

Aadoo sáwé?

Who is that?

Shóogoonáx,
aadéi yoo at kawdiyayi yé,
yá Lingít,
shayadiheni aa yéi sh kalneek
yá ixféenax̄ áyá,
haat haa wsidáłk,
Yá ixféé.

— Shaadaax'

For the things that happened
to the Tlingits,
in the beginning,
many say we migrated here
through the south,
the south.
— Robert Zuboff

(Dauenhaeuer, Haa Shuk á66–67)

Aadóo sáwé?

Start this lesson off with the following dialogue exercise. Take turns being A and B, paying close attention to the relationship between an elder and her/his grandchild. Try to use emotion when speaking, and also focus on having a flow to your language that makes it sound like a native Tlingit speaker.

A 1	[kawdigwál: k'ux, k'ux, k'ux]	[knocks: knock, knock, knock] ka-ÿu-∅-di-√gwál hsf.pfv.s/he-(3.S).cl-(+d,∅,+i).√beat/knock/ring/hit/stab
2	neil gú!	come in! neil + ∅-√gú into-building + cl-(+d,∅,-i).√walk/go-(singular)
B	aa sáwé?	who's there? aa(dóo) + sá-wé? who + voice.there
A 4	xát áyá.	it's me. xát + á-yá me-(is.i) + [focus].right-here
5	aaá. ax dachxánk'.	oh. my grandchild. aaa + ax + dachxán-k' yes + my-(is.p) + grandchild.[diminutive]
B 6	tlél iyaxooteen.	i didn't recognize you. tlél + i-ya-u-ÿu-xa-∅-√teen not + you-(2s.O).vsf.irr.pfv.i-(is.S).cl-(+d,∅,-i).√see
7	yak'éi haat yigoodí.	it's good that you've come. ∅-ya-k'éi + haa-t + ÿu-i-∅.√goot-í s/he/it-(3.O).cl-(+d,∅,+i).√good/fine + this-hither-at-(arriving) + pfv.you-(2s.S).cl-(+d,∅,-i).√walk/go-(singular)

B 8	wáa sáwé?	what's up? wáa + sá how + voice
A 9	ax tláa jeetx utlxí áyá haat xwasi.in.	i've brought some boiled fish from my mother ax + tláa + jee-dáx + utlxí + á-yá + haa-t + Ø-yü-xa-si.vín my-(is.p) + mother + possession.from + boiled fish + hither.at-(arrived) her/him/it-(3.O).pfv.i-(is.S).cl-(~d,Ø,+i).vcarry-(full container)
10	ax adée!	oh wow! (Oh my!) (Far out.) ax + adée my-(is.p) + dear-thing
B	goodáx át sáwé?	where is it from? goo-dáx + át + sá-wé where.from + thing-(4n.i) + voice.that
A 12	ast'eix wookoox ax éesh dziyaak s'ootaat.	my father went fishing just this morning. Ast'eix + ýu-Ø-ýa-vkoox + ax + éesh + dziyaak + s'ootaat fishing + pfv.s/he-(3.S).cl-(~d,Ø,+i).vgo-(by boat or car) + my-(is.p) + father + little-while-ago + morning
B 13	gunalchéesh, hó hó.	thank you very much. gunalchéesh +hó-hó thank-you + [emphasis]
A 14	i jiyís yéi at nakasaneiyí.	let me do something for you. i jee-yís + yéi + at + na-ga-xa-sa-vnei-yí your-(2s.p) + possession.for-(benefit) + thus + something-(4n.O) + na-md.gá-md.i-(is.S).cl-(~d,s,-i).vdo/work-on
B 15	héen eetéenáx xat yatee.	i need some water. héen + eetí-náx + xat + ýa-vtee water + remnant.through/via + me-(is.O) + cl-(~d,Ø,+i).vbe

