

THE CONFEDERATED TRIBES LANGUAGE LESSON

Learner's Corner

Over the many past weeks we have examined the action words see, go, sing, and dance. This has given us a good look at what patterns form as we express different subjects (I, you, we, etc.). In this, and the next, issue we will look at two new action words. Practice what you have learned already. By now, you might even be able to do some of these exercises without any English answer translation!

Kiksht

(Wasq'u)

Verbs

go -i-

Sentences

See if you can recognize the action word (remember the "sandwich" idea) in the following few sentences. Then try and practice it your knowledge below:

Itgäqwit inuya skulyamt.

Alma itgäqwit anuya skulyamt.

Itgäqwit nanuya skulyamt.

You probably recognized skulyamt ("to school"), but did you pick out the action word? What is it saying? Copy it down and try to pull it apart before you look at the answer here:

inuya
i / n / u / ya
[few hours past] / I / [near time] / go
I went (just recently)

anuya
a / n / u / ya
[future] / I / [far time] / go
I will go

nanuya
na / n / u / ya
[several months past] / I / [near time] / go
I went (a few months ago)

Now, see if you can translate these English sentences/fragments into Kiksht:

You will go

You went (a year or more ago)

You walked (went on foot) to school.

How do you think you did? Use the past issues of Spilyay to help you out. When you are done, call the Kiksht team within the Language Program (553-3575) on Fridays and see how you did!

Why Should I Learn Kiksht?

(Taken from Wasq'u Itlawacha, a newsletter produced by the Kiksht language team.)

Why should I learn this language? It doesn't help me get a job! It doesn't help me get money out of the bank (or put it in). It isn't used by anyone today. These are innocent questions that the youth are asking today. And we feel it's our obligation to share the importance of our language with the youth.

Keep in mind that only a small percentage of children ask these questions. And according to a survey Mrs. Graham shared with us that the majority of parents (over 80%) are in favor of their children learning a language. Over 70% of the High School students surveyed believe language is important to them.

One way we try to answer these questions is to share the history of our people and their displacement over a century ago. That if it had not been the unique relationship shared between our government and the U.S. government that we would not have a place to call our own as we do today. We gave up our claim to the land inherently ours to the government for the white settlers that were coming to the area. It was because of our uniqueness that urged the government to make a treaty with us.

We had our own language, government, inherent land base, customs, and religious beliefs. If we should start giving up these characteristics, what would make us different from those around us? We don't claim to answer all the questions the kids ask, but if you have ideas that can add to these, please feel free to jot them down and send them to us, or call 553-3575.

Numu

(Paiute)

Verbs

walk go
sogomea mea

Sentences

Remember that Numu has similar structure to English, but different habits and word order. Subjects and objects are expressed in a like manner to English (with a single word, rather than a helper phrase glued to another word), but the logical phrasing order is: subject-object-verb. (See past issues for reviews of this.)

Nu nasekoodukwitoo sogome'a.
I school-to walk.
I walk to school.

Nu nasekoodukwitoo sogomeano'o.
I school-to walking.
I am walking to school.

Nu nasekoodukwitoo sogomeokwe.
I school-to will walk.
I will walk to school.

Try and translate these three English sentences:

You walk to school.

You will walk to school.

They walk to school.

They will walk to school.

We are walking to school.

We will walk to school.

I will go to the school.

When you've finished, ask around to compare your answers. Feel free to call the Language Program, especially on Fridays, and ask your Numu language team for the right answers and see how you did! (553-3575) What is more important than getting them right is making the effort. Thank you for taking time for the precious activity of language study.

Ichishkiin

(Sahaptin)

Verb

walk go
tkw'anaitisha winasha

Sentences

You may have noticed by now that the communication of subject and object follow a fairly straight-forward formula. In fact, this formula is even easier than that of English. The first word of an Ichishkiin sentence generally tells you who the subject is. (The special case is when talking about he, she, or they. In that case, this action word tells us if it is he, she, or they.) Now, let's start with a few example sentences using what you already have learned about tenses (past, present, and future):

Tkw'anaitmshnash ai sapsikw'atpamayau.
Tkw'anait /msh /nash /ai /sapsikw'atpama /yau
walk / [past] / I / to, for / school / towards, to
I walked to school.

Tkw'aninash sapsikw'atpamayau.
Tkw'ani / nash / sapsikw'atpama / yau
walk / I / school / towards, to
I am walking to school.

Tl'nash tkw'anaitita sapsikw'atpamayau.
Tl' / nash / tkw'anaiti / ta / sapsikw'atpama / yau
[emphasis] / I / walk / [future] / school / towards, to
I will walk to school.

Try and translate these six English sentences:

I went to work.

I am going to work.

I will go to work.

Did you go to work?

Are you going to work?

Compare what you wrote to the answers below and thank you for taking time to do this exercise. How did you do?

Answers:

Winanáš kutkutpamayau.
Winashaash kutkutpamayau.
Tl'nash winata kutkutpamayau.

Mishnam winaná kutkutpamayau.
Mishnam winashá kutkutpamayau.
Mishnam winata kutkutpamayau.