc* (trousers/hood), *li bitaen*, from CF *butin* (clothing), or *kawkishkamen* (presumably from Cree) in Southern Michif, but it is *ayowinis*, from Plains Cree *ayiwinis* (clothing) in Northern Michif.

Number: Number is a grammatical category that indicates whether it is singular (the concept of one), plural (more than one), and in some languages, dual (two). Number is important in agreement within sentences, as between determiners and nouns, adjectives and nouns, pronouns and verbs, and subjects and verbs, which must correspond in number to create grammatically correct expressions. Number can also influence how words are inflected. In French, plurality is expressed on nouns and adjectives by the suffix *-s* (or *-x* for a limited number of words ending in *-ou*, as in *genoux* (knees)), which are pronounced only in liaison contexts (and realized as /z/). Some nouns and adjectives whose singular form ends in *-al* (as in *cheval* (horse) or *spécial* (special)) mark their plural with an *-aux* ending, as in *chevaux* (horses) and *spéciaux* (special)). Number is also marked on determiners, such as singular definite article *le* (masc. (the)) versus plural *les* (masc./fem. (the)); singular demonstrative *ce* (masc. (this)) or *cette* (fem. (this)) versus plural *ces* (masc./fem. (these)). Personal pronouns can be either singular or plural, as in *je/tu/il/elle* (I/you/he/she) versus *nous/vous/ils/elles* (we/you/they). Verbs are inflected according to person and number, as in first person singular *Je pars* (I am leaving) versus first person plural *Nous partons* (We are leaving).

Participle: The participle is an impersonal and non-temporal mood. In both English and French, participles have two tenses: Present and Past. In English, present participles usually end in -ing, as in "a howling wind", and past participles usually end in -ed or have irregular forms, as in "a beaded belt" or "the hidden door". In French, present participles always end in *-ant*, as in *le personnel aidant* (caregiver), and past participles have various endings depending on the verb class. For example, verbs with the infinitive

[6] Ahenakew, Vince. *Nêhiyawêwin Masinahiḳan: Michif/Cree Dictionary*. Saskatoon: Gabriel Dumont Institute, 2009.

ending in *-er* have the past participle ending in *-é*, verbs with the infinitive ending in *-ir* have the past participle usually ending in *-i*, etc.

Participles have two main functions; they either act as adjectives, modifying nouns, or help form compound verb tenses with auxiliary verbs. In English, both present and past participles can form compound verbs while in French, only past participles can do so. For example, English forms continuous tenses (describing ongoing actions) using the auxiliary "to be" + present participle, as in "I am working", "She was leaving", "They will be arriving", and "We have been eating". The past participle is used with the auxiliary "to have" to form past tenses (describing completed actions), as in "I have eaten", "he had left", or "she will have finished". Past participles are also used in the passive voice, as in "The project was completed on time". In French, present participles generally express an action that is taking place at the same time of the action described by the verb in the main clause, as in *Je l'ai vu faisant de la vitesse* (I saw him speeding). A clause involving a present participle can replace a relative clause, as in *Les étudiants possédant un téléphone intelligent devront le remettre à la direction avant d'entrer en classe* (Students owning a smart phone will have to hand them over to the director's office before entering the classroom.). In this case, *possédant un téléphone intelligent* can be replaced by the relative clause *qui possèdent un téléphone intelligent*.

The past participle used by itself acts as an adjective, just as in English: *un gâteau décoré* (a decorated cake); *Ils étaient enthousiasmés* (They were enthusiastic). When used with an auxiliary verb, it forms compound tenses, as in *J'ai lu* (I read/have read); *Il est arrivé* (He arrived/has arrived); *Nous aurons quitté* (We will have left), and so on.

