

# The Perfective

yéi at woonei

Wáa nanée sáwé, ch'áaaakw dultínitx áwé, s'íksh,  
áwé wuduwal'íx',  
s'íksh.

A tóonáx áwé kuyawduwawál, áwé téix koonastéegaa áwé;  
a tóonáx dultín.

– Aasx'aak, Kaagwaantaan

At one point after they had watched for a loooong time,  
they took false hellebore  
and broke the stalks,  
false hellebore.

They poked holes though them  
so that they wouldn't turn to stone;  
they watched through them.

– George Betts <sup>1</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> Betts, George. “Gus'k'kwáan / The Coming of the First White Man.” *Haa Shuká: Tlingit Oral Narratives*. trans. Nora Dauenhauer & Richard Dauenhauer. (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1981), 304–305.



Shaadootlaa (Seattle) and Óoxjaa Yádi Kanaan Bausler (Juneau) · photo by Ryan Cortes

Kingeisti David Katzeek (Juneau), Yaxdulákt' Lillian Austin (Juneau), Kinkawduneeek Paul Marks (Juneau), Shaawát Guwakaan George Bennet (Sitka), and L'eiwtú Ēesh Herman Davis (Sitka) · photo by Cody Dennis



## The Perfective (+) Mode

The method we are using to comprehend and use Tlingit verbs involves structural analysis of the language and the reconstruction of language using the patterns and elements that we are studying. If we were doing the same thing teaching English, we would spend a chapter on pronouns (i, you, s/he, we, you all, they) and then practice using them with different verbs, such as the following table. Tlingit is included so we can look at how the structure and philosophies of the languages differ.

We will start with a verb that has a relatively fixed object. When we learn to change the subject, we begin to use verbs in dynamic ways to shift who might be doing the action. For example:

S	ENGLISH	TLINGIT
1S	i sewed it	χwaakáa
1P	we sewed it	wutuwakáa
2S	you sewed it	yeeḱáa
2P	you all sewed it	yeyḱáa
3S	s/he sewed it	aawakáa
3P	they sewed it	has aawakáa
4H	it was sewed	wuduwakáa

The verb in English does not change, but what changes is the subject pronoun *before* the verb. In Tlingit, the switch is the same, but because the subject pronoun is located fairly deep into the prefix, it causes some contraction of some of the other elements in the prefix. If we were to pull the prefix apart in the above examples, they would look like this:

	PREVERB	PREFIX				STEM
	3 PL	OBJECT	PERFECTIVE	SUBJECT	CLASSIFIER	ROOT
χwaakáa	–	∅	ḡu	χa	ḡa	√ḱáa
wutuwakáa	–	∅	ḡu	tu	ḡa	√ḱáa
yeeḱáa	–	∅	ḡu	i	ḡa	√ḱáa
yeyḱáa	–	∅	ḡu	yi	ḡa	√ḱáa
aawakáa	–	a	ḡu	∅	ḡa	√ḱáa
has aawakáa	has	a	ḡu	∅	ḡa	√ḱáa
wuduwakáa	–	∅	ḡu	du	ḡa	√ḱáa

You might notice in these prefixes the presence of the PERFECTIVE marker, which may appear as any «wu», «w», or «y», but we write as «*ÿu*» when segmenting in Tlingit. Segmenting is writing out all the components that are present, including the zero marker ( $\emptyset$ ), and doing so in an uncontracted form. We write it with the character «*ÿ*» to show a sound that is no longer in Tlingit and now is a character that changes its sound to match what is around it. The default form is «w» and the «y» form only appears in the second person singular and plural forms.

The PERFECTIVE «*ÿu*» is a grammatical marker that allows us to look at the verb as an event, and the event is marked as completed by the +I form of the classifier. When looking at translations, we might think that the PERFECTIVE marker is showing past tense, but that is not the case. Tlingit looks at events more so than the time in which they may have occurred. We can see this in verbs that are PERFECTIVE but can be translated into either simple past or present tense English, such as:

TLINGIT	TRANSLATION	PREFIX			
		OBJECT	PERF	SUBJECT	CLASSIFIER
awsikóo	s/he knows it	a	<i>ÿu</i>	$\emptyset$	+i
ixwsiteen	i see you; i saw you	i	<i>ÿu</i>	<i>x</i> a	+i
ix'eiwa.áx	s/he understands you; s/he understood you:	i	<i>ÿu</i>	$\emptyset$	+i
kawdigán	it's bright; it was bright	—	<i>ÿu</i>	—	+i

A PERFECTIVE (+) signals that the verb has been completed, and is signaled using the PERFECTIVE marker (*ÿu*) and a +I CLASSIFIER. You can spot these classifiers by learning the +I form of the classifier groups, as listed below. The «*ÿa*» classifier will change its shape depending on what precedes it, as we will see in the verb examples later in this chapter. Look at the tables below, that show the +I CLASSIFIER for each of the classifier groups. If you see this classifier, and the PERFECTIVE marker, then you know the verb is PERFECTIVE (+), which means we look at it as an event and the verb has been completed.

