Carrier Grammar Facts
Lheidli Dialect

William J. Poser, Ph.D.

©2016 William J. Poser

Prince George, British Columbia

Revised 2016-01-04

Nouns

Plurals

Only nouns referring to people and dogs have plurals. The regular plural suffix is *-ne*, e.g. *dune* "man", *dunene* "men".. Most kinship terms have plurals in *-ke*, e.g. *neloo* "our mother", *nelooke* "our mothers". Nouns derived from verbs by adding *-a* in the singular substitute *-ne* in the plural. The main irregular plurals are:

Meaning	Singular	Plural
chief	dayi	dayikene
dog	lhi	lhike
wife	'at	'atkoo
woman	ts'eke	ts'ekoo
young man	chilh	chilhuke
young woman	t'et	t'edukoo

Possession

Possession is marked by prefixes. One set is used for nouns beginning with a consonant other than glottal stop, the second for those beginning with a glottal stop, and the third for nouns beginning with a vowel. *'at* "wife" and *'aih* "snowshoes" take the first set even though they begin with glottal stop. Class 1 nouns beginning with *m*, *n*, or *h* take the 2s prefix *nyu*, e.g. *nyumusdus* "your cow"; those beginning with *b* take the 2s prefix *m*.

Some nouns, mostly nouns of a single syllable, have a different stem when possessed than when unpossessed.

Prefixes

Class 1

1s	s	1dp	ne
2s	n	2dp	nah
3s	bu	3dp	hubu
djr	i	pdjr	hui
ref	du	areal	whu
ind	'u		

Class 2

1s	se	1dp	neye
2s	nye	2dp	nahye
3s	be	3dp	hube
djr	ye	pdjr	huye
ref	dude	areal	whe
ind	'e		

Class 3

1s	s	1dp	ney
2s	ny	2dp	nah
3s	b	3dp	hub
djr	y	pdjr	huy
ref	d	areal	wh
ind	'		

Sample Paradigms

Class 1 - duchun "wood"

1s	sduchun	1dp	neduchun
2s	nduchun	2dp	nahduchun
3s	buduchun	3dp	hubuduchun
djr	iduchun	pdjr	huiduchun
ref	duduchun	areal	whuduchun
ind	'uduchun		

Class 2 - 'oosa' "pail"

1s	se'oosa'	1dp	neye'oosa'
2s	nye'oosa'	2dp	nahye'oosa'
3s	be'oosa'	3dp	hube'oosa'
djr	ye'oosa'	pdjr	hiye'oosa'
ref	dude'oosa'	areal	whe'oosa'
ind	'e'oosa'		

Class 3 - oozi "name"

1s	soozi	1dp	neyoozi
2s	nyoozi	2dp	nahoozi
3s	boozi	3dp	buboozi
djr	yoozi	pdjr	huyoozi
ref	doozi	areal	hoozi
ind	'oozi		

Possessive Categories

1s	my
1dp	our (2+)
2s	your (1)
2dp	your (2+)
3s	his/her/its
3dp	their
djr	his/her/its
pdjr	his/her/its
ref	his/her/its/their own
are	it (areal)'s
ind	someone's

For the difference among the 3s, djr, pdjr, and ref, see **Syntax-Disjoint Reference**.

Inalienable Possession

Some nouns are *inalienably possessed*: they must either be part of a compound or be marked for possession. These include the body parts and kinship terms, plus a few others, e.g. *-k'oh* "tracks". When it is not desired to specify the possessor, the indefinite possessive form is used, e.g. *'uk'oh* "someone's/something's tracks". Alienable possession of inalienably possessed nouns is marked by adding the Class 2 prefixes to the indefinite form, e.g. *bu<u>ts</u>un* "it's flesh", *'u<u>ts</u>un* "meat", *be'u<u>ts</u>un* "his meat".

Common Stem-changing Nouns

Meaning	Unpossessed	Possessed Stem
axe	tsetselh	tsetsel
belt	se	ze
bread	lhes	les
child	skui	zkui
children	skeh	zkeh
clock	sadzi	zadzi
dog	lhi	lik
egg	khez	ghez
fishnet	lhombilh	lombil
load	khelh	ghel
money	sooniya	zooniya
rope	tl'oolh	tl'ool
song	shun	yun
thorn	whus	wus
urine	lhuz	luz
word	khunek	ghunek

Vocatives

Kinship terms referring to older relatives have a *vocative* form. The vocative has the same form as the indefinite possessed form.

