

TLINGIT LITERACY SESSION

WHITEHORSE, YUKON

February 6 - 8, 1996

Guest Instructor:

DR. JEFF LEER

Assistant Professor

Alaska Native Language Center
University of Alaska Fairbanks
Fairbanks, Alaska

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Native
Language
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**Yukon Native Language Centre
Tlingit Literacy Session
February 6-8, 1996**

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Tlingit Consonants

There are 46 consonants in the Tlingit language, many more than in English. Some are written with one letter, some with two or three, and **kh'**w as in **kh'wátl** 'pot', and **xh'**w as in **xh'wâł** 'down feathers' take four letters.

The letter **ł** as in **łłł** 'fireweed', is not found in English. It is called 'Indian-l', 'bar-l' or 'slash-l'. This consonant is made with the tongue in the same position as for ordinary **l**, but much air comes out around the sides of the tongue, making a hushing sound. [Because coastal Tlingit has no ordinary **l**, it simply uses the **l** letter for the **ł** sound, e.g., **łłł** 'fireweed'.]

On the *Consonant Chart* the consonants are arranged in vertical columns and horizontal rows.

The **columns** are arranged according to **where** the sounds are made in the mouth, from the lips (labials) to the vocal chords (glottals). For example, the consonants **d**, **t**, **t'** and **n** are all made in the same place with the tongue tip touching the gums just behind the teeth.

The **rows** show **how** the sounds are made. It can be seen that **t**, **ch**, **k**, and **kh** are all made in the same way. They are aspirated stops. The air flow is stopped and then a puff of air (aspiration) is released.

There are three columns for rounded consonants. These are made in the same way as their unrounded partners but in addition they have rounded lips. So **k** is the same as **kw** except that **kw** has rounding.

The distinction between velar or 'front-k' sounds and uvular or 'back-k' sounds is very important in Tlingit. Although English does not have this, many languages of the world do, such as Turkish,

Inuit (Eskimo) and Georgian. The Tlingit name for velar is **khà-k'ikhl'án** 'roof of mouth'. The name for uvular is **khà-nût'ayi** 'uvula', which is the thing hanging down at the back of your throat.

Glottal Stop

A glottal stop is made when the glottis or vocal chords close and release, which is a little like what you do when you cough.

There are three ways of writing glottal stop in Tlingit.

1. In the middle of a word use a period to write glottal stop.

si.ât'	it is cold
we.é/wa.é	you
nay.á	(you folks) go!

khus.ùk'	playing house, playing with dolls
sàyna.àt	person's name
khìs.êxh	person's name

There is always a glottal stop between two vowels.

2. At the end of a word, the glottal stop is written with apostrophe.

ná'	here!, take it!
hagwá'	serves you right, that's what you get
hé'	(surprise. also he.é)
3. At the beginning of a word, the glottal stop is not written.

Tlingit Consonant Chart

	Labial lips	Alveolar tongue tip behind teeth				Velar middle of tongue against roof of mouth	Uvular back of tongue touches uvula at back of throat	Glottal vocal chords			
<div>Stops (stop off the breath)</div>											
						rounded		rounded		rounded (rare)	
Plain		dâ weasel	dlèt snow	dzèt ladder, bridge, stairs	jâji snowshoes	gán firewood	gwêt bag	ghâ (raven call)	łaghwán tie it into a bow	nay.á (you folks) go!	ana.wèch (usually) wear it
Aspirated followed by a puff of air		tá sleep	tlâ mother	tsâts bear root, hedysarum	chàn mother-in- law	kâni brother/ sister-in- law	kwêy mark, landmark	khâ man	khwân people from ____		
Glottalized followed by a pop		t'á king salmon	tl'átk earth, ground	ts'ats'î bird	ch'âk' eagle	k'ínk' fermented fish heads	k'wát' egg (not fish egg)	kh'atèt pitcher	kh'wátł pot		
<div>Fricatives (breath flows through narrow opening creating friction)</div>											
Plain		lûł fireweed	sà name	shà mountain	xíxch' frog	xwê whew!	xhát me, I	xhwàgùt I went	hás they, them	yà- nahwên is swim- ming along	
Glottalized raised vocal chords		ł'ak dress	s'ìkh smoke, cigarette		x'âx' apple	x'wán longjohns	xh'é mouth	xh'wâl' down feathers			
<div>Sonorants (softer, you can sing them continuously)</div>											
Nasal air through nose	mâ-sá? how?	ná' here; take it									
Nonnasal	wàkh eye		dalèyí trout		yá this						