## The Perfective Verb

GROUP	+I CLASSIFIER	GROUP	+I CLASSIFIER
∅	ÿa	L	li
D+∅	di	D+L	dli
GROUP	+I CLASSIFIER	GROUP	+I CLASSIFIER
S	si	SH	shi
D+S	dzi	D+SH	ji

## Perfective & Related Verb Modes

There are four verb modes that contain the PERFECTIVE marker. The tables below show the approximate translation of the verb mode, and also the components that are in that mode. We will keep our focus on the PERFECTIVE, but we will look at the other modes in later chapters as we continue looking at components of the Tlingit verb and how they function.

MODE	ENGLISH EQUIVALENT	EXAMPLE	TRANSLATION
PERFECTIVE (+)	s/he did it	aawaḡáa	s/he ate it
PERFECTIVE (-)	s/he didn't do it	tlél awuxá	s/he didn't eat it
PERFECTIVE HABITUAL (+)	s/he does it (every time)	ooḡáaych	s/he eats it (every time)
PERFECTIVE HABITUAL (-)	s/he hasn't done it yet	tlél ooḡáaych	s/he hasn't eaten it yet

MODE	PREVERB	PREFIX				CLASSIFIER	SUFFIX
		IRR	CON PRE	PERF			
PERFECTIVE (+)				+	+i		
PERFECTIVE (-)	tlél	+		+	-i		
PERFECTIVE HABITUAL (+)			+	+	-i	ch	
PERFECTIVE HABITUAL (-)	tlél	+	+	+	-i	ch	

There are three verb modes that have a +I CLASSIFIER, and they are listed below. The last one has many variations, and they are also listed below. We touch on these now because one of the keys to becoming a masterful Tlingit speaker comes with using these modes dynamically to create meaning and metaphor, and then tying concepts together with relational phrases and other means that indicate sequence, cause & effect, and other alterations.

## The Perfective Mode

MODE	ENGLISH EQUIVALENT	EXAMPLE	TRANSLATION
PERFECTIVE (+)	s/he did it	aawaxáa	s/he ate it
IMPERFECTIVE (+) state verb only	s/he is (in a state)	yak'úi	s/he is good/fine
REALIZATIONAL <sup>2</sup>	?	shunliháash	the end floated
POTENTIALS	POTENTIAL (+)	agwaaxaayi	s/he might eat it
	POTENTIAL (-)	tlél agwaaxaayi	s/he might not eat it
	POTENTIAL ATTRIBUTIVE	no way s/he can do it	tlél aadé agwaaxaayi yé

<sup>2</sup> The realizational describes a past event or state, but is not well understood in terms of how it may differ from other notes. James Crippen notes this mode in his dissertation, and it can be found in the notes of Jeff Leer. It is an essentially obsolete form, mostly found in songs. It has the conjugation prefix, +i form of the classifier, and a long and high stem variation.

MODE	PREVERB	PREFIX			CLASS.	POSTVERB
		IRR	CON PRE	PERF		
PERFECTIVE (+)				+	+i	
IMPERFECTIVE (+) state verb only					+i	
POTENTIAL (+)		+	+		+i	
POTENTIAL (-)	tlél	+	+		+i	
POTENTIAL ATTRIBUTIVE	tlél + aadé	+	+		+i	yé

As with all things in Tlingit, there are exceptions. If the PERFECTIVE (+) verb is in a dependent clause, then the classifier will switch to -I, but everything else remains the same. You probably know some of the dependent clauses listed below.<sup>1</sup> They are given here to show how the classifier changes when it becomes a dependent clause.

TLINGIT	PREFIX				TRANSLATION
	OBJ	PFV	SUB	CLAS.	
iḡwsiteen	i	ÿu	ḡa	+i	i see you
yak'úi iḡsateení	i	ÿu	ḡa	-i	it's good to see you
ḡwaaxaa	∅	ÿu	ḡa	+i	i ate it
ḡwasikóo ḡwaxaayi	∅	ÿu	ḡa	-i	i know i ate it
yú s'eeḡ ḡwajaák	∅	ÿu	ḡa	+i	i killed a black bear
yú s'eeḡ ḡwajaagi aḡ tuwáa sigóo	∅	ÿu	ḡa	-i	i want to kill that black bear

<sup>1</sup> The last two come from "Dependent Clause Notes" by Dzéiwsh James Crippen.

## Perfective (+) Examples

Coming back to the PERFECTIVE mode, we should think about the importance of being able to hear this mode and put it together. Much of the information we communicate is about things that would be PERFECTIVE (+) in Tlingit. If we wanted to talk about something that happened yesterday, or tell a story, then we are going to need PERFECTIVE modes. In order to use event verbs in the present tense, we also need to know the PERFECTIVE mode.

As you learn more about this mode, you should begin looking through Tlingit materials and spot the perfectives, taking some time to figure out how they work. Many of the examples and much of the information presented here comes from the works of Crippen and verb documentation of Eggleston.



The above illustration is a metaphor for how to conjugate verbs in Tlingit. Starting from the top left and moving to the right is like starting at the left side of a verb phrase in Tlingit and moving towards the end. The idea here is to show the areas where things might change in a Tlingit verb, and then to show the most common things that might appear in that area. This is our starting point, and it will get us pretty far. There are some advanced pronouns and thematic prefixes that are not present, but when you are ready for those you can consult the works of Crippen, Eggleston, Leer, and Cable. Those advanced elements are used in oratory, and you might hear them

when working with master speakers, but we will start with bite sized pieces with the goal of getting you conjugating verbs in dynamic ways beginning with the most common modes.

