

Kwak’wala Speaker: Mildred Child (MC)
Linguist: Katie Sardinha (KS)
Recording date: June 20, 2015

Short text:

***kakut’amas* ‘teacher’**

English prompt¹

Mabel is a schoolteacher who teaches young kids. This morning she woke up with a cough, and she had to decide if she was going to go to the school to work, or stay home and rest. She didn’t know what to do. She worried that if she went to work, she might make the kids get sick. But she worried that if she stayed at home, they wouldn’t be able to find another teacher to take her place. She didn’t think that anyone else would be able to come in. But she didn’t think she should cough around the kids, and that was more important. So she decided to stay home and rest.

Kwak’wala Version:

kakut’amas xa gangananam, yaxux Mabelx. ’walasux t’saxk’a xwa ga’alax. olak’ala yaksa’mux noke’yaxs. “wix’itlan? kutlan lalax laxada kakut’la’as, lida gangananam’manix ugwakat t’sit’saxk’ax’idit. kutlan laxot, laxotlax.” la’misux, “wi:gilatlan?” la’misux t’ams’i xis gigame’, nilas t’saxk’a’a. la’mi “o, gwanu gaxlax. t’sit’saxk’ax’iditlida gangananam ugwaka. olak’ala ik la kus t’ams’i gaxan. la’man t’ams’itl [phone rings]² ke’ida kakut’amas ka gaxe’s ek’akila axsilaxga gangananam.” o:lak’ala ikux noke’yaxs Mabel. la’mux o’am la’edaka kwalga’li’a, tuma’ma’axs laxo’wa’.

¹ The methodology of this exercise was as follows: KS read a made-up story in English, and MC was instructed to tell the story back in Kwak’wala as she remembered it. The point of the exercise was not for MC to tell back the story exactly as it was said to her in English, but for MC to rephrase the gist of the story in her own words (and to embellish it if she wanted), in Kwak’wala.

² In the background we can hear MC’s home phone ringing several times, followed each time by the answering machine saying “Call from British Columbia”. Meanwhile, MC continues to narrate the story.

Kwak'wala Version, Line-By-Line³

- (1) k'ak'utłamas xa gangananam, yaxux Mabelx.
'A teacher of young children, Mabel is.'
- (2) 'walasux t'saxk'a xwa ga'alax.
'She was really sick this morning.'
- (3) olak'ala 'yaksa'mux noke'yaxs.
'She really felt bad in her heart and mind.'
- (4) "wix'itłan?"
'What will I do?'
- (5) "kutłan lalax laxada k'ak'utł'a'as, lida gangananam'manix ugwaatł
t'sit'saxk'ax'idtl."
'If I go to the school, the little children will also get sick.'
- (6) "kutłan laxotł, laxotłax."
'If I go and cough, they could get a cough.'
- (7) la'misux, "wi:gilatłan?"
'And so (she thought), "What will I do?''
- (8) la'misux t'ams'i xis gigame', nilas t'saxk'a'a.
'Then she phoned her boss, and told them that she was sick.'
- (9) la'mi "o, gwanu gaxlax."
'Then (they said), "Oh, don't come in then.'

³ The English translations provided here are paraphrases made by KS, based off of discussion that took place with MC after the text was recorded.

- (10) “t’sit’saxk’ax’id̥t̥ida g̥angananam ugwḁka.”
“The children will also get sick.”
- (11) “olḁk’ala ik lḁ kus t’ams’i gax̥an.”
“It’s really good that you phoned me.”
- (12) “la’man t’ams’it̥ ke’ida k’ak’ut̥ʔamas ka gaxe’s ek’akila ax̥silax̥ga g̥angananam.”
“I will go and call for a teacher to come and take good care of the children.”
- (13) o:lak’ala ikux̥ noke’yax̥s Mabel.
‘Mabel’s heart was really glad.’
- (14) la’mux̥ o’am la’edakḁ kwḁlga’li̥ʔa, t̥uma’ma’ax̥s laxo’wa’.
‘So she just went back to bed with her bad cough.’

Kwak’wala Dictionary

ax̥sila (= x̥)	‘to take care of (someone)’
ek’akila	‘to take care of oneself’
gax̥	‘to come’
g̥angananam	‘children’
gigame’	‘boss’
ga’ala	‘morning’
gw̥anu	‘do not’
ik	‘good’
kwḁlga’li̥ʔa	‘to go to bed’
la	‘to go’
la’edakḁ	‘to go back, return’
laxo	‘to cough’
ni̥ʔa (= s)	‘to reveal, to tell (of something)’
noke’	‘heart, mind’
olḁkala	‘really, truly’

k̲ak̲ut̲łamas (= x̲)	‘one who teaches (something), teacher’
k̲ak̲ut̲łas	‘school’
ugwaka	‘also, too’
t̲ams̲’i (= x̲)	‘to phone (someone), to ring’
t̲ams̲’i (ka)	‘to phone (for something), to ring’
t̲sax̲k̲’a	‘sick’
t̲uma	‘really, very’
’walas	‘big, very’
’yaksa’m	‘bad’

