

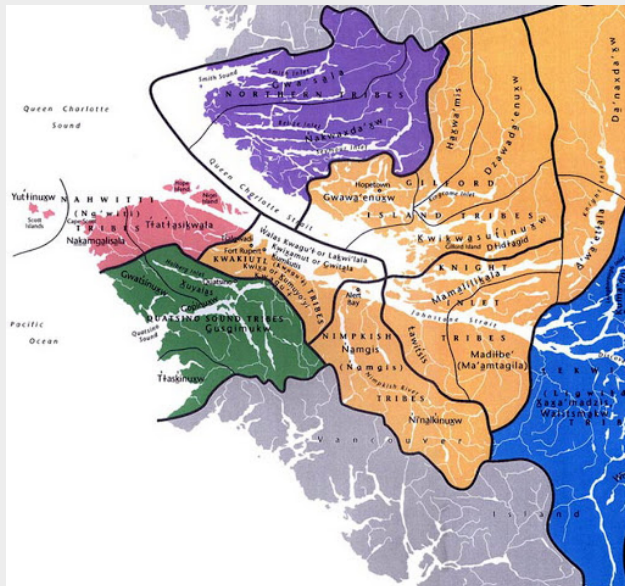
The grammar of body- directed action verbs in Kwak'wala

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Kwak'wala Language

- Member of the Wakashan language family, Northern branch
- Fewer than 150 L1 speakers remaining, 2.2% of the population (FPCC 2018)



Kwakwaka'wakw Territory: Umista Cultural Society



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- Four language consultants, all speaking the central dialect, contributed knowledge to this presentation.

Gilakas'la to **Ruby Dawson Cranmer**, **Mildred Child**, **Julia Nelson**, and **Violet Bracic**.

Body-directed action verbs

Table 1

<u>Verb</u>	<u>English Translation</u>	<u>Morpheme Analysis</u>
dix'id	'to wipe'	dax- 'to wipe' -(x)'id 'inchoative'
kusa, kus'id	'to shave'	kus- 'to shave' -a 'final vowel' -(x)'id 'inchoative'
t'suxwa, t'suxw'id	'to wash'	t'suxw- 'to wash' -a 'final vowel' -(x)'id 'inchoative'
la'stax'id	'to bathe'	la- 'to go' -(')sta 'liquid' -(x)'id 'inchoative'
lus'and	'to undress, get naked'	lus- 'to uncover, to open curtain or roof' -(k)'an 'body' -(x)'id 'inchoative'
k'uxt'sud	'to dress'	k'ux- 'to be dressed' -t'saw 'in' -(x)'id 'inchoative'
k'uxamult'sud, k'uxwaf'so	'to undress'	k'ux- 'to be dressed' -am 'nominal suffix' -waf/-uf 'reverse direction' -t'saw 'in' -(x)'id 'inchoative'

Outline

- This presentation will describe basic features of the grammar of the verbs in Table 1.
 - ❖ Reflexive and transitive sentence types
 - ❖ Implicit objects
 - ❖ Interaction with body part suffixes
- Though broadly similar in their grammar, there is quite a bit of micro-variation in how these verbs pattern.

Basic sentence types

- With body-directed action verbs, you can form two basic kinds of sentences: **reflexive** and **transitive**.
- **Reflexive** sentences:
 - ❖ Lack a grammatical object
 - ❖ Describe situations where the subject of the sentence does something to their own body
- **Transitive** sentences:
 - ❖ Have **an object** in the accusative case (=x in third person)
 - ❖ Describe situations where the subject does something directed towards whoever the object denotes (this can be the subject's body or someone else's)

Transitive objects

- With ALL of the verbs in Table 1, the **object** can be a person distinct from the subject (5).

(5) la_{an} k'uxwał'sud **xux** **Monica_x**
la ='m =an k'ux -wał -t'saw -(x)'id =**x** =**ux** **Monica** =**(a)_x**
AUX =VER =1 dress -REV -in -BEC =**A C C** =**D 2** **Monica** =**v 2**
'I am undressing **Monica**.' (20200622-VB VF)

Transitive objects (cont.)