Past Progressive: The Past Progressive tense (also known as the Past Continuous tense) is used to describe an ongoing activity in the past or an ongoing activity alongside another activity; for example, "I was reading a book" and "While I was reading a book, she prepared dinner". The Past Progressive is thus a combination of tense (the action is in the past) and aspect (it is an ongoing action). In French, the equivalent to the Past Progressive is the Imparfait, as in *Je lisais un livre* (I was reading a book) and *Je lisais un livre pendant qu'elle a préparé le dîner* (While I was reading a book, she prepared dinner.)

Person: A grammatical person refers to one or more participant in an event. Most languages make a distinction between the speaker or speakers (first person singular or plural), as in English "I", "we"; French *je, nous*; the person or persons spoken to (second person singular or plural), as in English "you"; French *tu*, *vous*, and third person includes all that are not listed above (third person singular or plural), as in English "he", "she", "it", "they"; French *il, elle, ils, elles*. In many languages, the (spoken or written) verb form depends on the person of the subject and whether it is singular or plural, as in French *Je parle* (I speak) but *Nous parlons* (We speak); *Il parle* (He speaks) but *Ils parlent* (They speak). Person is also crucial in possessive relationships, as in English "my/your/his/her/our/your/their book"; in French *mon/ton/son/notre/votre/leur livre*.

In some languages, different person classifying systems exist. In Cree (and by definition Northern and Southern Michif), for example, there are two first person plural pronouns: if the speaker is referring to themself and others but not the person or persons spoken to, this is referred to as the first person plural **exclusive** (I and at least one other person but not you) (i.e., niyanān "we"). If the speaker is referring to themself as well as the person or persons spoken to, this is referred to as the first person plural **inclusive** (i.e. kiyānaw "we"). So, a Cree speaker will say: ***Ni****wī-nitawi-mīciso****nān*** (We (but not you) are going to go eat) or ***Ki****wī-nitawi-mīciso****naw*** (We (including you) are going to go eat).

Cree, like all Algonquian languages, distinguishes two third persons: **proximate** for a more important or topical third person and **obviative** for a less important or less topical third person. In the following two sentences: *Okimāw iskwēwa kitotēw* (The chief talks to the woman) and *Okimāwa iskwēw kitotik* (The chief talks to the woman). Both of these sentences are glossed the same way in English but in the first sentence, *Okimāw* (chief) is unmarked while *iskwēwa* (woman) has the obviative suffix -*wa*. In the second sentence, it is the exact opposite since the obviative suffix is now on *okimāwa*. The semantic difference between the two sentences is that in the first, *okimāw* is in focus, it is the "topic" of the sentence, while in the second, *iskwēw* is unmarked while *okimāwa* is marked with -*wa*, indicating that *iskwēw* is now the topic and *okimāwa* the obviative, or less topical third person. Michif has only partially maintained this proximate/obviative distinction.[7]

In other languages, such as French and other Romance languages, a distinction is made in degrees of formality and informality: the second person singular *tu* is used to address family members, younger persons, and close friends, while *vous* is used either to address more than one person or to address a stranger, a superior, colleague with whom the speaker is not close, etc. CCF and MF do not necessarily follow this principle and use *tu* more readily with strangers, superiors, and so on.

Phoneme: A phoneme is the smallest unit of speech that distinguishes one word from another; for example, in English, the sound /p/ in "cap" separates the word from words like "cab", "can", "cat", or "cad". /p/, /b/, /n/, and /d/ are all phonemes in English. Linguists use slashes before and after a given letter symbol to indicate phonemes. A given phoneme may have more than one sound variant, called an **allophone**. For example, in American English, the sound spelled with the letter < t > is usually pronounced with a glottal stop [ʔ] (brief closing of the glottis) in the word "cat", with an alveolar flap [ɾ] (rapid and slight contact of the tip of the tongue against the teeth ridge) in "dating", an alveolar stop [t] (complete closure of the mouth with the tongue against the teeth ridge without any explosion of air in "stick", and an aspirated alveolar stop [t^h] (complete closure of the mouth with the tongue against the teeth ridge with an explosion of air at release) in "tie". Allophones, therefore, have different articulations within words depending on different contexts, such as word initial, between vowels, word final, etc.,