Kwak’wala Analysis⁴

- (1) k̲ak̲ut̲łamas x̲a gangananam, yaxux Mabelx̲.

k̲ak̲ut̲łamas	x̲a	gangananam	yaxux	Mabelx̲
k̲ak̲ut̲łas	-mas = x̲ = a	RED~gananam	yax̲ = ux̲	Mabel = (a)x̲
learn	-CAUS = ACC = D4	PL~child	APPOS = D2	Mabel = v2

‘A teacher of young children, Mabel is.’

- (2) ’walasux t̲sax̲k̲’a x̲wa ga’alax̲.

’walasux	t̲sax̲k̲’a	x̲wa	ga’alax̲
’walas	= ux̲ t̲sax̲k̲’a	= x̲ = w = a	ga’ala = (a)x̲
big/very	= D2 sick	= ACC = D2 = D4	morning = v2

‘She was really sick this morning.’

⁴ The Kwak’wala analysis here was carried out by KS on December 22, 2021, and is a work in progress. All errors are my own.

- (3) olak'ala 'yaksa'mux noke'yaxs.

olak'ala	'yaksa'mux		noke'yaxs		
olak'ala	'yaksa'm	= ux	noke'	= (a)x	= s
truly	bad	= D2	heart/mind	= V2	= 3.POSS

'She really felt bad in her heart and mind.'

- (4) "wix'itlan?"

'wix'itlan				
'wi	-x'id	= tɬ	= an	
WH	-BEC	= FUT	= 1	

"What will I do?"

- (5) "kutlan lalax laxada k'ak'ut'la'as, lida gangananam'manix ugwakatɬ t'sit'saxk'ax'idɬ."

kutlan	lalax		laxada			k'ak'ut'la'as			
ka	= u'	la	= lax	la	= x	= a	= da	k'ak'ut'la	-'as
PREP	= HYP	go	= HYP	PREP	= ACC	= D4	= DET	learn	-LOC.PASS

lida			gangananam'manix		ugwakatɬ	
la	= i	= da	RED~ gananam	= 'manix	ugwaka	= tɬ
AUX	= D3	= DET	PL~ child	= DIM.PL	also	= FUT

t'sit'saxk'ax'idɬ			
Ci~	t'saxk'a	-x'id	= tɬ
PL~	sick	-BEC	= FUT

"If I go to the school, the little children will also get sick."

(6) “kutlan laxot, laxotlax.”

<u>kut</u> lan		<u>laxo</u> t		<u>laxo</u> t <u>lax</u>
<u>ka</u>	=u' =t =an	<u>laxo</u>	=t	<u>laxo</u> =t =lax
PREP	=HYP =FUT =1	cough	=FUT	cough =FUT =HYP

“If I go and cough, they could get a cough.”

(7) la'misx, “ 'wi:gilatlan?”

<u>la</u> 'mis <u>x</u>		'wi:gilat <u>lan</u>
<u>la</u>	= 'm = (w)is = <u>ux</u>	'wi -gila =t =an
AUX	=VER =and.so =D2	WH -do/make =FUT =1

‘And so (she thought), “What am I gonna do?”’

(8) la'misx t'ams'i xis gigame', nilas t'saxk'a'a.

<u>la</u> 'mis <u>x</u>		t'ams'i	<u>xis</u>	<u>gigame</u> '
<u>la</u>	= 'm = (w)is = <u>ux</u>	t'ams -x'id	= <u>x</u> = i(')s	<u>gigame</u> '
AUX	=VER =and.so =D2	ring -BEC	=ACC =3.REFL.POSS	boss
	<u>ni</u> las	t'saxk'a'a		
	<u>ni</u> la =s	t'saxka =a		
	tell =INST	sick =EMB		

‘Then she phoned her boss, and told them that she was sick.’

(9) la'mi "o, gwanu gaxlax."

la'mi		o		gwanu		gaxlax
la	= 'm	= i	o	gwanu		gax = lax
AUX	= VER	= D3	EXCLAM	do.not		come = HYP

"Then (they said), "Oh, don't come in then."

(10) "tsit'saxk'ax'idthida gangananam ugwaka."

tsit'saxk'ax'idthida					gangananam	ugwaka
Ci~ tsaxk'a	-x'id	= th	= i	= da	RED~ gananam	ugwaka
PL~ sick	-BEC	= FUT	= D3	= DET	PL~ child	also

"The children will also get sick."