		here. i've brought it here.
A 16	héix' haat xwasi.ín.	hé-x' + haa-t + ḷu-xa-siv.ín here.at-(residing) + hither.at-(arriving) + pfv.i-(1s.S).cl-(‐d,s,+i).√carry-(full container)
17	gunalchéeshik'.	thanks, dear gunalchéesh-i-k' thank-you.[peg vowel].diminutive
B		
18	goosú i tláa?	where is your mother? goo-sá-ú + i + tláa where.voice.is/are-at + your-(2s.p) + mother
A 19	neilú hú.	she's home neil-ú + hú home.is/are-at + her/him-(3s.i)
B 20	goosú i kék'?	where's your little sister/brother? goo-sá-ú + i + kék' where.voice.is/are-at + your-(2s.p) + younger-sibling-(same gender)
21	sgóonu hú.	s/he's at school sgóon-ú + hú school.is/are-at + her/him-(3s.i)
A	kkwagóot dei.	i'm going to go now ga-u-ga-xa-∅-√góot + dei ga-md.irr.ga-md.i-(1s.S).cl-(‐d,∅,-i).√walk/go-(singular)
23	tsu i xándeí kkwagóot seigánx'.	i'll come see you again tomorrow. tsu + i + xán-de + ga-u-ga-xa-∅-√góot + seigán-x' again + your-(2s.p) + beside.towards + ga-md.irr.ga-md.i-(1s.S).cl-(‐d,∅,-i).√walk/go-(singular) + tomorrow.at-(residing)

		it's good to see you.
24 B	yak'éi ixwsateení.	Ø-ŷa-√k'éi + i-ŷu-xa-sa-√teen-í her/him/it-(3.O)-cl-(-d,Ø,-i).√good/fine + you-(2s.O).pfv.i-(1s.S).cl-(-d,s,-i).√see
25	aaá tsu haagu x'wán.	yes, comeback again aaá + tsu + haa-Ø-√gú + x'wán yes + again + hither.cl-(-d,Ø,-i).√walk/go-(singular) + be-sure-to/may-you
A 26	gunalchéesh.	thank you. gunalchéesh thank-you

Kinship Terms

Tlingit kinship terms are rooted in the matrilineal clan system. Because of this, it is important to understand the traditional Tlingit way of looking at family, friends, and in-laws. Often we see the word friends translated in Tlingit as «ax xoonx'i yán» (my clan relatives, friends). This term would not necessarily include those from the opposite clan, who generally are «ax kaani yán» (my in-laws) and can also have specific relationships which are dictated by clan genealogy. These terms are fluid, and are not determined only by lineage. If two people grow closer to one another through friendship or marriage, they may choose to use a kinship term for one another instead of calling each other by name.

A kinship term is a form of greeting, and is often used in public and in ceremony to show a closeness to a clan or individual. In Tlingit culture, the clan is the primary form of identity, and an individual should always be conscious of the clans of others, especially clan opposites. When speaking in public at a Tlingit event, the speaker should always address clan opposites, and should be careful not to boast about the self or one's own clan. An insult to the opposite clan in public could result in a debt that the clan of the speaker is responsible for paying.

When thinking about kinship terms, it is important to remember the clan based-system of Tlingit. Although we are using English terms like, “her older sister” the term sister is not limited to the other females from the same parent(s). Instead, it refers to all members of the same clan who are also female and are of the same generation. Because of this, there is no translation for English kinship terms like cousin. Instead, the challenge of the speaker is to think in Tlingit, about the clan that person may be and how that clan relates to one's own lineage.

The father's clan is often the one shown the most respect and love in public, and we must again keep in mind the clan structure. A paternal uncle is not just the blood siblings of one's father, but instead all of the males in his clan that are of the same generation. Paternal refers to «kaa éesh yinaanáx» (a person's father's lineage) and maternal is «kaa tláa yinaanáx» (a person's mother's lineage). A Tlingit person is the same clan as their mother, and one must always protect the relationships between clans by putting clan law before the individual. Speak carefully, and try not to insult a clan by using their at.óow without permission (including their histories and crests).