Tlingit Vowels

T=Teslin, C=Carcross, A=Atlin

The basic Tlingit vowels are **a**, **e**, **i** and **u**. An **o** occurs sometimes in borrowed words and interjections.

The vowels can be long or short and have either high or low tone.

short low (no mark)	short high (´)	long low (`)	long high (^)
---------------------------	------------------------	----------------------	-----------------------

ch'a <i>just</i>	á <i>that, there</i>	à (à) <i>yes</i>	â <i>sitting, lake</i>
de <i>already</i>	té <i>rock</i>	dè <i>trail, road</i>	dê <i>enough</i>
i <i>your</i>	í <i>don't!</i>	dì <i>tea</i>	î <i>yuck!</i>
tsu <i>again</i>	tsú <i>also, too</i>	gishù (T, A) geshù (C) <i>pig</i>	nàshû <i>extends</i>
	hó hó <i>thankyou</i>		ahô <i>I don't want to</i> <i>(coast: I understand)</i>

Nasalized Vowels

1. Irregular in expressions, e.g.,

à 'yes'

èhé 'I'm not impressed'

áhó 'Oh yeah!, Oh, I get it, I understand'

2. Nasalization rule for Teslin (not for Atlin or Carcross): Whenever a syllable ends with a vowel plus y or w, the vowel is nasalized. This is found with the combinations:

ay aw

ey ew

iy iw

— uw

Examples:

tày fat

tây garden

xhày beaver lodge, sweat bath

yây whale

kwêy mark, landmark

dlìy meat

kîy knee

t'îy elbow

tîy chin

gàw drum; clock, hour, time

hàw oh?, oh! (also hà̀m)

hàw bough

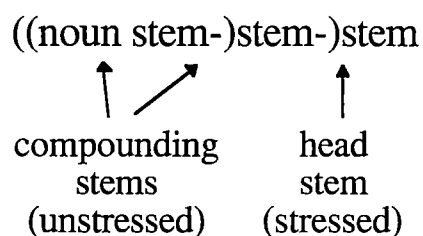
nàw alcohol, booze

f'êw sand

sîw, sîm (T)	<i>rain</i>
sûw (C)	<i>rain</i>
datîw (A)	<i>he's reading</i>
datîw, datûw (T)	<i>he's reading</i>
detûw (C)	<i>he's reading</i>
s'ûw	<i>blue-green</i>
tûw-s'inâ	<i>candle</i>

Note: There is no nasalization in **háy'** 'how much?, how big?' possibly because it ends in glottal stop.

A Vowel Change



If a stem ends with **é**, it becomes **a** when it is in a compound preceding the head stem, that is, preceding the last stem in the word. This rule has exceptions.

xh'é <i>mouth</i>	xh'a-dà <i>around the mouth, lips</i>	
sé <i>voice, neck</i>	sa-dà <i>around the neck</i>	

Some Words Borrowed From Chinook Jargon

Tl = Tlingit, CJ = Chinook Jargon, Fr = French

Tl	nadâkw	table
CJ	ladâp	
Fr	la table	
Tl	nakwnêt	priest
CJ	lablêt	
Fr	le prêtre	
Tl	wanadû, older nawadû	sheep
CJ	lamadû	
Fr	la mouton	
Tl	wasûs	cow
S.Tl	waswûs	
CJ	masmûs	
Tl	nâw	alcohol, booze
CJ	lâm	
Eng.	rum	