- With the verbs **dix'id** 'to wipe', **kusa / kus'id** 'to shave', and **t'suxwa / t'suxw'id** 'to wash', **the object** can also refer explicitly to a body or body part.

(6) la'mux dix'idux Shellyax
 l(a) =m =ux day -(x)'id =ux Shelly =(a)x
 AUX =VER =D 2 wipe -BEC =D 2 Shelly =v 2
 xi's awik'wine'
 =x =i(')s awik'wine'
 =ACC =3.REFL.POSS body
 'Shelly wiped off **her body**.' (20191205-RDC VF)

(7) kusux Shellyax xux gugama'yexs Eddie
 kus =ux Shelly =(a)x =x =ux gugame' =(a)x =s Eddie
 shave =D 2 Shelly =v 2 =ACC =D 2 face =v 2 =3.POSS Eddie
 'Shelly is shaving **Eddie's face**.' (20191205-RDC VF)

- The object can be refer to the body of the subject (6) or a non-subject (7).
 - ❖ Object determiners indicate whose body the action is done to (the verb doesn't).

Transitive objects (cont.)

- The verbs **la'stax'id** 'to bathe', **lus'and** 'to undress', **k'uxt'so** 'to get dressed', and **k'uxamult'sud** / **k'uxwalt'sud** 'to undress' **cannot** take explicit objects referring to body parts.

(8) *Context: Eddie is hanging out in his underwear when the doorbell rings. He puts clothes on his bottom half to answer the door.*

* k'uxt'sudi	Eddie	xi's		gugwa'yu
k'ux -t'saw -(x)'id =i	Eddie	=x	=i(')s	gugwa'yu
dress -in -BEC =D3	Eddie	=ACC	=3.REFL.POSS	leg
kas	le'	axstudax		t'axala
k(a) =(i)'s	la =i'	ax -'stu -(x)'id =x		t'axala
PREP =3.REFL.POSS	go =NMZ	do -eye -BEC =ACC		door

Intended: 'Eddie dressed his legs to go open the door.'

Speaker's comment: "You would say *kaxsidzandi Eddie* ('Eddie put his pants on.')

(20200614-JN JF)

Impossible reflexives

- Plain reflexives with the verb roots **t'suxw-** 'to wash' and **day-** 'to wipe' do not sound like complete sentences (9).

(9) a. ? **t'suxw'idi** Simon
 t'suxw -(x)'id =i Simon
 wash -BEC =D3 Simon
Literally: 'Simon washed.'
Speaker's comment: "What did he wash?" (20200614-JN JF)

b. ? **dix'idi** Monica_x
 day -(x)'id =u_x Monica =(a)_x
 wipe -BEC =D2 Monica =v2
Literally: 'Monica wiped.'
Speaker's comment: "For example, you could say *didagam* ('to face-wipe')." (20200614-JN JF)

- These verbs' meaning is more general than the other verbs in Table 1.

Implicit objects

- Reflexive sentences lack grammatical objects.
- However, they still have an **implicit object**: the body or body part which the listener *understands* the action to be directed at, even though the speaker doesn't say it.
- With **kusa / kus'id** 'to shave', the implicit object is typically understood to be a face:

(10) lux **kus'id**ux Eddiyax, latlux lax Gwa'dzi.
'Eddie **is shaving** (*implicit*: his own face), he is gonna go to Port Hardy.'
(20181127-MC VF)

(11) **kus'id**ux Eddiyax **xux Bill**x, k'i'sux tlu'am k'otlala.
'Eddie **is shaving Bill** (*implicit*: Bill's face), he (Bill) doesn't really know how.'
(20181127-MC VF)

- This default can be overridden by context, however. If we were talking about a woman, the listener might assume she is shaving her legs.

Implicit objects (cont.)