Tlingit kinship terms are listed here with the placeholder –, as in –tláa (–'s mother). This placeholder must be replaced by another pronoun or noun. For example: «ax tláa» (my mother), «i tláa» (your mother), «gooch tláa» (wolf mother), and «naa tláa» (clan mother).

	that is her/his ____ /
du ____ áwé.	du ____ á-wé her/his-(3s.p) + [focus].that
-tláa	mother
-éesh	father
-káak	maternal uncle
-tláak'w	maternal aunt
-sáni	paternal uncle
-aat	paternal aunt
-léelk'w	grandparent

	is that your ____? i ____ ák.wé?
	i + ____ + á-gé-wé your-(2s.p) + ____ + [focus].yes/no?.that
♀	female specific kinship terms
-shátx	(female's) older sister
-kéek'	(female's) younger sister
-éek'	(female's) brother
♂	male specific kinship terms
-húnxw	(male's) older brother
-kéek'	(male's) younger brother
-dlaak'	(male's) sister

-yádi	child
-yátx'i	children
-sée	daughter
-yéet	son
-dachxán	grandchild
-kéilk'	maternal niece/nephew
-káalk'w	paternal niece/nephew
-xúx	husband
-shát	wife
-chaan	mother-in-law
-wóo	father-in-law

	<p>this is me</p> <p><u>x</u>át áyá.</p> <p>xát + á-yá me-(is.i) + [focus].right-here</p>
	<p>this is my grandparent right here</p> <p><u>a</u>x léelk'w áyá yáadu.</p> <p>ax + léelk'w + á-yá + yá-t-u my-(is.p) + grandparent + [focus].right-here + right-here.at-(arrived).is/are-at</p>
	<p>i am her/his grandchild</p> <p><u>d</u>u dachxán áyá <u>x</u>át.</p> <p>du + dachxán + á-yá + xát her/his-(3s.p) + grandchild + [focus].right-here + me-(is.i)</p>
	<p>i am my grandparent's grandchild</p> <p><u>a</u>x léelk'w dachxán áyá <u>x</u>át.</p> <p>ax + léelk'w + dachxán + á-yá + xát my-(is.p) + grandparent + grandchild + [focus].right-here + me-(is.i)</p>

	<p>this is my father.</p>
ax éesh áyá.	<p>ax + éesh + á-yá my-(is.p) + father + [focus].right-here</p>
	<p>my father is my grandparents' son</p>
ax léelk'w yéet áwé, ax éesh.	<p>ax + léelk'w + yéet + á-wé + ax + éesh my-(is.p) + grandparent + son + [focus].there + my-(is.p) + father</p>
	<p>i am my father's son</p>
ax éesh yéet áyá xát.	<p>ax + éesh + yéet + á-yá + xát my-(is.p) + father + son + [focus].right-here + me-(is.i)</p>
	<p>i am my father's daughter</p>
ax éesh sée áyá xát.	<p>ax + éesh + sée + á-yá + xát my-(is.p) + father + daughter + [focus].right-here + me-(is.i)</p>

	where is your father
goosú i éesh?	<p>goo-sá-ú +i + éesh where.voice.is/are-at + your-(2s.p) + father</p>
	there is my father
wéidu ax éesh.	<p>wé-t-u + ax + éesh there.at-(arrived).is/are-at + my-(1s.p) + father</p>
	imperfective (+)
	who do you see?
aadóo sá iyatéen?	<p>aadóo + sá + Ø-i-ya-√téen who + voice + her/him/it-(3.O).you-(2s.S).cl-(-d,Ø,+i).√see</p>
	imperfective (+)
	i see my father
ax éesh xaatéen.	<p>ax + éesh + xat my-(1s.p) + father + her/him/it-(3.O).i-(1s.S).cl-(-d,Ø,+i).√see</p>

	is that your paternal uncle?
i sáni ák.wé?	<p>i + sáni + á-gé-wé</p> <p>your-(2s.p) + paternal-uncle + [focus].yes/no.that</p>
	yes, that is my paternal uncle.
aaá, ax sáni áwé.	<p>aaá + ax + sáni + á-wé</p> <p>my-(1s.p) + paternal-uncle + [focus].that</p>
	imperfective (+)
	how is your mother?
wáa sá yatee i tláa?	<p>wáa + sá + Ø-ÿa-√tee + i + tláa</p> <p>how + voice + her/him/it-(3.O).cl-(-d,Ø,+i).√be + your-(2s.p) + mother</p>
	imperfective (+)
	my mother is good.
ax tláa yak'éi.	<p>ax + tláa + Ø-ÿa-√k'éi</p> <p>my-(1s.p) + mother + her/him/it-(3.O).cl-(-d,Ø,+i).√good/fine</p>

imperfective (+)

what is your paternal aunt called?