Other Comments on Tlingit Language

The importance of tone. The place Hutshi has been thought to be Hûch'i Àyí 'last lake' but it is actually Hûch'i Àyí 'last one'. When packing, this was the place to put the last stuff.

m̄hmí'	annoyed
èhè'	
hàyîn!	said to a baby? (coast: hàék)
hedlâw (C)	my goodness!
hadlô(T)	my goodness!
ahó (C)	'I don't want to'
ahó dê(T)	'I don't want to'
âhó	'Oh yeah! Oh, I get it, I understand'

The tone on sá in words like dà-sá 'what' or mâ-sá 'how' is especially high because it marks a question. But we do not have to write this special height because it is predictable.

Being Lucky:

fixhêtl	he/she/it is lucky or fortunate
fixhêdlí	it is lucky, brings good luck, fortune (coast)
wufixhêtl	he/she is lucky, blessed
gaxhłaxhêtl	let him/her be lucky, get lucky, ge blessed
Łixhêtl yá tl'átk	
Dikânkhâwu, łaxhêtl hà-jìt-tí	

Tlingit Listening Exercise

Listen to each example. Write [d] and [t] and [t'] as you hear them.


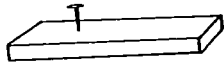
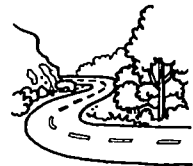


- | | |
|----------|-------------------|
| 1. té | 1. rock |
| 2. t'â | 2. board |
| 3. dè | 3. road |
| 4. tàt | 4. night |
| 5. t'ùk | 5. baby bag |
| 6. dânà | 6. money |
| 7. t'îsh | 7. skin stretcher |
| 8. tîł | 8. shoe |
| 9. dûsh | 9. cat |
| 10. tât' | 10. junco (bird) |


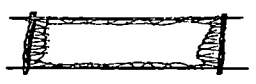



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 <div data-bbox="378 693 478 789"></div>	 <div data-bbox="770 693 868 789"></div>	 <div data-bbox="1159 693 1257 789"></div>	 <div data-bbox="1549 693 1647 789"></div>	 <div data-bbox="1940 693 2049 789"></div>
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 <div data-bbox="378 1272 478 1366"></div>	 <div data-bbox="770 1272 868 1366"></div>	 <div data-bbox="1159 1272 1257 1366"></div>	 <div data-bbox="1549 1272 1647 1366"></div>	 <div data-bbox="1940 1272 2049 1366"></div>
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Tlingit Listening Exercise

Listen to each example. Write [dl] and [tl] and [tl'] as you hear them.



- | | |
|--------------|-----------------|
| 1. dl̥inkwát | 1. carefully |
| 2. tl̥ákw | 2. quickly |
| 3. tl̥ákw | 3. always |
| 4. dl̥iy | 4. meat |
| 5. tl̥'íkh | 5. finger |
| 6. dl̥èt | 6. snow; white |
| 7. tl̥ét | 7. not |
| 8. tl̥'átk | 8. land |
| 9. dl̥àk' | 9. man's sister |
| 10. tl̥'ák' | 10. wet wood |

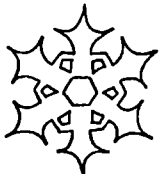



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Write /dl/ /tl/ /tɬ/ as you hear them in the following:

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carefully	quickly	always		
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	not			
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Tlingit Listening Exercise

Listen to each example. Write [dz] and [ts] and [ts'] as you hear them.

- | | |
|------------|-------------------|
| 1. dzánti | 1. flounder |
| 2. tsík | 2. roasting stick |
| 3. tsú | 3. also |
| 4. dzàs | 4. babiche |
| 5. ts'ùtát | 5. morning |
| 6. kuts'ín | 6. mouse |
| 7. dzèt | 7. ladder |
| 8. łatsìn | 8. strength |
| 9. łits'â | 9. smells good |
| 10. tsà | 10. seal |

Tlingit Listening Exercise

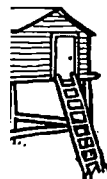
Write /dz/ /ts/ /ts'/ as you hear them in the following:

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also



strength



Tlingit Listening Exercise

Listen to each example. Write [j] and [ch] and [ch'] as you hear them.




