

THE CONFEDERATED TRIBES LANGUAGE LESSON

Learner's Corner

A good place to start a study (or a review, for those who already speak) of Ichishkiin, Numu, or Kiksht is with the concept of a subject (the one "doing" an action) and of an object (the one "receiving" the action). As an example, the English action words "to throw" and "to follow" both require a subject and an object. (One must follow another one or thing, similarly, one must throw something.) In this issue, we will start with some small sentences covering a few vocabulary words and, in particular, illustrations of how each language identifies a subject and an object. While on the topic of subjects/objects, let's take a quick look at how English does this, then I invite you to compare this to Ichishkiin, Numu, and Kiksht. In English, subject and object status is identified by the order in which the words appear. For example, in "Bob sees Fred", we know that Bob is the one who is seeing and not Fred. Bob is the subject (the "doer") and Fred the object ("receiver"). By reversing Fred and Bob, as in "Fred sees Bob", we change the basic meaning of who is doing the action. Let's see what happens in Ichishkiin, Numu, and Kiksht!

Kiksht

(Wasq'u)

Words

I	Naika
You	Maika
Home	Itqwi
School	Skul
Work	Anxamgapx
Lunch	Sitkumsan itxlem
Dinner	Chushdix itxlem

Verbs

to see	gl -kl
to follow	-wa
to eat	txlam

Sentences

Ayamwaya.
I will follow you.

Nanwat.
You will follow me.

Enxelmax chushdix itxlem.
I am eating dinner.

Demxilax itxlem sitkumsanbet.
You are eating lunch.

Bob luqnit Fred.
Bob sees Fred.

Sarah ikagelkel Rose.
Sarah sees Rose.

Yamuqmit.
I see you.

In Kiksht, complex words are formed by beginning with the verb root and adding markers before or after the root. These markers relate information about who the subjects and objects are as well as when the action will take place. We can see this in the first example of "Ayamwaya". The verb (root) of this sentence is *wa* (to follow). The *m* tells us that the object of this sentence is "you" (as in, someone to follow you). On the outside of *mwa* are markers that tell us this event will happen in the future and, at the front of the word, who the subject of the sentence is (I will follow you).

Language Classes:

Wasco: Mondays from 3:30 to 5 PM in Language Trailer.

Paiute: Wednesdays from 3:30 to 5 PM in the Language Trailer.

Sahaptin: Tuesdays and Thursdays from 3:30 to 5 PM in the Language Trailer.

Home Base Classes:

Paiute: Tuesdays from 5 to 8 PM. Held at Cheryl Lohman's Home. (For info. call Pat Miller at 553-3575.)

Sahaptin: Thursdays from 5 to 8 PM. Held in the Simnasho Area. (For info. call Suzie Slockish at 553-2201.)

Numu

(Paiute)

Words

I	Nu
You	U
Home	Nobe
School	Schoodu
Work	Woiku
Lunch	Tabetuka
Dinner	Yongo tuka

Verbs

to see	poone
to follow	nakwi
to eat	tuka

Sentences

Nu u nakwi kemma.
I you follow behind
I am following you.

U nuga nakwi kemma.
You me follow behind
You are following me.

Nu yongo tuka.
evening-dinner eat
I am eating dinner.

U tabe tuka.
You lunch eat
You are eating lunch.

Bob ka Fred poone.
Bob [obj] Fred sees
Bob sees Fred.

Sarah ka Rose poone.
Sarah [obj] Rose sees
Sarah sees Rose.

Nu ume poone.
I you see
I see you.

In Numu, the *ka* has many many uses. In these cases, the *ka* tells us that the thing immediately following it is not the subject of the sentence. (In other words, the thing following *ka* is the object of the sentence.) So, in the sentence "Bob ka Fred poone", we know that Bob (not Fred) is seeing because *ka* comes before Fred.

Ichishkiin

(Sahaptin)

Words

I	-ash, -mash,
You	-nam
Home	Nisha
School	Sapsikw'atpamá
Work	Kútkut
Lunch	Shapsh
Dinner	Tkwatat

Verbs

to see	q'inusha
to follow	twánasha
to eat	tkwátasha

Sentences

Twanashamash.
Twana / sha / mash
Follow / -ing / I-you
I am following you.

Patwanashanam.
Pá / twana / sha / nam
(I) / follow / -ing / you
You are following me.

Tkwatashaash.
Tkwata / sha / ash
Eat (dinner) / -ing / I
I am eating dinner.

Tkwátashanam.
Tkwáta / sha / nam
Eat (dinner) / -ing / you
You are eating lunch.

Bob iq'inusha Fredna.
Bob i / q'inu / sha Fred / na
Bob (s)he / see / -ing Fred / [obj.]
Bob sees Fred.

Sarah iq'inusha Rosena.
Sarah i / q'inu / sha Rose / na
Sarah (s)he / see / -ing Rose / [obj.]
Sarah sees Rose.

Q'inushamash.
Q'inu / sha / mash
See / -ing / I-you
I see you.

(Each sentence is broken down in this format: Ichishkiin is broken into its grammatical parts, which are then assigned English translations on the following line, which is again followed by "normal" English. The marker of [obj] means that the word of which it is a part is the object of the sentence. As in "Rosena", *na* indicates that Rose is the object in the sentence.)