wáa sá duwasáakw i aat?

wáa + sá + Ø-du-ÿa-√sáa-kw + i + aat

how + voice
+ her/him/it-(3.O).someone-(4h.S).cl-(–d,Ø,+i).√name.[repeatedly]
+ your-(2s.p) + paternal-aunt

imperfective (+)

my paternal aunt is called Susie.

Susie yóo duwasáakw ax aat.

Susie + yóo + Ø-du-ÿa-√sáa-kw + ax + aat

Susie
+ to/fro + her/him/it-(3.O).someone-(4h.S).cl-(–d,Ø,+i).√name.[repeatedly]
+ my-(1s.p) + paternal-aunt

which clan is your father?

daakw.aa naa sáwé i éesh?

daakw-aa + naa + sá-wé + i + éesh

which.one(s)-(part.i) + clan/tribe + voice.that + your-(2s.p) + father

imperfective (+)

my father is Raven moiety/tribe

Yéil naax sitee ax éesh.

yéil naa-x + Ø-si-√tee + ax + éesh

raven + clan/tribe.[locative] + her/him/it.cl-(–d,s,+i).√be +
my-(1s.p) + father

	where is your father's <u>kwáan</u> ?
goot'á <u>kwáan</u> sáwé i éesh?	<p>goo-t-áa + <u>kwáan</u> + sá-wé + i + éesh where.at-(arrived).one(s)-(part.i) + people-of + voice.that + your-(2s.p) +father</p>
	it is Áak'w <u>Kwáan</u>
Áak'w <u>Kwáan</u> áwé.	<p>Áa-kw + <u>Kwáan</u> + á-wé lake.[diminutive] + people-of + [focus].that</p>
	imperfective (+)
	where does your mother live?
goox' sá yéi yatee i tláa?	<p>goo-x' + sá + yéi + Ø-ŷa-√tee + i + tláa where.at-(residing) + voice + thus + her/him/it-(3.O).cl-(~d,Ø,+i).√be + your-(2s.p) + mother</p>
	imperfective (+)
	my mother lives in Juneau.
Juneaux' yéi yatee ax tláa.	<p>Juneau-x' + yéi + Ø-ŷa-√tee + ax + tláa Juneau.at-(residing) + her/him/it-(3.O).cl-(~d,Ø,+i).√be + my-(1s.p) + mother</p>

imperfective (+)

my ____ lives in ____.

____-x' yéi yatee ax ____.

____-x' + yéi + Ø-ya-√tee + ax + ____
____.at-(residing) + her/him/it-(3.O).cl-(-d,Ø,+i).√be + my-(1s.p) + ____

imperfective (+)

what does your father need?

daat eetéenáx sá yatee i éesh?

daat + eetí-náx + sá + Ø-ya-√tee + i + éesh
what + remnant.through/via + voice + her/him/it-(3.O).cl-(-d,Ø,+i).√be
+ your-(2s.p) + father

imperfective (+)

my father needs a rifle.

óonaa eetéenáx yatee ax éesh.

√.óon-aa + eetí-náx + Ø-ya-√tee + ax + éesh
shoot.one(s)-(part.i) + remnant.through/via + her/him/it-(3.O).cl-(-d,Ø,+i).√be
+ my-(1s.p) + father

imperfective (+)

my ____ needs ____.

