

## *Eyak Grammar Sketch*

### **Introduction**

**Eyak** (ISO 639-3: eya)

*Language family?*

Na-Dene

Athabaskan-Eyak

*Where is it spoken? How many speakers?*

Southcentral Alaska

Copper River delta

Last speaker (Marie Smith Jones) died in 2008

*What grammar materials?*

Grammar:

Krauss, Michael E. 2024. *A Grammar of Eyak*. Edited by Kevin Baetscher and Gary Holton. De Gruyter, forthcoming.

Provenance:

Krauss → founded the Alaska Native Language Center, Eyak specialist.

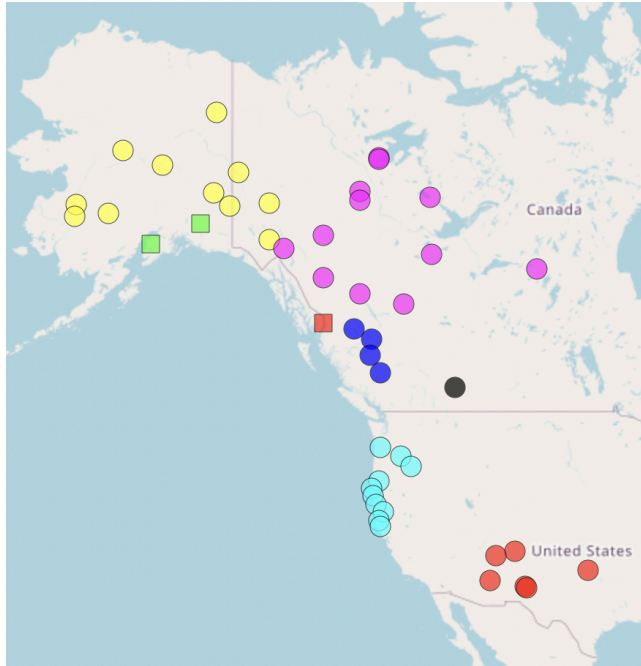
Baetscher & Holton → linguists that have edited and compiled Krauss' work posthumously.

*What are the materials like?*

Very dense, but informative. It's exhaustive and technical in an effort to document as much of Eyak as possible.

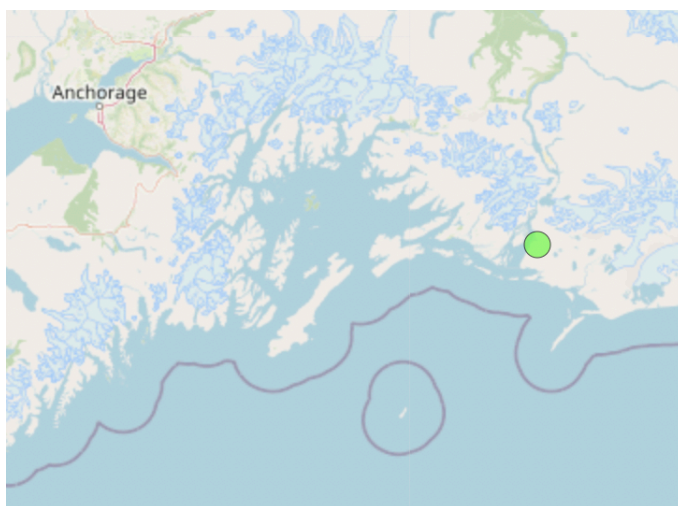
## Athabaskan-Eyak Language Family

❖ Where are the languages spoken?



← Athabaskan languages (Glottolog)

➤ Apachean, Central Alaska-Yukon Athabaskan, Central British Columbia Athabaskan, Northwestern Canada Athabaskan, Pacific Coast Athabaskan, Sarsi, Southern Alaskan Athabaskan, Tsetsaut



← Eyak (Glottolog)

❖ What are the languages and how are they subgrouped?

➤ Eyak is the only language in its branch

➤ Athabaskan contains **44** languages

■ **2** are alone in their respective subgroups:

- Sarsi
- Tsetsaut

■ **6** subgroups

- Apachean (6)
- Central Alaska-Yukon Athabaskan (11)
- Central British Columbia Athabaskan (4)
- Northwestern Canada Athabaskan (9)
- Pacific Coast Athabaskan (10)
- Southern Alaskan Athabaskan (2)

❖ Is there controversy in the subgrouping?

➤ Ethnologue and Glottolog disagree

■ Glottolog is seen above, Ethnologue below

➤ Umbrella term is “Eyak-Athabaskan” instead of “Athabaskan-Eyak”

■ Eyak is the only language in its branch, but...

■ Tlingit is now included, also on its own branch

- Usually this trio is called Na-Dene (Sapir)

■ Athabaskan contains **44** languages, only **3** subgroups:

- Apachean (6)
- Northern Athabaskan (28)

◆ Now includes Sarsi and Tsetsaut

- Pacific Coast Athabaskan (11)

❖ Does this language family have any neighbors?