- In reflexive sentences with **la'stax'id** 'to bathe', **lus'and** 'to undress', **k'uxt'sud** 'to get dressed' and **k'uxamult'sud** / **k'uxwalt'so** 'to undress', the implicit object in a reflexive is the subject's body.
 - Is it the *whole* body by default?
- The verbs **t'suxwa** / **t'suxw'id** 'to wash' and **dix'id** 'to wipe' entail the existence of an object, but say nothing specific about it (9).

Body part suffixes

<u>Suffix</u>	<u>Translation</u>	<u>Phonology</u>	<u>Example</u>
-(g)am	‘face’	Loses initial g after non-resonant consonants	/kus-/ + /-(g)am/ + /-(x)’id/ → [kusamd] ‘to face-shave’
-iłba	‘nose’	Softens a previous consonant	/t’suxw-/ + /-iłba/ → [t’sugwiłba] ‘to nose-wash’
-(x)t’sana	‘hand, arm’	Loses initial x after non-resonant consonants	/ax-/ + /-(x)t’sana/ + /-(a)la/ → [axt’sanala] ‘to be on hand’
-(g)it(a)	‘body’	Loses initial g after non-resonant consonants	/day-/ + /-(g)it(a)/ → [dagita] ‘to body-wipe’
-(k)’an	‘body’	After a non-resonant consonant, this suffix loses its initial k; then, either the non-resonant consonant hardens or a glottal stop is realized	/lus-/ + /-(k)’an/ + /-(x)’id/ → [lus’and] ‘to undress, get naked’
-’stu	‘eye’ or ‘round opening’	The initial glottal stop is sometimes missing	/max-/ + /-’stu/ + /-(x)’id/ → [maxstud] ‘to strike in eye’

Using body part suffixes

- Body part suffixes can be used to **create** predicates describing body-directed actions.

- (12) a. lus-
‘to uncover, to open curtain or roof’ (Boas 1948:403)
- b. lus'id
lus -x'id
uncover -BEC
‘clouds opening up’ (First Voices 2009)
- c. lus'and
lus -(k)'an -x'id
uncover -body -BEC
‘to undress, to get naked’ (20191205-RDC VF)

Using body part suffixes (cont.)

- The verbs **kusa** / **kus'id** 'to shave', **dix'id** 'to wipe', and **t'suxwa** / **t'suxw'id** 'to wash' take **body part suffixes** optionally.
- In **reflexive** sentences, body part suffixes specify a region of the subject's body (13).

(13)

$lu_{\underline{x}}$		kus\underline{a}md\underline{x}			$Eddiy_{\underline{a}}_{\underline{x}}$	
$l(\underline{a}) = u_{\underline{x}}$		kus	-(g)\underline{a}m	-(x)'id	$=u_{\underline{x}}$	$Eddie = (\underline{a})_{\underline{x}}$
AUX =D2		shave	-face	-BEC	$=D2$	$Eddie =V2$
'Eddie shaved his face .'						(20181127-MC VF)
<i>(lit. 'Eddie face-shaved.'</i>)						

Using body part suffixes (cont.)

- In **transitive** sentences with these same verbs, body part suffixes specify a region on the body of **the object**.

(14) la'mux̄ Eddiyax̄ kusamd

 l(a) = 'm =ux̄ Eddie =(a)x̄ kus -(g)am -(x)'id

 AUX =VER =D2 Eddie =V2 shave -face -BEC

 xux̄ Billx̄

 =x̄ =ux̄ Bill =(a)x̄

 =ACC =D2 Bill =V2

'Eddie **shaved Bill's face**.'

(*lit.* 'Eddie face-shaved Bill.')

(20181127-MC VF)

Conclusion

- The body-directed action verbs in Table 1 are broadly similar in their grammar, though even within this small set there is micro-variation:
 - ❖ E.g. *dix'id*, *t'suxwa/t'suxw'id*: don't form plain reflexives
 - ❖ E.g. *la'stax'id*, *lus'and*, *k'uxt'sud*, *k'uxwał'sud*: take person objects only
- A case study of these verbs highlights interesting interactions between various parts of Kwak'wala grammar:
 - ❖ Reflexivity
 - ❖ Transitivity
 - ❖ Implicit objects
 - ❖ Body part suffixes

References

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