____ eetéenáx yatee ax ____.

____ + eetí-náx + Ø-ya-√tee + ax + ____
____ + remnant.through/via + her/him/it-(3.O).cl-(-d,Ø,+i).√be
+ my-(1s.p) + ____

imperfective (+)

how is your paternal aunt feeling?

wáa sá sh tudinook i aat?

wáa + sá + sh + tu-∅-di-√nook + i + aat

how + voice + reflx + inside.s/he-(3.S).cl-(+d,∅,+i).√feel/touch
+ your-(2s.p) + paternal-aunt

imperfective (+)

my paternal aunt is sad.

ax aat toowú yanéekw.

ax + aat + tú-wú + ∅-ÿa-√néekw

my-(is.p) + paternal-aunt + inside.is/are.at
+ her/him/it-(3.O).cl-(~d,∅,+i).√sick/hurt

where is your grandparent's sickness/hurt?

goo sá i léelk'w yanéegú?

goo + sá + i + léelk'w + ÿa-√néekw-u

where + voice + your-(2s.p) + grandparent + cl-(~d,∅,+i).√sick/hurt.[possessive]

imperfective (+)

my grandparent has a sore throat.

ax léelk'w leitóox yanéekw.

ax + léelk'w + la-tú-ÿ + ∅-ÿa-√néekw

my-(is.p) + grandparent + neck.inside.at-(along/repetitive)
+ her/him/it-(3.O).cl-(~d,∅,+i).√sick/hurt

	perfective (+)
aadóo éet sá yaan uwaháa?	<p>who is hungry?</p> <p>aadóo + ée-t + sá + yaan + ѕu-ÿa-√háa who + [empty base].at-(arrived) + voice + hunger + pfv.cl(-d,∅,+i).√move-imperceptably-invisibly</p>
	perfective (+)
ax éesh éet yaan uwaháa.	<p>my father is hungry.</p> <p>ax + éesh + ée-t + yaan + ѕu-ÿa-√háa my + father + [empty base].at-(arrived) + hunger + pfv.cl(-d,∅,+i).√move-imperceptably-invisibly</p>
	perfective (+)
aadóo éet sá yataawaháa?	<p>who is sleepy?</p> <p>aadóo + ée-t + sá + ѕa-√taa+ѕu-ÿa-√háa who + [empty base].at-(arrived) + voice + cl(-d,∅,+i).√sleep+pfv.cl(-d,∅,+i).√move-imperceptably-invisibly</p>
	perfective (+)
ax sáni éet yataawaháa.	<p>my paternal uncle is sleepy.</p> <p>ax + sáni + ée-t + ѕa-√taa+ѕu-ÿa-√háa my + paternal-uncle + [empty base].at-(arrived) + cl(-d,∅,+i).√sleep+pfv.cl(-d,∅,+i).√move-imperceptably-invisibly</p>

	perfective (+)
aadóo sá wudixwétl?	who is tired? aadóo + sá + Ø-yü-di-√xwétl ¹ who + voice + her/him/it-(3.O).pfv.cl-(+d,Ø,+i).√tire/exhaust
	perfective (+)
ax kékílk' wudixwétl.	my maternal niece/nephew is tired. ax + kékílk' + Ø-yü-di-√xwétl ¹ my + maternal-niece/nephew + her/him/it-(3.O).pfv.cl-(+d,Ø,+i).√tire/exhaust
	perfective (+)
aadóo sá shaawakúx?	who is thirsty? aadóo + sá + Ø-sha-yü-ÿa-√kúx who + voice + her/him/it-(3.O).head.pfv.cl-(+d,Ø,+i).√drain-out/bail-out/be-thirsty
	perfective (+)
ax tláa shaawakúx.	my mother is thirsty. ax + tláa + Ø-sha-yü-ÿa-√kúx my + mother + her/him/it-(3.O).head.pfv.cl-(+d,Ø,+i).√drain-out/bail-out/be-thirsty