Suffixes

Nouns may be derived from other nouns by adding one of several suffixes.

cho	big	batcho	big mitts
yaz	small	batyaz	small mitts
ch'ul	torn, worn	batch'ul	old, worn out mitts
jut	old, rotten	batjut	old, rotten mitts

Note: when -*yaz* is added to the name of an animal, it usually refers to the young, e.g. *lhiyaz* "puppy".

Postpositions

Most postpositions cannot follow pronouns but are inflected for their object, e.g. *sch'a* "against me". These forms are very similar to those of possessed nouns, but there is an additional *reciprocal* form marked by the prefix *lh-*, e.g *lhch'a* "against each other".

1s	sch'a	1dp	nech'a
2s	nch'a	2dp	nahch'a
3s	buch'a	3dp	hubuch'a
djr	ich'a	pdjr	huich'a
ref	duch'a	areal	hooch'a
ind	'uch'a	rec	lhch'a

Numbers

There are five sets of numbers used to count items

of different types.

	Generic	Human	Times	Locative	Abstract
1	lhuk'ui	'ilhunah	'ilhoh	'ilhudah	'ilhuk'ui
2	nanko	nana	nat	nada	nawh
3	tagi	tana	tat	tada	tawh
4	dunghi	dina	dit	dida	diwh
5	skwunlai	skwunlane	skwunlat	skwunlada	skwunla
6	lhk'utaki	lhk'utane	lhk'utat	lhk'utada	lhk'uta
7	lhtak'alt'i	lhtak'alt'ine	lhtak'alt'it	lhtak'alt'ida	lhtak'alt'i
8	lhk'udunghi	lhk'utdunghine	lhk'utdit	lhk'udida	lhk'utdunghi
9	huk'ui hooloh	lhuk'ui hoolohne	lhuk'ui hooloh	lhuk'ui hoolo	lhuk'ui hooloh
10	lanezi	lanezine	lanezi	lanezida	lanezi

The decades are formed by combining the multiplicative form of a number with "ten". Larger numbers are formed by adding decades with the conjunction *'o'a* "plus". For example, 234 [human] is *nat lanezi lanezi 'o'a tat lanezi 'o'a dine* [(2 * 10 * 10) + (3 * 10) + 4].

Adjectives

Carrier has no words that behave like English adjectives. It has many words that describe things and modify nouns, but they are verbs. The structure of the sentences *ludi lhukui* "the tea is sweet" and *t'et nudaih* "the young woman is dancing" is the same: Noun Verb. When such words modify a noun, they are part of a relative clause: *ludi lhukui-i* "the tea which is sweet" = "the sweet tea", *t'et nudaih-a* "the young woman who is dancing".

There are just a handful adjectives that modify nouns. These include the demonstratives and "other" (*'uyoo, 'uyoon, 'uyoon-ne*), e.g. *'uyoon ts'eke* "the other woman".

Pronouns
Independent

	SG	DU	PL
1	si	nawheni	wheni
2	nyun	nawheni	nawheni
3 human	'en	'enne	'enne
3 non-human		'i	

Intensive

	SG	PL
1	sich'oh	whenich'oh
2	nyunch'oh	nohnich'oh
3		dich'oh

Demonstratives

The demonstrative adjectives/pronouns are:

	non-human	human sg.	human pl.
near speaker	ndi	ndunah	ndun-ne
near addressee	nyegi	nyugah	nyugahne
away from	nyugi	nyunah	nyuna-ne

both			
far away from both	'unni	'unah	'unahke

Verbs

Forms

Carrier verbs are marked for their subject. Here is the Imperfective Affirmative of "to sing".

	sg	du	pl
1	usjun	idujun	ts'ujun
2	injun	uhjun	uhjun
3	ujun	hujun	hujun

This verb is typical in that dual and plural forms are different only in the first person. "to sit" has nine different forms:

	sg	du	pl
1	sida	siduke	ts'udelhts'i
2	sinda	suhke	delhuts'i
3	usda	huzke	hudelhts'i

These mean: **1s** "I am sitting", **1d** "the two of us are sitting", **1p** "the three or more of us are sitting", **2s** "you (one person) are sitting", **2d** "you two are sitting", **2p** "you (three or more) are sitting", **3s** "(s)he is sitting", **3d** "the two of them are sitting", **3p** "they (three or more) are sitting".