The Tlingit verb undergoes the most changes in the prefix, which is where nearly all conjugation takes place. As things are added or changed here, they interact with everything around them and often undergo contraction in ways that are complex but predictable. As we can see in the illustration, each switch can be activated or can change its content, but each switch can only have one thing at a time. The top three on the left are preverb items, and the object is also in the preverb except for the «k,» «a,» «i,» and «∅» which are in the prefix. From there, we have ten switches that are all in the preverb, and those are: thematic 1, thematic 2, thematic 3, self-benefactive, outer conjugation, irrealis, inner conjugation, perfective & ga mode, subject, and classifier group. The last two—d component & i component—change the qualities of the classifier.

We will be discussing each of these switches in future chapters, and also looking at different verb modes and how they are activated on the switchboard. There are basically two types of components in a Tlingit verb: ones that have meaning and ones that only have a grammatical function. For example, most of the thematic prefixes have embedded meanings and add their meaning to the verb. Other parts of the verb exist to put the verb into certain modes. This can be confusing in some instances because a component may have meaning but is present only because of the verb mode.

COMPONENTS WITH MEANING	COMPONENTS WITH GRAMMATICAL FUNCTION ONLY
preverbs	outer conjugation
reciprocal	inner conjugation
3p plural	ga mode
object	
thematic 1	
thematic 2	
thematic 3	
self-benefactive	
irrealis	
perfective	
subject	

The areas that activate for the PERFECTIVE (+) are the **PERFECTIVE MARKER** and the **+I COMPONENT**. The **OBJECT** and **SUBJECT** can change, and their presence depends on the transitivity of the verb. Keep in mind, though, that if there is an **OBJECT (O)** or **SUBJECT (S)** in the theme, then it must be there unless the transitivity of the verb has changed. The **THEMATIC PREFIXES** can change, but doing so creates a new verb. As you learn to use the PERFECTIVE (+), what you are really doing is learning all the possible combinations of **OBJECTS**, **THEMATIC PREFIXES**, **PERFECTIVE MARKER**, **SUBJECTS**, and the **CLASSIFIER**. In order to learn this information, we start with the **SUBJECT** and **CLASSIFIER** combinations, then look at adding **THEMATIC PREFIXES**, changing **OBJECTS**. By studying their patterns and practicing various combinations, we can learn to use the PERFECTIVE (+) mode and then start looking at some of the specifics of verb components and how to form other modes.

Prefixes with the PERFECTIVE MARKER and +I COMPONENT have complex, but predictable prefixes. We can learn the patterns and apply them to other verbs. There are patterns for  $\emptyset$  GROUP CLASSIFIERS and then slightly different patterns for the other classifiers (S GROUP, L GROUP, SH GROUP) that are identical except for a consonant change. Once we have the CLASSIFIER, then we should be able to learn, predict, and use different SUBJECT pronouns. Most modern resources will give us the third person object and subject, and we can change object and subject and accurately predict the prefix.

STEM VARIATION is predictable in the PERFECTIVE. There are six STEM TYPES, which are marked in the theme. If there is no consonant at the end, then the stem is either OPEN or FADING. The OPEN stem is unmarked and the FADING stem is marked by the superscript letter h, as in:

O-shu-ka-S- $\emptyset$ - $\sqrt{\text{jaa}}^h$  ( $\emptyset$  act verb – transitive)

for S to instruct, show O (by word); for S to advise, give advice to, counsel O

Stems that end in a consonant are closed and there are three types: CLOSED, GLOTTAL, and EJECTIVE. Both glottal and ejective are marked in the stem with a high tone mark, and the closed is unmarked. The final type is INVARIABLE, which is marked with a superscript cross <sup>x</sup>.

Invariable stems never change, so they are the exception to the rules. For all others, there are three factors that determine stem variation. The STEM TYPE and CONJUGATION PREFIX, which are marked in the theme, and then the VERB MODE. Once you know the STEM TYPE and CONJUGATION PREFIX, then it is a matter of learning the variables for the VERB MODE. As we will see, there is a familiar patten:  $\emptyset$  and everything else.

This is a lot of information to take in, but there are tables provided to guide you as you internalize the patterns of STEM VARIATION. When it comes to the PERFECTIVE, the rules of stem variation are highly predictable: all OPEN and FADING stems will be long and high (c<sup>v</sup>v) for ∅ conjugation verbs, and long and low (cvv) for non-∅ (na, ga, ga) conjugation verbs; CLOSED stems will be short and high (c<sup>v</sup>c) for ∅ conjugation verbs and long and low (cvvc) for non-∅; and both GLOTTAL and EJECTIVE stems will be short and high (c<sup>v</sup>c/c<sup>v</sup>c') for ∅ and long and high (c<sup>v</sup>vc/c<sup>v</sup>vc') for non-∅ verbs.