(11) "olak'ala ik la kus t'ams'i gaxan."

olak'ala	ik	la	kus		t'ams'i	gaxan
olak'ala	ik	la	ka	= us	t'ams -x'id	gaxan
truly	good	AUX	PREP	= 2.POSS	ring -BEC	1.OBJ

"It's really good that you phoned me."

(12) “la’man t’ams’itł ke’ida k’ak’utłamas ka gaxe’s ek’akila axsilaxga gangananam.”

la	=’m	=an	t’ams	-x’id	=tł	ka	=i	=da	k’ak’utla	-mas
AUX	=VER	=1	ring	-BEC	=FUT	PREP	=D3	=DET	learn	-CAUS

ka	gaxe’s				ek’akila
ka	gax	=a	=i’	=s	ek’akila
PREP	come	=EMB	=NMZ	=3.POSS	take.care.of.self

axsila	xga			gangananam
axsila	=x	=ga		red~ gananam
take.care.of	=ACC	=D1		PL~ child

“I will go and call for a teacher to come and take good care of the children.”

(13) o:lak’ala ikux noke’yaxs Mabel.

olak’ala	ikux		noke’yaxs			Mabel
olak’ala	ik	=ux	noke’	=(a)x	=s	Mabel
truly	good	=D2	heart/mind	=v2	=3.POSS	Mabel

‘Mabel’s heart was really glad.’

(14) la'mux o'am la'edaka kwalga'li'a, tuma'ma'axs laxo'wa'.

la'mux		o'am		la'edaka
la = 'm = ux		o = 'm		la -edaka
AUX = VER = D2		so = VER		go -return
kwalga'li'a				
kwal	-ga'ł	-ił		-a
lie.down	-DIR.TEL	-indoors		-A
tuma'ma'axs			laxo'wa'	
tuma = 'm = a = (a)x = s				laxo = a'
really = VER = EMB = V2 = 3.POSS				cough = I3

'So she just went back to bed with her bad cough.'

Glossing Conventions and Abbreviations

Gloss	Morphs	Notes
-		affix boundary
=		clitic boundary
~		reduplicant boundary
!		hardening mutation
◦		softening mutation
:	v:	dramatic vowel lengthening
1	= <u>a</u> n	first person singular
1.EXCL	= <u>a</u> nu' <u>x</u> w	first person plural exclusive (“we and not you”)
1.EXCL.OBJ	ga <u>x</u> anu' <u>x</u> w	first person plural exclusive object, instrumental or accusative case (“us and not you”, “to us and not you”, “from us and not you”, “of us and not you”)
1.EXCL.POSS	= <u>a</u> nu' <u>x</u> w	possessed by first person plural exclusive
1.INCL	= <u>a</u> n's	first person plural inclusive (“we including you”)
1.INCL.OBJ	ga <u>x</u> an's	first person plural inclusive object, instrumental or accusative case (“us including you”, “to us including you”, “from us including you”, “of us including you”)
1.INCL.POSS	= <u>a</u> n's	possessed by first person plural inclusive
1.OBJ	ga <u>x</u> an	first person singular object, instrumental or accusative case (“me”, “to me”, “from me”, “of me”)
1.POSS	= <u>a</u> n	possessed by first person
2	= s	second person
2.OBJ	lotł (UR), loł	second person object, instrumental or accusative case; the final consonant frequently spirantizes in natural speech
2.POSS	= u's, = us	possessed by second person
3.POSS	= s	possessed by third person

3.REFL.POSS	= i's, = is, = u's, = us	possessed by third person who is coreferent with the sentential subject or topic; = u's is used with medial (D2) referents, = i's is used with distal (D3) referents
A	-a, = a	the suffix is a default stem-final vowel, corresponding in many instances with Greene's (2013) 'final vowel', but which may have other functions as well; the clitic is epenthetic (Littell 2016:546-8)
ABIL	weł	ability modal, "can"
ACC	= x̄	accusative case
ACC.PASS	-saŵ (UR), -su'	accusative passive, a voice suffix targeting arguments that are marked with accusative case in active clauses; realized as -saŵ when followed by a vowel and as -su' elsewhere (Littell 2016:519) ⁵
ADD.FOC	= xa	additive focus (Littell 2016)
APPOS	ya	appositive
AUG	-dzi	augmentative
AUX	la-	auxiliary verb, historically related to the verb <i>la-</i> 'to go'
BE.1	nugwa	first person copula (Littell 2016)
BE.2	su	second person copula (Littell 2016)
BE.D1	ga	third person proximal copula (Littell 2016)
BE.D2	yu	third person medial copula (Littell 2016)
BE.D3	he	third person distal copula (Littell 2016)
BEC	-x'id (UR), -x'i, -'i, -d, -nd, -ud	become operator, momentaneous aspect, inchoative; marks transition predicates (Greene 2013, Sardinha 2018, 2020); the allomorphy of this suffix is discussed in Boas (1947:365)
C	(various)	consonant

⁵ The same phonological rule applies for the realization of dłaŵ (UR)/dłu', a conjunctive predicate which is glossed as 'with', 'and', or 'or' as appropriate given the context.

