

THE CONFEDERATED TRIBES LANGUAGE LESSON

Indian New Year

One important feature of action words is the ability to communicate time (and possibly place) of an action. In the past couple of issues we have looked at forming action words using the "present tense"--describing actions occurring in the moment. Now let's see what happens when we take those same action words and use a form of the "past tense"--describing actions that occurred before now.

Kiksht

(Wasq'u)

Sentences

To start with, let's contrast the present tense version of "to see" with its past tense version. While these may look different, they are more similar than you might suspect. In Kiksht building actions words is similar to making a sandwich: start with the meat and keep adding condiments on either side of it, completing the job with a layer of bread on the bottom and on the top. The "meat" of Kiksht verbs are often only a few letters. The remaining letters signify the subject, object, number, and time of the core event. As you'll see below, Kiksht naturally carries communicates more detail about time than English does.

Ganugwitkel idat'qt itqwii. **Maika gamugwitkel idat'qt itqwii.**
I saw the longhouse. You saw the longhouse.

Niugmit idat'qt itqwii. **Emduqmit idat'qt itqwii.**
I see the longhouse. You see the longhouse.

Gagugwitkel idat'qt itqwii. **Gachugwitkel idat'qt itqwii.**
She saw the longhouse. He saw the longhouse.

Axka duqmit idat'qt itqwii. **Yaxka shduqmit idat'qt itqwii.**
She sees the longhouse. He sees the longhouse.

Galgugwitkel idat'qt itqwii. **Ganshgugwitkel idat'qt itqwii.**
They saw the longhouse. We (all of us) saw the longhouse.

Labladiqsh iduqmit idat'qt itqwii. **Alxaika alquqmit idat'qt itqwii.**
They see the longhouse. We (all of us) see the longhouse.

Gantgugwitkel idat'qt itqwii. **Endaima intduqmit idat'qt itqwii.**
We (us two) saw the longhouse. We (us two) see the longhouse.

Nindwichk idat'qtba itqwii.

Ni- / -n- / -d- / -wi / -chk / idat'qtba itqwii
[distant past] / I / [recent] / dance / have done / longhouse
I danced at the longhouse in the recent past.
I danced at the longhouse.

Nimdwichk idat'qtba itqwii.

Ni- / -m- / -d- / -wi / -chk / idat'qtba itqwii
[distant past] / you / [recent] / dance / have done / longhouse
You danced at the longhouse in the recent past.
You danced at the longhouse.

Nigadwichk idat'qtba itqwii.

Nig- / -a- / -d- / idat'qtba itqwii
[distant past] / she / [recent] / dance / have done / longhouse
She danced at the longhouse in the recent past.
She danced at the longhouse.

Nigidwichk idat'qtba itqwii.

Nig- / -i- / -d- / -wi / -chk / idat'qtba itqwii
[distant past] / he / [recent] / dance / have done / longhouse
He danced at the longhouse in the recent past.
He danced at the longhouse.

Kanawa nindwichk idat'qtba itqwii.

Kanawa / ni- / -t- / -d- / -wi / -chk / idat'qtba itqwii
All / [distant past] / he, she, they / [recent] / dance / have done / longhouse
All of them danced at the longhouse in the recent past.
They danced at the longhouse.

Kanawa ninchdwichk idat'qtba itqwii.

Kanawa / ni- / -nch- / -d- / -wi / -chk / idat'qtba itqwii
All / [distant past] / we (but not you) / [recent] / dance / have done / longhouse
We all, except you, danced at the longhouse in the recent past.
We (us all) danced at the longhouse.

Nintdwichk idat'qtba itqwii.

Ni- / -nt- / -d- / -wi / -chk / idat'qtba itqwii
[distant past] / we (someone else and I) / [recent] / dance / have done / longhouse
We, someone else and I, danced at the longhouse in the recent past.
We (us two) danced at the longhouse.

Numu

(Paiute)

Review

Fill in the missing words in these sentences:

(1) Nu _____ tunekwuhu.
I sing at the longhouse.

(2) _____ oodunobekwi'yoo tunekwuhu.
You sing at the longhouse.

(3) Umu ka oodunobekwi'yoo _____.
(S)he sing at the longhouse.