	perfective (+)
daa sá i tláak'w éet uwaháa?	<p>what is your maternal aunt hungry for?</p> <p>daa + sá + i + tláak'w + ée-t + ýu-ýa-√háa what + voice + your-(2s.p) + maternal-aunt + [empty base].at-(arrived) + pfv.cl(-d,Ø,+i).√move-imperceptably-invisibly</p>
	perfective (+)
xáat ax tláak'w éet uwaháa.	<p>my maternal aunt is hungry for fish.</p> <p>xáat + ax + tláak'w + ée-t + ýu-ýa-√háa fish + my-(is.p) + maternal-aunt + [empty base].at-(arrived) + pfv.cl(-d,Ø,+i).√move-imperceptably-invisibly</p>
	imperfective (+)
daa sá i tláa tuwáa sigóo?	<p>what does your mother want?</p> <p>daa + sá + i + tláa + tú-ýá + si-√góo what + voice + your-(2s.p) + mother + inside.face + cl(-d,s,+i).√happy</p>
	imperfective (+)
lítaa ax tláa tuwáa sigóo.	<p>my mother wants a knife.</p> <p>√lít-aa + ax + tláa + tú--ýá + si-√góo cut/saw.one(s)-(part.i) + my-(is.p) + mother + inside.face + cl(-d,s,+i).√happy</p>

	what does your father have?
daa sá i éesh jeewú?	<p>daa + sá + i + éesh + jee-wú what + voice + your-(2s.p) + father + possession.is/are-at</p>
	my father has money.
dáanaa ax éesh jeewú.	<p>dáanaa + ax + éesh + jee-wú money + my-(1s.p) + father + possession.is/are-at</p>
	who has the money?
aadóo jeewú sá wé dáanaa?	<p>aadóo + jee-wú + sá + wé + dáanaa who + possession.is/are-at + voice + there + money</p>
	my mother has the money.
ax tláa jeewú wé dáanaa.	<p>ax + tláa + jee-wú + wé + dáanaa my-(1s.p) + mother + possession.is/are-at + there + money</p>

Kinship terms can be used without a pronoun when directly addressing the relative. This switch is similar to the difference in English between “my mom” when talking to someone else about your mother, and “mom!” when talking directly to your mother. A small number of Tlingit kinship terms have special forms when directly addressing a relative. The others stay the same but do not require a pronoun.

sik'	daughter!
yítk'	son!
kélk'	maternal niece/nephew!
kálk'w	paternal niece/nephew!
chxánk'	grandchild!
atléi / atlée	mom!



k'wát'

egg



k'wálx

fern sprouts



dzísk'w

moose



tsísk'w
dzísk'w (At, T),
óondách (T), wesdzi
(C), mesdzi (C)