[7] Weaver, Deborah. Obviation in Michif. *Work Papers, Summer Institute of Linguistics*, University of North Dakota Session 26, 1982, pp 174-262. Available at https://commons.und.edu/sil-work-papers/vol26/iss1/6/

yet these differences do not create meaningful distinctions, and American speakers perceive all of these sounds with no conscious effort as merely being allophones of a single phoneme /t/. Each phoneme in a given language has its own set of allophones. For example, the French phoneme /t/ does not have an aspirated allophone [tʰ] in word initial position; instead, the French allophone of /t/ in this position is [t̪], a dental voiceless stop; it also does not have the alveorlar flap [ɾ] allophone between vowels as in English; it uses the same allophone as in word-initial position. However, in CF, the phoneme /t/ has an allophone [ʦ] when it is before high front vowels such as /i/ or /y/, as in [ʦy] for *tu* (you, sing.), while MF has the allophone [ʧ] in the same context.

Predicate Noun: A predicate noun, also called the predicate nominative, is a noun or infinitive that comes after a linking verb (verbs such as "to be", "to seem", and "to look like", "to become"). The predicate noun renames or re-identifies the subject. For example, in "Heather is a doctor", doctor is a predicate noun. In "Oksana's dream is to travel, the infinitive "to dream" also acts as a predicate noun to the subject "Oksana's dream". In English, there are also predicate adjectives, as in "Ravi seems tired". In French, the technical term for predicate noun is "attribut du sujet", as in *Lorraine est un médecin* (Lorraine is a doctor). The "attribut du sujet" can also be an adjective, an infinitive, or a prepositional phrase, as in *Juan semble fatigué* (Juan seems tired); *Son rêve est de voyager* (His dream is to travel); *Juan est dans son bureau* (Juan is in his office). The "*attribute du complement direct*" more or less functions as the "*attribute du sujet*" but is linked semantically to the direct object of a verb, as in *Je considère cet écrivain comme un génie* (I consider this writer to be a genius), where *comme un génie* modifies and describes the direct object *cet écrivain* (this writer).

Proper noun: In grammar, a proper noun is a specific name for a particular person, place, thing, or idea. Unlike common nouns, which refer to general categories, such as "town", "book", "philosophy", and "woman", proper nouns identify unique entities; for example, "Ottawa", "*Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*", and"Mary".

Reflexive: Reflexive words show that the person who does the action is also the person who is receiving it. In English, there are no specific reflexive verb forms, and reflexion is expressed by the use of the suffix -self (singular) or -selves (plural) added to a personal pronoun, as in "I hurt myself" or "We enjoyed ourselves". In French, reflexive expressions are formed by the use of a personal pronoun followed by an object pronoun of the same person followed by a verb, as in *Je me lave* (I wash myself/I am washing myself), where *Je* is the first person singular subject personal pronoun and *me* is the first person singular object pronoun, There are two types of reflexive verbs: those that are inherently reflexive as in *s'évanouir* (to faint), *se rebeller* (to rebel), *se repentir* (to repent), etc., where the verb without the reflexive pronoun does not exist and those that are occasionally reflexive as in *Je me lave* (I wash myself) but *Je lave l'auto* (I wash the car).