(4) _____ oodunobekwi'yoo tunekwuhu.
We sing at the longhouse.

(5) Nu ka oodunobewitoo _____.
I go to the longhouse.

(6) Oosoo oodunobewitoo _____.
You go to the longhouse.

(7) Umu ka _____ meaga'a.
(S)he go to the longhouse.

(8) Nume _____ oodunobewitoo _____.
We go to the longhouse.

Verbs

see poone
dance nuga

Sentences

Take a look at the last issue of the Spilyay and note one thing we begin to see is that time is not communicated thought Numu words as it is in English (or Kiksht, or Ichishkiin):

Nu ka oodunobekwi'yoo nuka.
I danced at the longhouse.

U oona oodunobekwi'yoo nuka.
You danced at the longhouse.

Masoo oodunobekwi'yoo nuka.
She danced at the longhouse.

Esoo oodunobekwi'yoo nuka.
He danced at the longhouse.

Umu ka oodunobekwi'yoona nuka.
They danced at the longhouse.

Nume ka oodunobekwi'yoona nuka.
We danced at the longhouse.

Now let's switch gears and look at how "see" changes--or doesn't--when we put it into the past tense (saw, versus see):

Nu ka oodunobe poone.
I saw the longhouse.

U ka oodunobe poone.
You saw the longhouse.

Oosoo ka oodunobe poone.
She saw the longhouse.

Oosoo ka oodunobe poone.
He saw the longhouse.

Umu ka oodunobe poone.
They saw the longhouse.

Nume ka oodunobe poone.
We saw the longhouse.

Review Answers:

- 1) oodunobekwei'yoo
2) oosoo
3) tunekwuhukwe
4) nume, ka
5) meowkwe
6) me'a
7) oodunobekwitoo
8) ka, me'akwe

Ichishkiin

(Sahaptin)

Review

From the last issue of Spilyay, re-construct these sentences using the appropriate word beginnings or endings:

-atash Pa- -nam -ash I-

(1) Walptaiknxa _____ kaatnampa.
I sing at the longhouse.

(2) Walptaiknxa _____ kaatnampa.
You sing at the longhouse.

(3) _____ walptaiknxa kaatnampa.
She sings at the longhouse.

(4) _____ walptaiknxa kaatnampa.
They sing at the longhouse.

(5) Walptaiknxa _____ kaatnampa.
We sing at the longhouse.

Verbs

see iq'inusha
dance waashasha

Sentences

As we've seen over the past couple of issues, Ichishkiin uses special ending (or beginning) sounds to represent the subject. (Such as the ending -ash, or the beginning pa-.) Similarly, Ichishkiin uses other ending sounds to distinguish the "time" (or tense) of the action. English has a similar habit with 'ed' as in 'jumped' versus 'jump'. Once you pick up the pattern below, start looking for it through-out the normal lessons!

Aq'inunash kaatnamna.

A- / q'inu / -n(a) / -ash / kaatnam / -na
It / see / [past tense] / I / longhouse [object]
I saw the longhouse.

Aq'inushananam kaatnamna.

A- / q'inu / -shana / -nam / kaatnam / -na
It / see / [past tense] / you / longhouse / [object]
You saw the longhouse.

Iq'inushana kaatnamna.

I- / q'inu / -shana / longhouse / [object]
(S)he / see / [past tense] / longhouse / [object]
(S)he saw the longhouse.

Paq'inushana kaatnamna.

Pa- / q'inu / -shana / kaatnam / -na
They / see / [past tense] / longhouse / [object]
They see the longhouse.

Aq'inushanatash kaatnamna.

A- / q'inu / -shana / -tash / kaatnam / -na
It / see / [past tense] / we / longhouse / [object]
We see the longhouse.

By now, some of these endings should start to look pretty familiar. Try writing down the same sentences with "danced" and compare with the sentences below:

Wáashashanaash kaatnampa.
I danced at the longhouse.

Wáashashananam kaatnampa.
You danced at the longhouse.

Iwáashashana kaatnampa.
(S)he danced at the longhouse.

Pawashashana kaatnampa.
They danced at the longhouse.

Wáashashanatash kaatnampa.
We danced at the longhouse.

Review Answers:

- 1) ash
2) nam
3) I
4) Pa
5) atash