TYPE	THEME	CON PRE	PATTERN
OPEN	CVV	∅	c <sup>v</sup> v
		na, ga, ga	cvv
FADING	CVV <sup>h</sup>	∅	c <sup>v</sup> v
		na, ga, ga	cvv

TYPE	THEME	CON PRE	PATTERN
CLOSED	CVVC	∅	c <sup>v</sup> c
		na, ga, ga	cvvc
GLOTTAL	C <sup>v</sup> VC	∅	c <sup>v</sup> c
		na, ga, ga	c <sup>v</sup> vc
EJECTIVE	C <sup>v</sup> VC'	∅	c <sup>v</sup> c'
		na, ga, ga	c <sup>v</sup> vc'

With practice, you will discover that the verb theme gives all the information needed to properly conjugate a verb. It shows the PREFIX content and STEM TYPE, and then you can adjust as needed for VERB MODE and PERSON. The table below shows what the STEM TYPES look like in the theme, what the predicted STEM VARIATION should be, and then the perfective form of the verb. When thinking about stem variation, remember that the stem type is given in the theme (cvv, cvv<sup>h</sup>, cvvc, c<sup>v</sup>c, c<sup>v</sup>c', xxx<sup>\*</sup>).

TYPE	THEME	CON PRE	PATTERN	THEME	PERFECTIVE
OPEN	CVV	∅	c <sup>v</sup> v	(yéi) + O-S-∅-√saa <sup>2</sup> (∅ event)	yéi aawasáa
		na, ga, ga	cvv	O-ka-S-s-√nei <sup>3</sup> (na act)	akawsinei
FADING	CVV <sup>h</sup>	∅	c <sup>v</sup> v	O-S-l-√l'aa <sup>h</sup> (∅ act)	awlil'áa
		na, ga, ga	cvv	S-∅-√taa <sup>1 h</sup> (na act)	wootaa
CLOSED	CVVC	∅	c <sup>v</sup> c	O-S-∅-√look (∅ act)	aawalúk
		na, ga, ga	cvvc	O-S-sh-√k'aan (ga state)	awshik'aan
GLOTTAL	C <sup>v</sup> VC	∅	c <sup>v</sup> c	ya-d+∅-√géel (∅ event)	yawdigíl
		na, ga, ga	c <sup>v</sup> vc	O-S-l-√sháat (ga act)	awlisháat
EJECTIVE	C <sup>v</sup> VC'	∅	c <sup>v</sup> c'	a-S-∅-√lóox' (∅ act)	aawalúx'
		na, ga, ga	c <sup>v</sup> vc'	sh + ka-S-d+l-√háach' (na state)	sh kawdliháach'
INVARIABLE	—	—	—	O-l-√tseen <sup>*</sup> (ga state)	wulitseen
				O-S-s-√xán <sup>*</sup> (ga state)	awsixán

O-S-Ø-√t'ei\* (*ga event verb – transitive*)

or S to find O (usually as the result of searching)

S-d+Ø-√kaa (*Ø act verb – object intransitive*)

for S to sew

TLINGIT	PATTERN	TLINGIT	PATTERN
x̄waat'ei	Ø-ÿu-x̄a-ÿa	x̄wadikáa	ÿu-x̄a-di
wutuwat'ei	Ø-ÿu-tu-ÿa	wutudikáa	ÿu-tu-di
yeet'ei	Ø-ÿu-i-ÿa	yidikáa	ÿu-i-di
yeeyt'ei	Ø-ÿu-yi-ÿa	yeeydikáa	ÿu-yi-di
aawat'ei	a-ÿu-Ø-ÿa	wudikáa	ÿu-Ø-di
has aawat'ei	has + a-ÿu-Ø-ÿa	has wudikáa	has + ÿu-Ø-di
wuduwat'ei	Ø-ÿu-du-ÿa	wuduwakáa	ÿu-du-ÿa

O-S-s-√áat' (*Ø act verb – transitive*)

for S to make O cold, cool

a + géi~ + S-d+s-√geet<sup>2</sup> (*Ø event verb – object intransitive*)

for S to violate, break (law or custom), to do something wrong

TLINGIT	PATTERN	TLINGIT	PATTERN
x̄wasi.át'	Ø-ÿu-x̄a-si	a géit x̄wadzigít	ÿu-x̄a-dzi
wutusi.át'	Ø-ÿu-tu-si	a géit wutudzigít	ÿu-tu-dzi
yisi.át'	Ø-ÿu-i-si	a géit yidzigít	ÿu-i-dzi
yeeysi.át'	Ø-ÿu-yi-si	a géit yeeydzigít	ÿu-yi-dzi
awsisi.át'	a-ÿu-Ø-si	a géit wudzigít	ÿu-Ø-dzi
has awsi.át'	has + a-ÿu-Ø-si	a géit has wudzigít	has + ÿu-Ø-dzi
wududzi.át'	Ø-ÿu-du-dzi	a géit wududzigít	ÿu-du-dzi

**O-S-l-√k'oots** (*na event verb – transitive*)

for S to break O (esp. rope-like objects)

**S-d+l-√koo<sup>h</sup>** (*na act verb – object intransitive*)

for S to vomit, throw up

TLINGIT	PATTERN	TLINGIT	PATTERN
xwalik'oots	Ø-ÿu-xa-li	xwadlikoo	ÿu-xa-dli
wutulik'oots	Ø-ÿu-tu-li	wutudlikoo	ÿu-tu-dli
yilik'oots	Ø-ÿu-i-li	yidlikoo	ÿu-i-dli
yeeylik'oots	Ø-ÿu-yi-li	yeeydikoo	ÿu-yi-dli
awlik'oots	a-ÿu-Ø-li	wudlikoo	ÿu-Ø-dli
has awlik'oots	has + a-ÿu-Ø-li	has wudlikoo	has + ÿu-Ø-dli
wududlik'oots	Ø-ÿu-du-dli	wududlikoo	ÿu-du-dli