great horned owl



at kach'áak'u

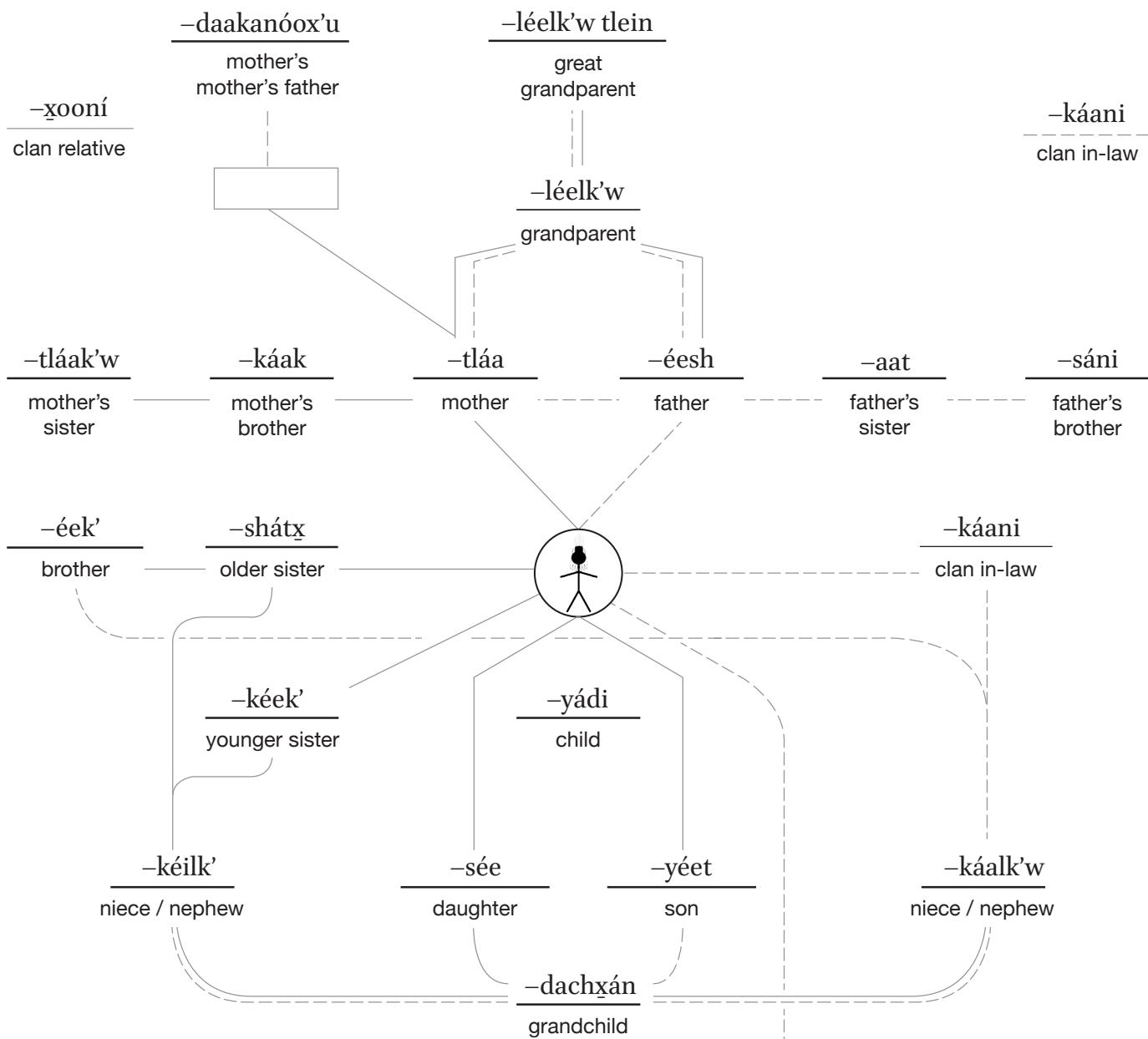
carver



kashóok' gwéil,
kashéek'w gwéil

heating pad

shaawát (♀)