Most verbs come in four main forms:

the **imperfective**, which is roughly like the English present tense

the **perfective**, which is roughly like the English past tense

the **future**, which indicates that something is going to happen

the **optative**, which expresses uncertainty

The optative has many uses. By itself it is used to make suggestions and to say that something may happen. It is also used in various constructions. The optative followed by *ait'oh* expresses impossibility, e.g. *wusjun' ait'oh* "I can't sing". It is also used in the complement of "want", e.g. *nosbe' hookwa'nuszun* "I want to go swimming".

The forms of "to sing" with 1p subject are:

IA	ts'ujun	we are singing
PA	ts'ejun	we sang
FA	uztejun	we are going to sing
OA	ts'oojun	let's sing OR we may sing

Each affirmative form has a corresponding negative form. For example:

IN	ts'usjun	we are not singing
PN	ts'ijun	we did not sing
FN	ts'utesjun	we are not going to sing
ON	ts'oosjun	let's not sing

Transitive verbs can also be marked for their object. For example, we have forms like *nasudants'ooz* "she kissed me", *nanyudants'ooz* "she kissed you (1)", and *naidants'ooz* "she kissed him". The form with no object marker, *nadants'ooz* is not a sentence by itself; it must be preceded by a noun phrase that indicates who or what was kissed:

tsalhts'ul	nadan<u>ts</u>'oo<u>z</u>
baby	she kissed

She kissed a baby

If we don't want to add an object noun phrase we have to use the *unspecified object marker,* which is the glottal stop before the /d/.

na'dan<u>ts</u>'oo<u>z</u>
She kissed someone

Structure

Verbs consist of a *stem,* a possibly null *valence prefix,* and further prefixes divided into two zones.

Disjunct Zone	Conjunct Zone	Valence	Stem

The conjunct zone consists of 12 positions:

Obj	S₀	WH_q	Con	D_q	N_q	S_q	In	Neg	Mod	Asp	S,
12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1

Obj	Object
S₀	Outer Subject
WH_q	WH-Qualifier
Con	Conative
D_q	D-Qualifier
N_q	N-Qualifier
S_q	S-Qualifier
In	Inchoative
Neg	Negative
Mod	Mode

Asp	Aspect
S_i	Inner Subject

Valence Prefixes

The valence prefix, if any, immediately precedes the verb stem.

Sample Paradigms
0-valence - to have

	SG	DU	PL
1	ust'i	idut'i	ts'ut'i
2	int'i	uht'i	uht'i
3	ut'i	hut'i	hut'i

lh-valence - to dry

	SG	DU	PL
1	usgui	idulgui	ts'ulhgui
2	ilhgui	ulhgui	ulhgui
3	ulhgui	hulhgui	hulhgui

l-valence - to be pregnant

	SG	DU	PL
1	ulhuchan	idulchan	ts'ulchan
2	ilchan	ulhuchan	ulhuchan
3	ulchan	hulchan	hulchan

d-valence - to drink

	SG	DU	PL
1	usnai	idutnai	ts'utnai
2	intnai	utnai	utnai
3	utnai	hutnai	hutnai

Underlying Subject Prefixes

	SG	DU	PL
1	s	idud	ts'
2	in	h	h
3	(V)	h(V)	h(V)

Inner and Outer Subject Markers

The inner subject markers 1s, 2s, 1d, and 2dp
appear immediately before the valence prefix. The
outer subject markers 1p and 3dp precede the
qualifier prefixes. The difference can be seen here:

to dance

	SG	DU	PL
1	nusdaih	nidudaih	ts'unudaih
2	nindaih	nuhdaih	nuhdaih
3	nudaih	hunudaih	hunudaih

Subject/Valence Prefix Rules

l-valence rules

1s	$s + l \rightarrow$ lhu
2s	$n + l \rightarrow l$
1d	$d + l \rightarrow l$
2dp	$h + l \rightarrow$ lhu

lh-valence rules

1s	$s + lh \rightarrow s$
2s	$n + lh \rightarrow$ lh
1d	$d + lh \rightarrow l$
2dp	$h + lh \rightarrow$ lh

d-valence rules

1s	$s + d \rightarrow s$
2s	$n + d \rightarrow$ nt
1d	$d + d \rightarrow t$
2dp	$h + d \rightarrow t$

The D-Effect

The D-Effect describes what happens when the /d/
at the end of the 1d subject marker or the d-
valence prefix combine with a following
consonant. If there is no D-Effect, the final /d/ of
the 1d prefix disappears.