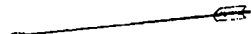
- | | |
|-----------|---------------------------------------|
| 1. ch'ít | 1. diving bird |
| 2. jûn | 2. dream |
| 3. chà | 3. term of respect for brother-in-law |
| 4. jêgít | 4. jacket |
| 5. chùnèt | 5. arrow |
| 6. ch'âkw | 6. long ago |
| 7. jâji | 7. snowshoes |
| 8. chán | 8. stink |
| 9. ch'âk' | 9. eagle |
| 10. jánwu | 10. goat |




Tlingit Listening Exercise

Write /j/ /ch/ /ch'/ as you hear them in the following:

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		<p>term of respect for brother-in-law</p>		
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<p>long ago</p>		<p>'stink</p>		
-----------------	---	---------------	---	---

Tlingit Listening Exercise

Listen to each example. Write [g] and [k] and [k'] as you hear them.






- | | |
|-------------|-----------------|
| 1. gân | 1. outside |
| 2. kît | 2. killer whale |
| 3. kakên | 3. yarn |
| 4. k'ûx | 4. marten |
| 5. kûx | 5. rice |
| 6. gút | 6. dime |
| 7. k'îljâ | 7. Chinook wind |
| 8. kâst | 8. barrel |
| 9. k'idên | 9. well |
| 10. k'isâni | 10. boys |





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Write /g/ /k/ /k'/ as you hear them in the following:

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<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

			well	
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

Tlingit Listening Exercise

Listen to each example. Write [gh] and [kh] and [kh'] as you hear them.

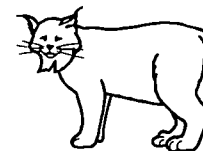
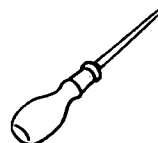
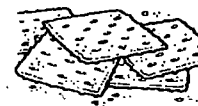
- | | |
|------------|------------------|
| 1. ghâch | 1. rug |
| 2. kh'âtl' | 2. flat and thin |
| 3. khîdu | 3. beaver dam |
| 4. ghâtl | 4. pilot bread |
| 5. kh'atèł | 5. pitcher |
| 6. ghítghà | 6. pine needle |
| 7. khênà | 7. awl |
| 8. ghàt | 8. sockeye |
| 9. ghàkh | 9. lynx |
| 10. khutí | 10. weather |

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Write /gh/ /kh/ /kh'/ as you hear them in the following:

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Tlingit Listening Exercise

Listen to each example. Write [tɬ'] and [ɬ] as you hear them.






- | | |
|--------------|----------------------|
| 1. tɬ'átk | 1. earth |
| 2. ɬ'àk | 2. dress |
| 3. tɬ'àdên | 3. sideways |
| 4. tɬ'íkʰ | 4. finger |
| 5. ɬ'êw | 5. sand |
| 6. ɬ'à | 6. breast |
| 7. tɬ'êli | 7. milt (fish semen) |
| 8. aɬ'ûn | 8. hunting |
| 9. tɬ'ûghu | 9. liver |
| 10. tɬ'úk'xh | 10. worm; bug |




Tlingit Listening Exercise

Write /tl'/ and /t/ as you hear them in the following:

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<p>BREAST</p>	<p>MILT</p>			

Tlingit Listening Exercise

Listen to each example. Write [ts'] and [s'] as you hear them.