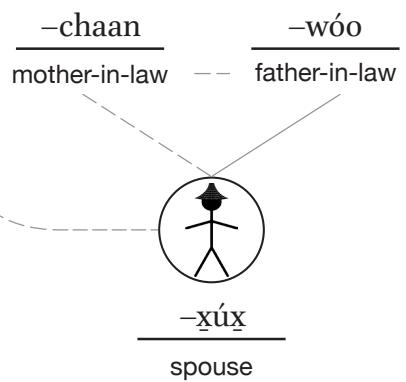


INDEPENDENT PRONOUNS

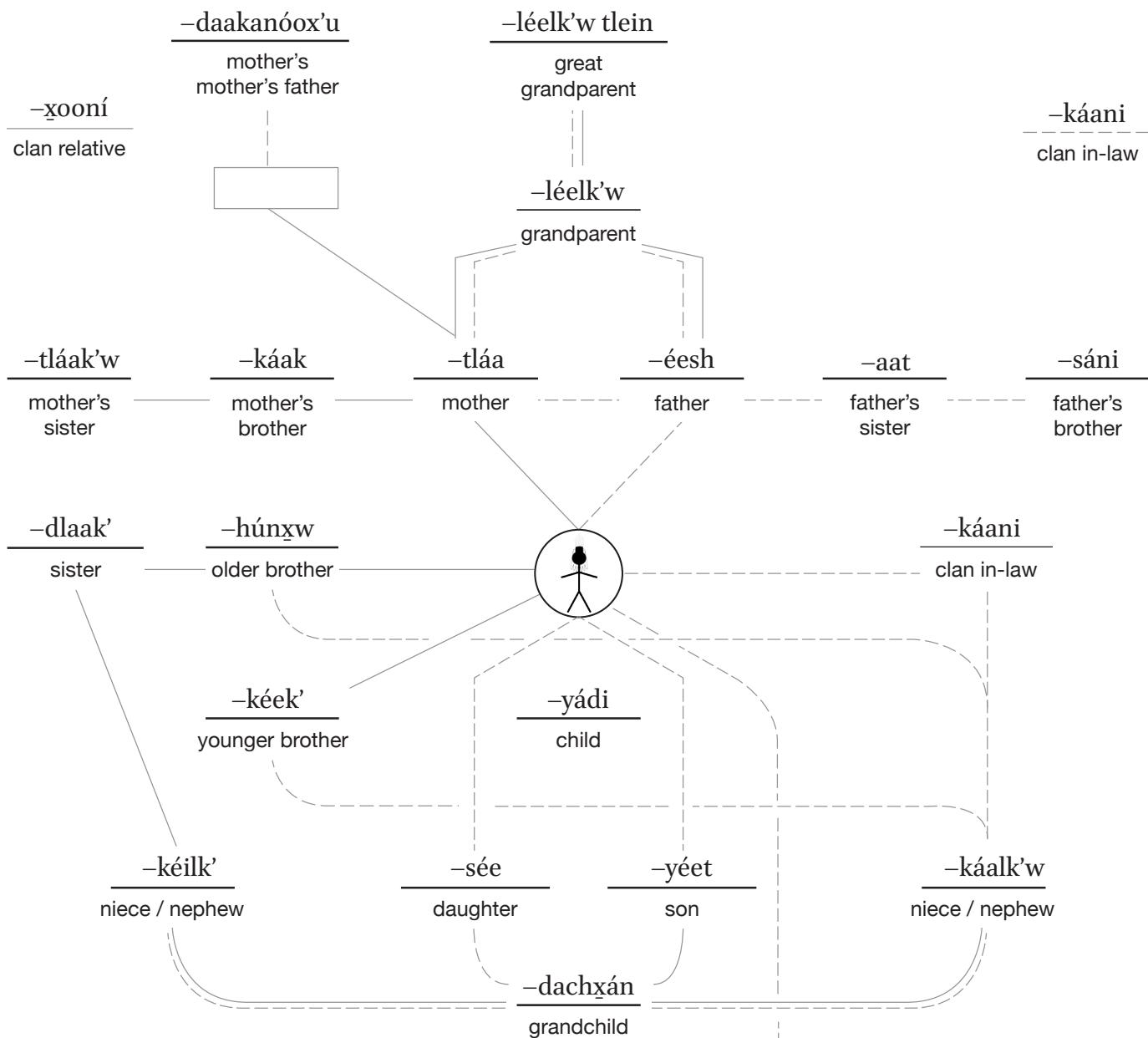
xát	i, me
wa.é	you
hú	s/he, her/him
uháan	we / us
yeewháan	you all
hás	them, they
káa	person/someone
át	it

POSSESSIVE PRONOUNS

ax	my
i	your
du	her/his
haa	our
yee	you all's
has du	their
kaa	person's/someone's
at	its



káa (♂)

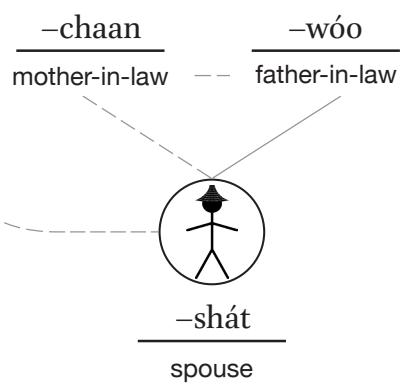


INDEPENDENT PRONOUNS

xát	i, me
wa.é	you
hú	s/he, her/him
uháan	we / us
yeewháan	you all
hás	them, they
káa	person/someone
át	it

POSSESSIVE PRONOUNS

ax	my
i	your
du	her/his
haa	our
yee	you all's
has du	their
kaa	person's/someone's
at	its



Tlingit Kinship System