C₂	Result	1d	3s	Gloss
'	t'	idut'alh	u'alh	chew
l	dl	nidudlat	nulat	float around
lh	l	idulgui	ulhgui	dry
n	tn	hoodutnih	whunih	be awake
y	j	'oonidujeh	'oonuyeh	pick berries
z	dz	nidudzoot	nuzoot	skate around
z	dz	nidudzun	ninzun	think

TS-Softening

When the verb stem begins with /ts/ and the first person singular subject marker /s/ immediately precedes it, the /t/ is lost.

n-u-s-tsi' → nussi' "I am bad"

The in-Conjugation

Many stative verbs are conjugated in the imperfectivre like the perfectives of active verbs. A common pattern is the *in*-conjugation, in which the prefix *in* appears in position 2. It takes the form *in* if it is preceded by a conjunct prefix. If not, it is realized as *n*.

to be tall

	SG	DU	PL
1	nusyez	nidujez	ts'inyez
2	ninyez	nuhyez	nuhyez
3	nyez	hinyez	hinyez

The S-Perfective

The perfective marker is z if preceded by a conjunct prefix, otherwise s.

go around in a boat [PA]

	SG	DU	PL
1	nusikui	nusidukui	nuts'uzkui
2	nusinkui	nusuhkui	nusuhkui
3	nusukui	nuhuzkui	nuhuzkui

s fuses with valence *l* and valence *lh* to yield *lh*, e.g. *nulhgaih* "he ran around", cf. *nusilgaih* "you ran around".

Formtion of the Future

For most verbs the vowel that marks the future tense is *e* except in the 2s and 1d, where it fuses with the initial *i* of the subject marker into *a*.

e-future - to do

	SG	DU	PL
1	'utest'elh	'utadut'elh	'uztet'elh
2	'utant'elh	'uteht'elh	'uteht'elh
3	'utet'elh	'uhutet'elh	'uhutet'elh

For a minority of verbs, the future marker is *a* no matter what the subject.

a-future - to buy

	SG	DU	PL
1	ootaskulh	ootadukulh	ts'ootakulh
2	ootankulh	ootahkulh	ootahkulh
3	ootakulh	hootakulh	hootakulh

Formation of the Optative

Similarly, for most verbs the optative marker is *oo*, except in the 2s and 1d where it fuses wit the initial *i* of the subject marker into *o*. For a minority of verbs the optative marker is *o* no matter what the subject.

oo-optative - to do

	SG	DU	PL
1	'oost'en'	'odut'en'	'uts'oot'en
2	'ont'en'	'ooht'en'	'ooht'en'
3	'oot'en'	'uhoot'en'	'uhoot'en'

o-optative - to take

	SG	DU	PL
1	oschoot	odulchoot	ts'olchoot
2	olhchoot	olhchoot	olhchoot
3	olhchoot	holhchoot	holhchoot

For oo-optative verbs, the optative marker is also realized as o when it immediately follows a

disjunct prefix ending in a consonant.

to go around in a boat

	sg	du	pl
1	noske	noduke	nuts'ooke
2	nonke	nohke	nohke
3	noke	nuhooke	nuhooke

This does not happen following a disjunct prefix ending in a vowel.

to go back by boat

	sg	du	pl
1	naoosduke	naoduke	nats'ooduke
2	naonduke	naoohduke	naoohduke
3	naooduke	nahooduke	nahooduke

A consonant-final conjunct prefix has no effect.

to eat [n-class object]

	SG	DU	PL
1	noosyi	nodudai	ts'unooyi
2	nonyi	noohyi	noohyi
3	nooyi	hunooyi	hunooyi

In word-initial position, if the optative marker would by the rules discussed so far surface as oo, it is realized as *wu*.

to eat

	sg	du	pl
1	wusyi	odudai	ts'ooyi
2	onyi	wuhyi	wuhyi
3	wuyi	hooyi	hooyi

to eat [uo]

	sg	du	pl
1	'oosyi	'odudai	'uts'ooyi
2	'onyi	'oohyi	'oohyi
3	'ooyi	'uhooyi	'uhooyi

Alternate 1p Marker

The 1p subject marker *ts'* is optionally replaced with *z* if the *z* can be made syllable-final. For example, we may say *uztejun* instead of *ts'utejun* "we are going to sing". However, *zoojun* is not a possible variant of *ts'oojun* "let's sing" since there is no way to make the *z* syllable-final. For this reason, the *z* variant never occurs immediately before the stem. For example, *uzjun* is not a possible variant of *ts'ujun* "we are singing".Nominalizing Suffixes

human singular	a
human plural	ne
location	a
other non-human	i

These are used to derive nouns from verbs, e.g. *hodulh'eh* "he is teaching" *hodulh'eh-a* "teacher" or "school", *hodulh'eh-ne* "teachers", *hodulh'eh-i*

"teaching machine" They are also added to the verb of a relative clause, where they agree with the head, e.g. *t'et mai oonuye-a* "the young woman who is picking berries".