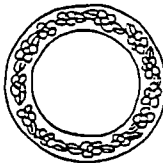
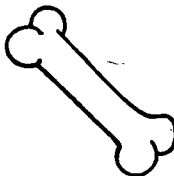

- | | |
|---------------|---|
| 1. s'ús' | 1. harlequin duck |
| 2. ts'ats'î | 2. bird |
| 3. s'íx' | 3. plate |
| 4. s'àxh | 4. bone |
| 5. łits'â | 5. smells good |
| 6. ts'ùtât | 6. morning |
| 7. s'éł' | 7. rubber |
| 8. s'ikhdàkèt | 8. pipe |
| 9. s'î | 9. eyebrow |
| 10. alts'ík' | 10. pinches it
(holds between thumb
and forefinger) |


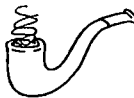


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	<p>RUBBER</p>			
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Tlingit Listening Exercise

Listen to each example. Write [k'] and [x'] as you hear them.

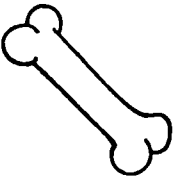



- | | |
|------------|---|
| 1. asx'îx' | 1. tearing off (meat) from bone with teeth. |
| 2. k'înk' | 2. fermented fish heads |
| 3. x'ât' | 3. island |
| 4. k'é | 4. goodness |
| 5. x'à | 5. point |
| 6. x'úx' | 6. paper |
| 7. k'ûx | 7. marten |
| 8. k'îłjâ | 8. chinook wind |
| 9. x'âx' | 9. apple |
| 10. x'ús' | 10. club (weapon) |





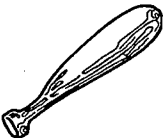
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			<p>GOODNESS</p>	

Tlingit Listening Exercise

Listen to each example. Write [kh'] and [xh'] as you hear them.





- | | |
|---------------|----------------------|
| 1. xh'âk | 1. canyon |
| 2. kh'èkh'w | 2. tern (bird) |
| 3. xh'ùs | 3. foot |
| 4. xh'é | 4. mouth |
| 5. kh'aliyêł | 5. is a liar |
| 6. xh'îx'wáł' | 6. pin |
| 7. kh'wátl | 7. pot |
| 8. xh'ahîni | 8. saliva |
| 9. xh'în | 9. willow-like plant |
| 10. kh'atèł | 10. pitcher, jug |





Tlingit Listening Exercise

Write /kh'/ and /xh'/ as you hear them in the following:

*Yukon
Native
Language
Centre*

Yukon College
Box 2799
Whitehorse, Yukon
Canada Y1A 5K4
Telephone (403) 668-8820
Facsimile (403) 668-8825

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		<p>SALIVA</p>		
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The Moose Hunt
Lucy Wren, Carcross

Title

Dzísk'w-káxh esx'idé yùgùt.
He is hunting moose.

page 1

Khâ áwé. Wé khâ esx'idé yùgùt.
That is a man. The man is going hunting.

page 2

Dàt-káxh-sá esx'idé yùgùt ? Dzísk'w-káxh esx'idé yùgùt.
What is he going hunting for? He is going hunting for moose.

page 3

Gùsû wé ûnà ? Yâdu ûnà.
Where is the gun? Here is the gun.

page 4

Â-yàxh ét yùgùt.
He is walking by the lake.

Note: ét yùgùt gets run together in normal speech so it sounds like édùgùt.

page 5

Dzísk'w-xh'us.ítí awsitìn.

He sees moose tracks.

page 6

Wé khâ dzísk'w awsitìn. Wé khâ-dzísk'w hîn edená.

The man sees a moose. The bull moose is drinking water.

page 7

Wé khâ-dzísk'w wé khâ awsitìn.

The bull moose sees the man.

page 8

Wé khâ-dzísk'w wé khâ-nákh khut-yujixìx.

The bull moose runs away from the man.

Note: khut-yujixìx gets run together in fast speech so it sounds like khudujixìx.

Hedô! Wé khâ wé dzísk'w eyawsi.únxhà.

The man shoots at the moose and misses.