CAUS	-mas	causative (Sardinha 2015)
CONN	= <u>x</u> a	connector; appears as a host for enclitics following the first-person enclitic; some speakers consistently uses = <u>x</u> a for this purpose, while some other speakers use = <i>t</i> a in the same position for the same purpose
CONT	- <u>a</u> la	continuative aspect; marks process predicates (Greene 2013; Sardinha 2018, 2020)
D1	= ga	third person proximal deictic determiner (this, right here”) (Nicholsen and Werle 2009)
D2	= u <u>x</u> , = w	third person medial deictic determiner (“this, close by”) (Nicholsen and Werle 2009); The = w morph is realized in some third person medial DPs in the accusative case
D3	= i	third person distal deictic determiner (“that, over there”) (Nicholsen and Werle 2009)
D4	= a	existential deictic determiner (Black 2011)
DET	= da, = d	determiner, ostensive marker (Black 2011); the distribution of = d is unique from = da and is restricted to copular clauses (Littell 2016:111-112)
DIM	= bido, = bidu	diminutive; the two variants are in free variation
DIM.PL	= ’man <u>i</u> xw	diminutive plural
DIR.ATEL	-(g) <u>a</u> ł	atelic directional (Rosenblum 2013)
DIST.PAST	= wa’ł	distant past tense
do	<u>a</u> x-	dummy verbal root
EMB	= a	embedding vowel (Littell 2016:604-606)
EMPH	-dzo	emphatic
EXCLAM	o	exclamatory (“Oh!”); the tongue root is back and low compared with the English exclamation “Oh!”
FUT	= tł	future
GER	-’ina <u>y</u> i	gerund

GRAD.ADV	- <u>ḥ</u> akw <u>ala</u>	a gradual advancement; indicates progression towards a telos
HYP	= u', = lax	hypothetical, uncertain; these clitics appear in conditional and modal clauses, but their precise semantics is not well understood
I3	= e', = a'	third person distal invisible
IMP	= <u>la</u> , = ga	imperative
INDEF	gwi	indefinite root (“do thusly”)
INST	= s	instrumental case (Sardinha 2017)
INST.PASS	-ayu	instrumental passive, a voice suffix targeting arguments that are marked with instrumental case in in active clauses
INTENS	= kas	intensifier
JF		judged form
LOC	-al	locative lexical suffix (“on”)
LOC.PASS	-'as	locative passive, a voice suffix targeting arguments that occur in locative prepositional (la) phrases in active clauses
make.noise.CONT	-(k)'ala	continuative aspect; form used for describing events involving emissions of sound
MOD	= <u>xant</u> , wax	modal; = <u>xant</u> is an epistemic modal; wax is glossed as ‘try’ in contexts where this meaning is apparent and as MOD elsewhere
NEG	(k)i's	negation
NEG.EXIST	ḥayos	negative existential (“there is no”, “there are no”)
NMLZ	= i', = ay', - <u>am</u> , - <u>ał</u> , - <u>anam</u> , -'ima	nominalizer; - <u>am</u> , - <u>ał</u> , and - <u>anam</u> weaken (lenite) a preceding consonant, while -'ima hardens (glottalizes) a preceding consonant
PEJ	-oł	pejorative
PL	Ci	plural
PART	-kw	participle, result nominalizer

PREP	la, <u>ka</u>	preposition; la is a preposition that introduces locative arguments (“at”, “to”, “from”, etc.), while <u>ka</u> is a preposition that introduces causes, reasons, and purposes (“because”, “for”, “in order to”)
PRSNTV	= as	presentative (Littell 2016:263)
QUES	= a	question
REC.PAST	= xd	recent past tense
RED	(various)	reduplicant
RECIP	= ap’	reciprocal (“each other”, “one another”); triggers vowel lengthening in the stem
REPORT	= ǐ	reportative evidential
so	o	“so”, “just”; used to signal object or VP focus (Littell 2016)
sound.BEC	-gaʔ	become operator, momentaneous aspect, inchoative; used for describing events involving emissions of sound
STAT	-ała	stativizer (Sardinha 2018)
VER	= ’m	verum focus (Littell 2016).
VOC	<u>gan</u>	vocative; <u>gan</u> refers specifically to an infant girl
v1	= (i)k (UR), = (i)x	third person proximal visible; the final consonant often spirantizes
v2	= (i) <u>x</u>	third person medial visible
VF		volunteered form
WH	<u>wi</u>	generic wh-element

Feedback welcome at katie.sardinha@gmail.com!