Negatives

The Perfective Negative is made with the conjunct prefix *i*, which appears only when there is no inner subject marker.

to sing [PN]

	SG	DU	PL
1	usjun	idujun	ts'ijun
2	injun	uhjun	uhjun
3	ijun	hijun	hijun

The Imperfective Negative is made with the conjunct prefix *s/z*, which takes the form *z* when it is preceded by a conjunct prefix and there is an inner subject, otherwise *s*. The result of combining negative *s/z* with the valence prefix *l* is *lhu*, with *lh*, *lh*. Stative verbs often have an IN that looks like a Perfective Negative.

to sing [IN]

	SG	DU	PL
1	susjun	sidujun	ts'usjun
2	sinjun	suhjun	suhjun
3	usjun	husjun	husjun

The Future Negative and the Optative Negative are made by combining the same negative markers as

in the Imperfective Negative with the future and optative prefixes used in the affirmative.

to sing [FN]

	SG	DU	PL
1	tuzesjun	tuzadujun	ts'utesjun
2	tuzanjun	tuzehjun	tuzehjun
3	tesjun	hutesjun	hutesjun

to sing [ON]

	SG	DU	PL
1	soosjun	sodujun	ts'oosjun
2	sonjun	soohjun	soohjun
3	wusjun	hoosjun	hoosjun

When there is no inner subject marker, the order of the conjunct negative prefix and the optative/future vowel is reversed. That is why we have 3pFN *hutesjun* rather than **hutusejun* and 3sON *wusjun* rather than **soojun*.

Stative verbs, as well as verbs whose negative forms are not distinct from their affirmative form, are usually negated by putting *iloh* after them, e.g. *usdot iloh* "I am not slender".

Stem Variation

Verbs may have different stems in different tenses, moods, aspects, and negation forms. For example, here are forms of "I go around by boat" with the stem and prefixes separated:

IA		nus	ke

IN	nusus	koh
PA	nusus	kui
PN	nus	kel
FA	nutes	kelh
FN	nutuzes	kel
OA	nos	ke
ON	nuzoos	ke

Syntax

Word Order

The object precedes the verb.
The subject precedes the object.
Postpositions follow their noun phrase.

Chilh	duloo	ba	goh	sulooh
boy	his mom	for	rabbit	snared₃ₛ
SUBJECT	NP	P	OBJECT	VERB
A boy snared a rabbit for his mother.				

Subordinate clauses precede the higher verb.

'Utsoo	ludi	wusnai	sulhni
grandma	tea	drink₁~₀ₐ	she told me
Grandma told me to drink tea.			

Khunai ghunline	si	duni	sich'i	huninzun.
game wardens	I	moose	I shot	they think
The game wardens think I shot a moose.				

The particles *cha* "also" and *za* "only" immediately follow the phrase they apply to.

Mali	cha	ludi	utnai
Mary	too	tea	drink_{3s}
Mary [as well as someone else] is drinking tea.			

Mali	ludi	cha	utnai
Mary	tea	too	drink_{3s}
Mary is drinking tea [as well as something else].			

These particles precede postpositions.

Malin	cha	ba	de'olhdzeh
Marlene	too	for	pour_{2s}
Pour for Marlene too.			

Conjunctions follow their clause.

Dutsigha	dinyez	'et huwa	nayulh'ool
hair_{REF}	it-is-long	because	braiding_{3s-DIR}
She is braiding her hair because it is so long.			

Number Agreement

Verbs agree with the number of the subject in two ways:

a) For all verbs, the choice of subject marker prefix depends on the number of the subject. This is illustrated by the paradigm of "to sing" on page 9. For example, we say *ujun* if we are talking about one person, *hujun* if we are talking about more

---

than one.

b) For a few verbs, the choice of verb itself depends on the number of the subject. This is illustrated by the paradigm of the verb "to sit" on page 9. It is made up of three different verbs: "for one to sit" (stem *-da*), "for two to sit" (stem *-ke*), and "for three or more to sit" (stem *-ts'i*). The subject markers of such verbs also reflect the number of the subject.