**O-S-sh-√k'aan** (*ga state verb – transitive*)

for S to hate O

**O-S-d+sh-√koox<sup>2</sup>** (*Ø act verb – transitive*)

for S to contribute O (food to share) to a potluck or gathering

TLINGIT	PATTERN	TLINGIT	PATTERN
xwashik'aan	Ø-ÿu-xa-shi	xwajikúx	Ø-ÿu-xa-ji
wutushik'aan	Ø-ÿu-tu-shi	wutujikúx	Ø-ÿu-tu-ji
yishik'aan	Ø-ÿu-i-shi	yijikúx	Ø-ÿu-i-ji
yeeyshik'aan	Ø-ÿu-yi-shi	yeeyjikúx	Ø-ÿu-yi-ji
awshik'aan	a-ÿu-Ø-shi	awjikúx	a-ÿu-Ø-ji
has awshik'aan	has + a-ÿu-Ø-shi	has awjikúx	has + a-ÿu-Ø-ji
wudujik'aan	Ø-ÿu-du-ji	wudujikúx	Ø-ÿu-du-ji

After looking at these examples, take note of the transitivity of the verb. If there is an object (O) in the theme, then it must be there. If there is a subject, then it must be there. Even for verbs where the object would never really change, we must keep in mind that it is there so we can make the proper third person object & subject combination (a- ... Ø-). For example, table below shows how English drops a pronoun when specifying the verb, how Tlingit does not, and what English would look like with Tlingit grammatical rules regarding pronoun use.

## The Perfective Verb

ENGLISH	TLINGIT	PREFIX	ENGLISH W/ TLINGIT GRAMMAR
i saw a cat	dóosh <u>x</u> wasiteen	Ø- <u>y</u> - <u>x</u> a-si	i saw it cat
we saw a cat	dóosh wutusiteen	Ø- <u>y</u> - <u>tu</u> -si	we saw it cat
you saw a cat	dóosh <u>y</u> isiteen	Ø- <u>y</u> - <u>i</u> -si	you saw it cat
you all saw a cat	dóosh yeeysiteen	Ø- <u>y</u> - <u>yi</u> -si	you all saw it cat
s/he saw a cat	dóosh awsiteen	a- <u>y</u> -Ø-si	s/he saw it cat
they saw a cat	dóosh has awsiteen	has + a- <u>y</u> -Ø-si	they saw it cat
a cat was seen	dóosh wududziteen	Ø- <u>y</u> - <u>du</u> -dzi	cat it was seen

Now that we have looked at examples of perfective verbs without thematic prefixes, fill in the blanks with what you think would be the correct conjugation for the subject in the following examples, and also give the expanded pattern for the prefix. Make sure to note the verb transitivity—whether or not there is an object. You can check your work at the end of the chapter.

## Perfective Exercises

O-S-Ø-√.aax<sup>1</sup> (Ø *event verb – transitive*)

for S to hear O

O-S-Ø-√.een<sup>1</sup> (Ø *act verb – transitive*)

for S to pick O (esp. berries) into a container

S	TLINGIT	PATTERN	TLINGIT	PATTERN
1S				
1P				
2S				
2P				
3S				
3P				
4H				

S-d+Ø-√shooch (Ø act verb – object intransitive)

for S to bathe, take a bath

káx̄ + O-S-d+Ø-√tee<sup>h 4</sup> (ga event verb – transitive)

for S to put on O (shirt, dress, etc.)

S	TLINGIT	PATTERN	TLINGIT	PATTERN
1S				
1P				
2S				
2P				
3S				
3P				
4H				

O-S-s-√koo<sup>h 1</sup> (Ø event verb – transitive)

for S to know, be acquainted with, make known O (esp. people, facts); for S to learn O (esp. facts)

O-S-s-√néekw<sup>x 1</sup> (ga state verb – transitive)

for S to make O sick

S	TLINGIT	PATTERN	TLINGIT	PATTERN
1S				
1P				
2S				
2P				
3S				
3P				
4H				

O-S-d+s-√gáax̄ (*ga act verb – transitive*)

for S to cry for, ask for O

O-S-d+s-√néex' (*∅ act verb – transitive*)

for S to sense the odor of O

S	TLINGIT	PATTERN	TLINGIT	PATTERN
1S				
1P				
2S				
2P				
3S				
3P				
4H				

O-S-l-√.aax̄<sup>1</sup> (*∅ act verb – transitive*)

for S to play O (musical instrument)

O-S-l-√ch'éix̄w<sup>1</sup> (*∅ event verb – transitive*)

for S to dirty, soil O (esp. clothing or person)

S	TLINGIT	PATTERN	TLINGIT	PATTERN
1S				
1P				
2S				
2P				
3S				
3P				
4H				

S-d+l-√saa<sup>3</sup> (*∅ event verb – object intransitive*)

for S to rest

sh + S-d+l-√k'áatl' (*∅ event verb – object intransitive*)

for S to become quiet, keep quiet; for S to stop talking or crying

S	TLINGIT	PATTERN	TLINGIT	PATTERN
1S				
1P				
2S				
2P				
3S				
3P				
4H				

O-S-sh-√góok<sup>1</sup> (*ga state verb – transitive*)

for S to know, learn how to do O

N-t + S-d+sh-√k'éin (*na motion verb – object intransitive*)

for (singular) S to jump around at N

S	TLINGIT	PATTERN	TLINGIT	PATTERN
1S				
1P				
2S				
2P				
3S				
3P				
4H				

## The Perfective With Thematic Prefixes

The thematic prefix adds consonants to the prefix, but the results are still predictable. A verb can have up to three thematic prefixes, but only the last one will contract with the perfective marker, subject, and the classifier (for *∅* group). In the *∅* group classifier verbs below we see identical prefixes with each verb. Keeping the **prefix** (object, thematic prefixes, conjugating prefixes, subject, classifier) and **stem** (√root, stem variation) separate helps us see the cut and paste nature of these patterns. That means that you can learn

these prefixes patterns and add them to the stem.