The Moose Hunt
Liz Smith and Margaret Bob, Teslin

Title

Khâ dzísk'w ał'ûn.
The man is hunting moose.

page 1

Q: Gùdê-sá yà nagút wé khâ ?
Where is the man going?

A: Asx'ìtdé yà-nagút.
He is going hunting.

page 2

Q: Dà-sá amsitìn ?
What does he see?

A: Khâ-dzísk'w amsitìn.
He sees the bull moose.

page 3

Q: Gùsú wé ûnà ?
Where's the gun?

A: Yâdu ûnà.
Here is the gun.

page 4

Q: Gùdê-sá yà-nagút wé khâ ?
Where is the man going?

A: Â xhánde yà-nagút ?
He is going towards the lake.

page 5

Q: Dà-sá amsitìn ?
What does he see?

A: Dzísk'u-xh'us.ìtí amsitìn.
He sees moose tracks.

page 6

Q: Mâ-sá khuwanûk wé dzísk'w ?
What is the moose doing?

A: Hîn adaná wé dzísk'w.
The moose is drinking water.

page 7

Q: Dà-sá amsitìn wé dzísk'w ?
What does the moose see?

A: Dzísk'w khâ amsitìn.
The moose sees a man.

page 8

Q: Mâ-sá khuwanûk wé dzísk'w ?

What is the moose doing?

A: Khâ-nákh khut-wujixìx wé dzísk'w.

The moose runs away from the man.

Hedô! Khâ dzísk'w ayamsi.únxhà.

Gosh! The man shot at the moose and missed.

Tlingit Moieties

Moiety

The Tlingit belong to one of two major moieties or social divisions. These are Yêł 'Crow' and Ghùch 'Wolf'. It is a rule that you marry someone from the opposite moiety.

Clan

Within each moiety there are several clans. You inherit your mother's clan. Important possessions are the property of the clan, such as songs, names, emblems, houses, regalia, stories and dances.

Yêł -- Crow				
Clan Name, Man of Clan	Dèshìtàn	Ishkìtàn	Kùkhhittàn	Ghànaxh.ádi
Woman of Clan	Dèshìtàn-shâwau	Ishkìtàn-shâwu	Kùkhhittàn-shâwu	Ghànaxh-shâ
Primary Crest	Sìidèdì <i>Beaver</i>	Xíxch' <i>Frog</i>	Yêł <i>Crow</i>	Yêł <i>Crow</i>
Secondary Crests		Xhât <i>fish</i> Tsàghsít' <i>spear</i>		

Ghùch -- <i>Wolf</i>	
Dakh'awèdí	Yanyèdí
Dakh'aw-shâ	Yanyèdi-shâ
(Teslin:) Ch'âk' <i>Eagle</i> Kîť <i>Killer Whale</i>	(Teslin:) Ghùch <i>Wolf</i> (Atlin:) Xûťs <i>Brown Bear</i>

Ghànaxh.ádi
 (woman) Ghànaxhshâ
 Primary Crest Yêť

Jesus Loves Me

Jesus-ch xhat-sixhán xhwasikû.

Du-x'úx'uch hà-in kanik

At-yátx'i du-àyíxh sitì.

Hú hitsìn, tlét hà-ułchìn.

Chorus:

À, Jesus xhat-sixhán

À, Jesus xhat-sixhán

À, Jesus xhat-sixhán

Du-x'úx'u yê-sh-kałnik.

Our Grandparents' Land Tlingit National Anthem

1. Ch'a-àdé yê-unatîghà-xhá
Lest it be left desolate
hà-hîk'w-hás-àní
our grandparents' land
a-kàdé xhat-sagaxhdu.áxhch-a
My voice will always be heard (singing) on it.
Hu-he-ya ...
vocables

2. Dâ x'êghà ch'a-yanaskhá i-tùwú
Do speak your mind truthfully
axh-àt-hás, a-yaw e-yaw
my aunts (father's sisters), *vocables*
I-yêli-káx' xh'anghidagáx'xhi
Make prayers for your Raven
Hu-he-ya ...
vocables