The two kinds of number agreement differ in what kind of subjects they are about. Dual and plural subject marker prefixes are used with dual and plural "human" subjects but not with "non-human" subjects. Dogs count as "human", as do animals portrayed as acting like people. Speakers vary in how they handle other pets and domestic animals. On the other hand, whether or not the subject is human is irrelevant to the choice of the verb itself. For example, in:

K'azba	yus	k'ut	delhts'i.
ptarmigan	snow	on	sit-3
The ptarmigan are sitting on the snow.			

we have the verb "for three or more to sit" since we are talking about several ptarmigan but not the 3dp subject marker since ptarmigan are not human. If we were talking about people sitting on the snow, the verb would be *hudelhts'i*.

Nouns that have a plural form may nonetheless be used in the singular if plurality is clear from the verb. In *dune hincha* "the men are big" the non-

plural *dune* is acceptable in place of the plural *dunene* because the verb *hincha* clearly has a third person duo-plural subject.

Scope of Negation

The negative marking in negative verbs is only negates the verb itself: it does not in general extend to other parts of the sentence. For example, we can say "I don't smoke" with just the IN verb form *'uzust'ot* because the object is expressed by the unspecified object marker within the verb, but if we want to say "I don't smoke tobacco", we cannot say *dek'a sust'ot*, where *sust'ot* is the 1s IN with no object marker, because the object, *dek'a* "tobacco" is not part of the verb. To bring *dek'a* within the scope of negation, we have to put the negative word *'aw* in front of it: *'aw dek'a sust'ot*.

Comparison

Comparison is marked by the postposition *anuṣ* "than".

Sanuṣ	soo	ujun
than-me	well	she sings
She sings better than I do.		

A few verbs have a special comparative form:

Nyanuṣ	'ilhdukw
than-you (1)	he is shorter
He is shorter than you are.	

'ilhdukw is the comparative form corresponding to *ndukw* "he is short".

Questions

Yes/no questions are formed by adding *ih* to the corresponding statement. Content questions are formed by putting the appropriate question word in the same place as the corresponding word would be in the answer.

Doocha	mba	nts'eda'	wheinya?
again	your dad	where-past	he-went

Now where did your dad go?

Question words

how far	dahoolhdzoh
how long a time	dahoolhdzoh
how long ago	dahoolhdzoh da
how many (generic)	daneltsuk
how many (human)	daooneltsukne
how many (wh-class)	daooneltsuk
how	nts'eza'a
what kind of (non-human)	dant'i
what kind of (human singular)	dant'unah
what kind of (human plural)	dant'uneh
what size	dalhcho
when (future)	nts'ohde
when (past)	nts'ohda
whence	nts'ez
where	nts'e

who (plural)	ndaneh
who (singular)	ndan
why	dika

Disjoint Reference

Third person singular object markers and possessors take on special forms if the noun is a non-subject and the subject of the clause is third person. Two NPs are *disjoint* if they share no members; they *overlap* if they share some but not all members.

singular subject same	ref
singular subject disjoint	djr
plural subject disjoint	pdjr
plural subject overlapping	3s

Examples:

ref Za dubat 'uyinla. "Za made his own mitts."

djr Za ibat 'uyinla. "Za made his (somebody else's) mitts."

pdjr Huibat 'uyinla. "They made his mitts." (he is not one of them)

3s Bubat 'uhuyinla. "They made his mitts." (he is one of them)

Absolutive Noun Classification

Many verbs take prefixes that express agreement with the noun class of the absolutive argument, that is, with the subject of intransitive verbs and the object of transitive verbs. The prefixes are:

d	stick-like things, sounds
n	round things
wh	areal things

Examples:

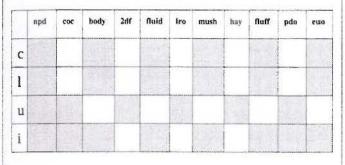| dustl'us lhuyul	the paper is white
tuz dulhuyul	the cane is white
nukuk nulhuyul	the ball is white
koo whulhuyul	the house is white

Classificatory Verbs

Classificatory verbs describe the handling or motion of particular classes of thing. For many events, different verbs must be used depending on the kind of thing involved. For a given kind of thing, many different events may be described by different derivatives of the same verb root. The different categories, in some cases sub-categorized by the absolutive prefix classes, are illustrated by the forms of "to give" below.