Again, we see two types prefixes here: the  $\emptyset$  group classifier, and the others. The  $\emptyset$  group behaves differently than others, but there are some similarities. While it may seem like a lot to process, the beauty is that once you have it you can plug any consonant-vowel combination (CV) in before the perfective marker and the verb will conjugate the same from the final thematic prefix until the stem. The exception to this are thematic prefixes «sa-» (voice) and  $\underline{x}$ 'a (mouth/opening), which change to «sei-» and « $\underline{x}$ 'ei-» for a  $\emptyset$  group classifier perfective without a subject marker, or with the 3rd person  $\emptyset$  marker, as in « $\underline{x}$ at seiwa.át'» (i am cold) and «yoo  $\underline{x}$ 'eiwatán» (s/he spoke).

To begin looking at perfectives with thematic prefixes, note the identical prefixes in the following verbs, and then look through the various examples:

ka $\underline{x}$ waa- + - $\sqrt{h}$ aa                      ka $\underline{x}$ waa- + - $\sqrt{h}$ éés'  
 prefix                      stem                      prefix                      stem

O-ka-S- $\emptyset$ - $\sqrt{h}$ aa<sup>1</sup> (*na act verb – transitive*)

for S to plant O

O-ka-S- $\emptyset$ - $\sqrt{h}$ éés' (*ga act verb – transitive*)

for S to borrow O (esp. round, spherical object)

TLINGIT	PATTERN	PREDICTION OF OTHER VERB
ka $\underline{x}$ waahaa	$\emptyset$ -ka- $\dot{y}$ u- $\underline{x}$ a- $\dot{y}$ a	ka $\underline{x}$ waahéés'
kawtuwahaa	$\emptyset$ -ka- $\dot{y}$ u-tu- $\dot{y}$ a	kawtuwahéés'
keeyahaa	$\emptyset$ -ka- $\dot{y}$ u-i- $\dot{y}$ a	keeyahéés'
kayeeyhaa	$\emptyset$ -ka- $\dot{y}$ u-yi- $\dot{y}$ a	kayeeyhéés'
akaawahaa	a-ka- $\dot{y}$ u- $\emptyset$ - $\dot{y}$ a	akaawahéés'
has akaawahaa	has + a-ka- $\dot{y}$ u- $\emptyset$ - $\dot{y}$ a	has akaawahéés'
kawduwahaa	$\emptyset$ -ka- $\dot{y}$ u-du- $\dot{y}$ a	kawduwahéés'

ya-ka-S-d+Ø-√náash \* (*Ø act? verb – object intransitive*)

for S to shake her/his own head (often to signal 'no')

yan~ + x'a-S-d+Ø-√ts'éin (*Ø motion verb – object intransitive*)

for S to quieten down, stop talking

TLINGIT	PATTERN	TLINGIT	PATTERN
yaka <sub>x</sub> wdináash	ya-ka- <sub>yü</sub> - <sub>x</sub> a-di	yan x' <sub>x</sub> awdits'án	x'a- <sub>yü</sub> - <sub>x</sub> a-di
yakawtudináash	ya-ka- <sub>yü</sub> -tu-di	yan x' <sub>x</sub> awtudits'án	x'a- <sub>yü</sub> -tu-di
yakaydináash	ya-ka- <sub>yü</sub> -i-di	yan x' <sub>x</sub> aydits'án	x'a- <sub>yü</sub> -i-di
yakayeeydináash	ya-ka- <sub>yü</sub> -yi-di	yan x' <sub>x</sub> ayeeydits'án	x'a- <sub>yü</sub> -yi-di
yakawdináash	ya-ka- <sub>yü</sub> -Ø-di	yan x' <sub>x</sub> awdits'án	x'a- <sub>yü</sub> -Ø-di
has yakawdináash	has + ya-ka- <sub>yü</sub> -Ø-di	yan has x' <sub>x</sub> awdits'án	has + x'a- <sub>yü</sub> -Ø-di
yakawduwanáash	ya-ka- <sub>yü</sub> -du- <sub>yä</sub>	yan x' <sub>x</sub> awduwats'án	x'a- <sub>yü</sub> -du- <sub>yä</sub>

O-ka-S-s-√kei (*ga act verb – transitive*)

for S to trail, follow tracks of O; for S to untangle O; for S to rip back, undo O (sewing, knitting)