Southern Michif (also known as **Heritage Michif**): Southern Michif is a hybrid language where the great majority of nouns (90%), deternminers, adjectives, possessive pronouns, prepositions, numerals, and conjunctions are from (Michif) French, and most

verbs, demonstratives, question words, personal pronouns, postpositions (prepositions come before the noun, postpositions come after the noun), and syntax are from Southern Plains Cree (Nēhiyawēwin). Adverbials are 70% from Cree, 30% from French; negative elements are 70% French, 30% Cree, while coordinate conjunctions are 55% from Cree, 40% from French, 5% from English. There are now more and more nouns borrowed from English and a few from Cree and even fewer from Saulteaux (Anishinaabemowin/Nakaweemowin/Nahkaweewin). The verbs "to have" and "to be" are from French, and there are also a few verbs that have a French or English root but Cree inflection, as in *Li per kii li-bin-i-w li muud* (The priest blessed the people), where the verb root is *(li-) bin-i*, from French *bénir* (to bless). As to phonology (the sound system), there is a scientific debate about whether there are two distinct phonologies (one for Cree items and one for French items) or a single system, dominated by Cree, where Michif French phonemes have melded with Cree ones. In fact, both hypotheses are partially correct. Southern Michif does maintain a number of French sounds that do not exist in Cree (such as /f/, /v/, /r/, /ch/, /dj/, nasal vowels, etc.). It also maintains typical French phonological rules such as liaison and elision. On the other hand, many French vowels have melded with Cree ones. For example, French schwa (also called "mute e") has melded with Cree short-/i/, as has French shortened-/i/ (as in *vite* (fast)). For some speakers, /o/ and /u/ are no longer distinct; for example, a word like *dos* (back) is pronounced /dou/, and *nous* (we) is pronounced /no/. This reflects Cree, which does not distinguish between the two vowels. There is also some Saulteaux influence, but it is mostly indirect.[8, 9] As Bakker and Papen (1996, p. 1174) state: "Not only is there a fairly neat distribution of the two languages across these grammatical categories, but both languages have lost little or nothing of their complexities."[10]

Michif is spoken in a number of scattered locations in Manitoba, Saskatchewan, North Dakota, and perhaps in Montana. Southern Michif speakers have also immigrated to British Columbia. The language is remarkably homogeneous throughout this immense area, although there are some clear differences between some communities such as Camperville and St. Lazare, Manitoba.

The origin of Southern Michif remains somewhat of a mystery, but Bakker (op.cit.) points out that it was already spoken by the 1820s and became well established by the 1840s. The first known mention of the existence of Michif dates from 1875, in the St. Boniface newspaper *Le Metis*. According to Bakker (op.cit.), Southern Michif most likely was created by bilingual French-Cree buffalo hunters who wintered in the Turtle Mountains, North Dakota, Duck and Riding Mountains in southwest Manitoba, and Wood Mountains and Cypress Hills in southern Saskatchewan. This is also where the original Michif speakers lived.

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[8] Bakker, Peter. (op.cit.).

[9] Papen, Robert A. Le mitchif : langue franco-crie des Plaines, in Albert Valdman, Julie Auger, and Deborah Piston-Hatlen (eds.), *Le français en Amérique du Nord. État présent*. Quebec: Les Presses de l'Université Laval, 2005, pp.327-347.

[10] Bakker, Peter & Robert A. Papen. Michif and other languages of the Canadian Métis, in Stephen Wurm, Peter Mülhäusler and Darrell Tryon (eds), *Atlas of Languages of Intercultural Communication in the Pacific, Asia, and the Americas*. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter, 1996, p. 1171-1183.

Standard Canadian French: CF is the standardized form of French used in Canada in formal communication, education, government, media, business, literature, and so on. It is based primarily on the French spoken in Quebec, while following codified grammatical and spelling conventions that are broadly shared with other standard varieties of French. Pronunciation reflects educated Canadian usage rather than metropolitan French pronunciation from France. For example, /t, d/ before high front vowels such as /i/ or /u/ are pronounced /ts, dz/; the nasal vowel /un/ is maintained whereas it has melded with the nasal vowel /in/ in metropolitan French; the front /a/ versus back /a/ distinction (as in *patte* (animal's leg) versus *pâte* (pasta) is equally maintained while it has been mostly lost in France. Standard Canadian French also includes specific words and expressions that are unknown or very rare in European French, such as *courriel* (email), *stationnement* (parking lot), *babillard* (bulletin board), *bleuet* (blueberry), *magasiner* (to shop), *achigan* (bass), *fin de semaine* (weekend), *faire du pouce* (to hitchhike), etc.