non-plural generic (chair)	sghate'alh
non-plural n-class (ball)	sghante'alh
non-plural d-class (name)	sghadute'alh
non-plural wh-class (house)	sghaoote'alh
plural generic (chairs)	sghatelelh
plural n-class (balls)	sghantelelh
plural d-class (names)	sghadutelelh
plural wh-class (houses)	sghaootelelh
uncountable (sugar)	sghatedzih
n-class uncountable (berries)	sghantedzih
d-class uncountable (toothpicks)	sghadutedzih
long rigid (canoe)	sghatetilh
d-class long rigid (stick)	sghadutetilh
body (dog)	sghatelhtelh
open container contents (cup of tea)	sghatekalh
two-dimensional flexible (shirt)	sghatelhchus
mushy stuff (mud)	sghatetloh
liquid (water)	sghatelhdzoh
hay-like (hay)	sghadutelhdzoh
fluffy stuff (down)	sghatelhdo

There are four sets of classificatory verbs, illustrated below for two categories.

Type	NPD	LRO	Gloss
controlled handling	taya'ai	tayantan	he put it into water
uncontrolled handling	tayalh'uz	tayalht'o	he threw it into water
inherent motion	talts'ut	tadankez	it fell into water
locative	us'ai	ustan	it is located

The controlled handling and locative verbs distinguish all eleven categories, but the other two sets have fewer categories as shown below. Adjacent categories with the same colour are merged. For example, the same uncontrolled handling verb is used for the npd and coc categories.

	npd	coc	body	2df	fluid	lro	mush	hay	fluff	pdo	euo
c											
l											
u											
i											

Phonological Rules

WH-Unrounding

When /wh/ immediately precedes /o/ or /oo/, it becomes /h/.

wh-oozi' → hoozi' "its (areal) name"

wh-ootaskulh → hootaskulh "I am going to buy (wh)"

WH-I Fusion

When /wh/ immediately precedes /i/, they fuse into /hoo/.

wh-in-nih → hoonih "you are awake" (cf. whusnih "I am awake".

wh-in-tel → hoontel "it (areal) is wide (cf. dintel "it (d-class) is wide"

W-Movement

When wh(u) immediately precedes a velar or labial consonant that is not at the beginning of a verb stem, wh becomes h, and, if the second consonant is velar, w is added to it.

wh-k'ui → hukw'ui "its (areal) birch trees"

wh-bat → hubat "its (areal) mitts"

wh-ka'ninzun → hukwa'ninzun "he wants (wh)"

wh-kaih →whukaih "he is shoveling", not hukwaih

For some speakers the intervening vowel is oo rather than u, e.g. hookwa'ninzun.

TL-Softening

Verb stem-initial tl becomes lh following lh:

nulh-tlus →nulhlhus "she is kneading"

Writing System

'	as in *uh-oh*	'a	quickly
a	as in *pot*	dada	illness
b	as in **b**oy	bat	mittens
ch	as in **ch**eese	chunih	marten
ch'	glottalized ch	**ch'**ekw	ash tree
d	as in **d**og	datsan	crow
dl	same syllable	k'ui**dl**i	willow
dz	same syllable	**dz**oot	coat
d<u>z</u>	fronted dz	**d<u>z</u>**ulh	mountain
e	as in *bait*	'uke	foot
f	as in *fan*	lugafi	coffee
g	as in *gun*	goh	rabbit
gh	as in *aaar***gh**!	'ugha	hair
gw	as in **gw**en	gwuzeh	whiskey jack
h	as in **h**ouse	hoonliz	skunk
i	as in *see*	ti	road
j	as in **j**aw	jenyo	bull moose
k	as in **k**ey	'uke	foot
k'	glottalized k	k'a	bullet
kh	as in *Bach*	khe	grease
kw	as in **qu**een	kwun	fire
kw'	glottal kw	kw'usul	beads

l	as in l**o**ck	lacholbai	yarrow
lh	voiceless l	lhulh	with e.o.
m	as in **m**o**m**	musdus	cow
n	as in **n**i**n**e	noostel	wolverine
o	as in p**o**le	goh	rabbit
oo	as in p**oo**l	noo	island
r	as in **r**ain	lugarat	carrots
s	as in **s**ay	sa	sun
s̲	fronted s	s̲e	belt
sh	as in **sh**oe	shun	song
t	as in **t**oe	talukw	salmon
t'	glottalized t	t'es	charcoal
tl	same syllable	dutleh	it is soft
tl'	glottalized tl	tl'o	grass
ts	same syllable	tsa	beaver
ts'	glottalized ts	ts'i	canoe
t̲s̲	fronted ts	t̲s̲e	rock
t̲s̲'	fronted ts'	t̲s̲'al	diaper moss
u	as in b**u**t	sus	black bear
w	as in **w**ay	wedlew	sandpiper
wh	voiceless w	whudzih	cariboo
y	as in **y**es	ya	sky
z	as in **z**oo	ze	only
z̲	fronted z	'uz̲ek	mouth