O-ka-S-l-√neek (*na act verb – transitive*)

for S to tell the story of O; for S to talk into O

TLINGIT	PATTERN	TLINGIT	PATTERN
ka <sub>x</sub> wsikei	ka- <sub>yü</sub> - <sub>x</sub> a-si	ka <sub>x</sub> wlineek	ka- <sub>yü</sub> - <sub>x</sub> a-li
kawtusikei	ka- <sub>yü</sub> -tu-si	kawtulineek	ka- <sub>yü</sub> -tu-li
kaysikei	ka- <sub>yü</sub> -i-si	kaylineek	ka- <sub>yü</sub> -i-li
kayeysikei	ka- <sub>yü</sub> -yi-si	kayeeylineek	ka- <sub>yü</sub> -yi-li
akawsikei	ka- <sub>yü</sub> -Ø-si	akawlineek	ka- <sub>yü</sub> -Ø-li
has akawsikei	has + ka- <sub>yü</sub> -Ø-si	has akawlineek	has + ka- <sub>yü</sub> -Ø-li
kawdudzikei	ka- <sub>yü</sub> -du-dzi	kawdudlineek	ka- <sub>yü</sub> -du-dli

ka-S-d+s-√nei<sup>3</sup> (*∅ act verb – object intransitive*)

for S to knit, weave, or crochet

ash + ka-u-S-d+l-√yát<sup>x</sup> (*na act verb – object intransitive*)

for S to play (esp. active games)

TLINGIT	PATTERN	TLINGIT	PATTERN
kaḵwdzinéi	ka-ÿu-ḵa-dzi	ash kaḵwdliyát	ka-ÿu-ḵa-dli
kawtudzinéi	ka-ÿu-tu-dzi	ash kawtudliyát	ka-ÿu-tu-dli
kaydzinéi	ka-ÿu-i-dzi	ash kaydliyát	ka-ÿu-i-dli
kayeeydzinéi	ka-ÿu-yi-dzi	ash kayeeydliyát	ka-ÿu-yi-dli
kawdzinéi	ka-ÿu-∅-dzi	ash kawdliyát	ka-ÿu-∅-dli
has kawdzinéi	has + ka-ÿu-∅-dzi	has ash kawdliyát	has + ka-ÿu-∅-dli
kawdudzinéi	ka-ÿu-du-dzi	ash kawdudliyát	ka-ÿu-du-dli

O-ka-S-sh-√xeet (*∅ act verb – transitive*)

for S to write, draw, or paint a picture of O; for S to print O by hand; for S to photograph, take pictures, X-rays of O

ka-S-d+sh-√xeet (*∅ act verb – object intransitive*)

for S to write, draw, or paint; for S to take a photograph

TLINGIT	PATTERN	TLINGIT	PATTERN
kaḵwshixít	ka-ÿu-ḵa-shi	kaḵwjixít	ka-ÿu-ḵa-ji
kawtushixít	ka-ÿu-tu-shi	kawtujixít	ka-ÿu-tu-ji
kayshixít	ka-ÿu-i-shi	kayjixít	ka-ÿu-i-ji
kayeeyshixít	ka-ÿu-yi-shi	kayeeyjixít	ka-ÿu-yi-ji
akawshixít	ka-ÿu-∅-shi	kawjixít	ka-ÿu-∅-ji
has akawshixít	has + ka-ÿu-∅-shi	has kawjixít	has + ka-ÿu-∅-ji
kawdujixít	ka-ÿu-du-ji	kawdujixít	ka-ÿu-du-ji

O-x'a-S-Ø-√déex' (Ø event verb – transitive)

for S to cork up (bottle), shut mouth of O

O-sa-S-Ø-√.aaḫ<sup>1</sup> (Ø event verb – transitive)

for S to hear O (a voice, esp. singing)

TLINGIT	PATTERN	TLINGIT	PATTERN
x'axwaadix'	ÿa-ÿu-xa-ÿa	saxwaa.áḫ	sa-ÿu-xa-ÿa
x'awtuwadix'	ÿa-ÿu-tu-ÿa	sawtuwa.áḫ	sa-ÿu-tu-ÿa
x'eeyadix'	ÿa-ÿu-i-ÿa	seeya.áḫ	sa-ÿu-i-ÿa
x'ayeeydix'	ÿa-ÿu-yi-ÿa	sayeey.áḫ	sa-ÿu-yi-ÿa
ax'eiwadix'	ÿa-ÿu-Ø-ÿa	aseiwa.áḫ	sa-ÿu-Ø-ÿa
has ax'eiwadix'	has + ÿa-ÿu-Ø-ÿa	has aseiwa.áḫ	has + sa-ÿu-Ø-ÿa
x'awduwadix'	ÿa-ÿu-du-ÿa	sawduwa.áḫ	sa-ÿu-du-ÿa

The last pattern to look at is the A-THEME verbs, which have different results than other thematic prefixes because they do not start with a consonant.