Standard French: SF is the widely accepted, codified form of the French language used in formal communication, education, government, media, and literature. It follows established rules of grammar, spelling, pronunciation, and vocabulary that are taught in schools and used across the French-speaking world. Grammar and spelling follow norms established by official institutions, such as the *Académie française* in France or the *Office de la langue française* in Quebec. Pronunciation is usually based on the educated speech of speakers of the Greater Paris area of France, though each French-speaking country tends to have its own pronunciation, which may vary to some extent from that of Greater Paris.

Stem: In linguistics, a stem is a part of a word to which can be added morphemes, such as prefixes and suffixes (both being affixes). It is important to distinguish between stems and roots. A root is the part of a word responsible for its lexical meaning. In Cree, a verb root cannot appear on its own and must necessarily act as a stem to which must be added certain affixes. In English for example, in the word "destabilized", the root is -stabil-, which cannot stand alone, while the stem consists of de-stabil-ize, to which is added the morpheme -ed, which is not part of the stem. A stem can be a lone root, such as the verb "run"; a compound of roots, such as the compound nouns "meatball" and "bottleneck", or a derivation with affixes, such as the verbs "blacken", "standardize", "unpack", "disassembled", etc.

Tense: In grammar, tense is a category that expresses time reference, indicating when an action or event occurs. It is typically manifested by the use of specific forms of verbs, particularly in their conjugation patterns. Most languages (but certainly not all) include present, past, and future tense. In languages with rich inflectional systems such as French, tense markers may be represented through affixes, or separate words. For example, in French, future tense is expressed by the suffixes *-rai, -ras, -ra, -rons, -rez*, and *-ront*, as in *Je partirai*, *Tu partiras*, *Il/Elle partira*, *Nous partirons*, *Vous partirez*, *Ils/Elles partiront* (I/You (sing.)/He/She/We/You (plur.)/They will leave), while the Compound Past tense is expressed by the use of auxiliary verbs + Past participle, as in *J'ai mangé* (I ate), *Je suis arrivé* (I arrived). Tense interacts with aspect (see definition) and mood (see

definition) to provide additional information about the timing and nature of actions. In French, the *Imparfait* tense expresses an ongoing action (aspect) in the past (tense), as in *Je mangeais* (I was eating) and the *Subjonctif Présent* expresses an action in the present based on an obligation, an emotion expressed by the verb in the main clause, as in *Il faut qu'il parte* (tense/subjunctive mood) (He has to leave).

Vernacular: The everyday, native language or dialect spoken by the people of a specific country, region, or community. It is the language of casual, informal conversation in everyday social contexts rather than the standard language used in formal writing, literature, or official administration. It is learned naturally at home and in the community from a young age rather than being taught in school. It is used for daily communication among peers, family, and neighbors. Vernaculars (also refered to as non-standard dialects) are often perceived as having lower social status or less prestige than the standard language, which is more codified and institutionally promoted. Sometimes they even carry social stigma, but regardless of any such stigma, all non-standard dialects are full-fledged varieties of language with their own consistent grammatical structure, sound system, and body of vocabulary. Vernaculars may vary from overtly prestigious speech varieties in different ways, in that the vernacular can be a distinct stylistic register, a regional dialect, a sociolect, or even an independent language. However, vernaculars usually carry covert prestige among their native speakers, in showcasing group identity or subculture affiliation. A vernacular may even have its own written form, though it could then be assumed that the orthography is unstable, inconsistent, or unsanctioned by powerful institutions, like that of government or education. According to sociolinguistics, the vernacular is "the least self-conscious style of people in a relaxed conversation", or "the most basic style"; that is, casual varieties used spontaneously rather than self-consciously, informal talk used in intimate situations.