Terminology & Abbreviations

absolutive argument - the subject of an intransitive verb or object of a transitive verb

abstract – the abstract numbers are used to count things like ideas and kinds.

areal - saliently 2- or 3-dimensional, that is, occupying an area or space, or an extent of time

2df - two-dimensional flexible object

coc - contents of open container

conjunct prefix - one of the prefixes occurring in the positions closer to the verb stem. Object markers are the leftmost conjunct prefixes.

demonstrative adjective – an adjective that points out a noun: "this", "that", etc.

disjunct prefix - one of the prefixes occurring in the positions farther from the verb stem.

djr - disjoint reference

dual - referring to exactly two

duo-plural - referring to two or more

euo - effectively uncountable objects. See *uncountable*.

first person - includes reference to the speaker. "I" and "we" forms.

generic – the category that includes everything that does not belong to some more specific category.

human - in Carrier grammar this includes spirits, dogs, and other animals considered as sufficiently human-like.

ind - indefinite. The indefinite possessive prefix means "someone's, something's".

inner subject marker - one of the subject marker prefixes that goes just before the valence prefix: 1s, 2s, 1d, and 2dp.

intensive pronoun - "(by) myself" etc.

intransitive – an intransitive verb is a verb like "to laugh" that does not take an objject.

labial - a sound made with the lips close to or touching each other, or with the lower lip near the upper teeth: *b* and *m*.

locative - having to do with places. The locative classificatory verbs express where things are located. The locative numbers are used to count places and plots of land.

lro - long rigid object

npd - non-plural (one or two) default object

object - the person or thing acted upon

outer subject marker - one of the subject marker prefixes that goes near the beginning of the conjunct zone, away from the stem: 1p, 3dp

pdjr - plural disjoint reference

pdo - plural default object

plural - when used strictly, referring to three or more. In contexts where there is no contrasting *dual,* referring to two or more. See also *duo-plural*.

rec – reciprocal, e.g. "each other's", "to each other".

ref – reflexive, e.g. "his own", "to himself".

root - the theoretical form underlying a set of stems, used to provide a simple way to talk about a verb. For example, we say that "go by boat" has the root *ke* although it has stems such as *ke* [IA continuous, e.g. *nuke*], *kelh*

[FA, e.g. *teskelh*], *kel* [PN, e.g. *nikel*], and *kui* [PA, e.g. *nusukui*].

second person - includes reference to the addressee but not the speaker. "you" forms.

singular - referring to one person or thing

stative verb – a verb that describes a state as opposed to an action or event, e.g. "be good, be angry, sleep".

stem - the last part of the verb, the same as the last syllable except in cases where a preceding /d/ combines with the stem.

stem set – the set of stems that a verb has in the various tenses, moods, aspects, and negation categories

subject - the person or thing that acts or is described

third person - refers neither to the speaker nor the addressee. "he", "she", "it" and "they" forms.

times – the numbers labeled times, also called "multiplicative" are used for counting how many times something happens as well as periods of time, such as months.

transitive – a transitive verb is one that takes an object, a noun phrase or pronoun that typically refers to the thing affected by the verb.

uncountable - describes a set of objects sufficiently numerous as not to be treated individually. This may be a large number, but can be as small as four. Classificatory verbs for this category are often used for large numbers of very small objects, such as grains of sand, sugar, or salt, but can be used for

larger objects, such as potatoes or even boulders.

valence prefix - the prefix position immediately preceding the verb stem. The possible valence prefixes are: 0 (none), *l*, *lh*, and *d*.

velar - a sound made with the back of the tongue near or touching the back of the roof of the mouth: *k*, *g*, *k'*, *kh*, and *gh*.

vocative - the form of a noun used to address someone, e.g. *'uba* "(hey) Dad!".

1d	first person dual
1dp	first person duo-plural
1p	first person plural
1s	first person singular
2d	second person dual
2dp	second person duo-plural
2p	second person plural
2s	second person singular
3d	third person dual
3dp	third person duo-plural
3p	third person plural
3s	third person singular