N + éek' + a-S-Ø-√heen<sup>1</sup> (ga state verb – object intransitive)

for S to believe, trust, believe in N

a-S-Ø-√l'eix (na act verb – object intransitive)

for S to dance

TLINGIT	PATTERN	TLINGIT	PATTERN
du éek' axwaaheen	a-ÿu-xa-Ø	axwaa'l'eix	a-ÿu-xa-Ø
du éek' iyaheen	a-ÿu-tu-Ø	iyal'eix	a-ÿu-tu-Ø
du éek' aawaheen	a-ÿu-i-Ø	aawal'eix	a-ÿu-i-Ø
du éek' awtuwaheen	a-ÿu-yi-Ø	awtuwal'eix	a-ÿu-yi-Ø
du éek' ayeeyheen	a-ÿu-Ø-Ø	ayeeyl'eix	a-ÿu-Ø-Ø
du éek' has aawaheen	has + a-ÿu-Ø-Ø	has aawal'eix	has + a-ÿu-Ø-Ø
du éek' awduwaheen	a-ÿu-du-Ø	awduwal'eix	a-ÿu-du-Ø

shóo-t~ + a-S-d+Ø-√.aak<sup>2</sup> (Ø event verb – object intransitive)

for S to build a fire (using wood)

N-ch + a-S-s-√woo<sup>1</sup> (Ø event verb – object intransitive)

for S to send N (often by mail)

TLINGIT	PATTERN	TLINGIT	PATTERN
shóot aḵwdi.ák	a-ÿu-ḵa-di	ách aḵwsiwóo	a-ÿu-ḵa-si
shóot awtudi.ák	a-ÿu-tu-di	ách awtusiwóo	a-ÿu-tu-si
shóot aydi.ák	a-ÿu-i-di	ách aysiwoo	a-ÿu-i-si
shóot ayeeydi.ák	a-ÿu-yi-di	ách ayeeysiwóo	a-ÿu-yi-si
shóot awdi.ák	a-ÿu-Ø-di	ách awsiwóo	a-ÿu-Ø-si
shóot has awdi.ák	has + a-ÿu-Ø-di	ách has awsiwóo	has + a-ÿu-Ø-si
shóot awduwa.ák	a-ÿu-du-Ø	ách awdudziwóo	a-ÿu-du-dzi

Now that we have looked at the thematic prefix perfective options, fill in the blanks as you did before. Keep in mind the classifier, transitivity, and how the CV system works to predict the prefix, even if the vowel changes. You can check your answers in the back of this chapter.

O-ya-S-Ø-√dlaak (*na event verb – transitive*)

for S to gain, get, obtain, acquire O; for S to succeed, accomplish O; for S to defeat, beat O

O-ya-S-Ø-√géel' (Ø *act verb – transitive*)

for S to sharpen O (with a grindstone)

S	TLINGIT	PATTERN	TLINGIT	PATTERN
1S				
1P				
2S				
2P				
3S				
3P				
4H				

ya-S-d+Ø-√náakw<sup>1</sup> (Ø *act verb – object intransitive*)

for S to bait hooks, put bait on fish hooks

tu-S-d+Ø-√.oos<sup>1</sup> (Ø *event verb – object intransitive*)

for S to pout, sulk, refuse to speak; for a machine to refuse to run

S	TLINGIT	PATTERN	TLINGIT	PATTERN
1S				
1P				
2S				
2P				
3S				
3P				
4H				

The Perfective Verb

(yóo) + O-ya-S-s-√kaa<sup>1</sup> (*na event verb – transitive*)

for S to tell, say (that) to O; for S to ask O to do (that)

O-ka-S-s-√nei<sup>3</sup> (*na act verb – transitive*)

for S to make O (cloth of any kind) (by weaving, knitting, or crocheting); for S to make or mend O (net)

S	TLINGIT	PATTERN	TLINGIT	PATTERN
1S				
1P				
2S				
2P				
3S				
3P				
4H				

sha-S-d+s-√yaa<sup>3</sup> (*na event verb – object intransitive*)

for S to anchor, lower anchor

a-S-d+s-√geiwú<sup>\*</sup> (*na act verb – object intransitive*)

for S to fish with net, seine

S	TLINGIT	PATTERN	TLINGIT	PATTERN
1S				
1P				
2S				
2P				
3S				
3P				
4H				

O-ka-(∅)-S-l-√séik'w (*∅ act verb – transitive*)

for S to stain, dye, color the surface of O

O-ka-S-l-√.eesh (*∅ act verb – object intransitive*)

for S to thread O (esp. beads), string together

S	TLINGIT	PATTERN	TLINGIT	PATTERN
1S				
1P				
2S				
2P				
3S				
3P				
4H				

sh + ka-S-d+l-√neek (*na act verb – object intransitive*)

for S to preach, narrate, tell a story

sha-S-d+l-√xóot' <sup>1</sup> (*na act verb – object intransitive*)

for S to fish with rod, sportfish, cast

S	TLINGIT	PATTERN	TLINGIT	PATTERN
1S				
1P				
2S				
2P				
3S				
3P				
4H				

O-ka-S-sh-√x'áal' (∅ *event verb – transitive*)

for S to cook O (herring eggs) by dipping in boiling water and oil

O-ka-S-sh-√k'aan (∅ *act verb – transitive*)

for S to push O away; for S to shoo O away; for S to drive O away

S	TLINGIT	PATTERN	TLINGIT	PATTERN
1S				
1P				
2S				
2P				
3S				
3P				
4H				

sh + ka-S-d+sh-√x'aakw<sup>2</sup> (*na event verb – object intransitive*)

for S to be comfortable, sit or lie comfortably

sh + ka-S-d+sh-√geiy (∅ *event verb – object intransitive*)

for S to dress up, smarten up, make an effort to look different

S	TLINGIT	PATTERN	TLINGIT	PATTERN
1S				
1P				
2S				
2P				
3S				
3P				
4H				