➤ Circle the entire western half of the US & Canada.

❖ What does Campbell have to say about it?

**LIA's main thesis is that 'all the indigenous languages of the Americas, except those of the Na-Dene and Eskimo-Aleut groups, fall into a single vast assemblage' (38).**

➤ Only mentioned to say that it's not lumped into Amerind

❖ What is the number of speakers?

➤ Eyak is considered "extinct" by Glottolog and "dormant" by Ethnologue

■ There are no native speakers left and it's not being taught in schools

➤ Athabaskan

Name	Group	# of Speakers
Navajo	Apachean > Southwestern > Western	120,000-170,000
Western Apache	Apachean > Southwestern > Western	14,000
Central Carrier	Central British Columbia > Carrieric > Dakelh	1,270
Hupa	Pacific Coast > California > Hupa-Chilula	1 (as of 2015)
Tututni	Pacific Coast > Oregon > Rogue River	Extinct (as of 1983)
Sarsi		170

➤ But most of the languages are dormant or extinct...

## Phoneme Inventory

**Table 4.1:** Obstruent inventory, in practical orthography with IPA equivalents.

	labial	coronal				velar		uvular	glottal
plain	b	d [t]	dl [tɬ]	dz [ts]	dj [tʃ]	g [k]	gw [kʷ]	G [q]	' [ʔ]
aspirate		t [tʰ]	tl [tʰɬ]	ts [tsʰ]	ch [tʃʰ]	k [kʰ]		q [qʰ]	
ejective		t'	tl' [tʰɬ']	ts'	ch' [tʃʰ']	k'		q'	
fricative			L [ɬ]	s	sh [ʃ]	x	xw [xʷ]	X [χ]	h

**Table 4.2:** Sonorant inventory.

w	l	y
m	n	

**Table 4.3:** Phonemic vowel inventory.

i	u
e [æ]	a [ɒ]

**Table 4.5:** Full vowel inventory with corresponding stigmata and reduced vowels.

reduced	full	stigmata			
i	i	ih	i'	i:	i:'
A	e	eh	e'	e:	e:'
	a	ah	a'	a:	a:'
u	u	uh	u'	u:	u:'

Reduced:

<i, A, u>

“the contrast between these (reduced vowels) and relationship to the full vowels is a complex issue, highly secondary and/or morphologically determined”  
(Michael E. Krauss, 153).

Stigmata:

/h/ (post) aspiration, ‘fading stigma’  
/ʔ/ (post) glottalization, ‘glottal stigma’  
/:/ length, ‘length stigma’

Minimal pairs:

1.

- a. O- 'itl'                    '(beaver) dam O'
  - b. O- 'iL'                    'pour, spill O'
- 2.
  - a. O- 'Adz'                    'impel O'
  - b. 'As'                        'pot-like trap'
  - c. 'Ash'                        'completely by, past' (preverb)
  - d. 'Al'                         'this' (proximal demonstrative)
  - e. 'Aw'                        'that, the' (distal demonstrative)
- 3.
  - a. 'GAts'AX'                  'cloth'
  - b. 'Gits'AX'                  'copper'

#### Orthography:

1. Since nearly all obstruents are voiceless, some symbols associated with voiced consonants in English are used for voiceless consonants in Eyak orthography
  - a. d [t]
  - b. dl [tʰ]
  - c. ds [ts]
  - d. g [k]
  - e. gw [kw]
2. When that fails, capital letters are used to differentiate
  - a. g [k]    G [q]
  - b. x        X [χ]
  - c. l        L [ʎ]
3. There are also differences in the full vowel list
  - a. e [æ]
  - b. a [ɒ]
  - c. Orthography

## Phonology Problem Set

### Stem Structure

Nearly all Eyak stems are monosyllabic. Identify the stem structure from these examples.

<i>XAtl'</i>	'night'
<i>'As</i>	'pot-like trap'
<i>qid</i>	'(falling) down off'
<i>'u'G</i>	'breathe, be alive'

However, some (about 80) stems are disyllabic. Other than just adding another vowel, what is required for a stem to be disyllabic?

<i>-GAma't'</i>	'twist'
<i>ch'iyahd</i>	'hat'
<i>kAna's</i>	'wolverine'
<i>-xAwah</i>	'red ribbon seaweed'
<i>-dAleh</i>	'horn, antler'

### Vowel Harmony

In Eyak, any  $CA > Ci$ , where C is any consonant. However, it can be blocked. What blocks this vowel harmony?

Vowel harmony is working:

Vowel harmony is blocked:

'A-x-i-t'eh > 'ixit'eh	'I am'	IAXA-xi-XAL > IAXAxiXAL	'I'm drunk'
dA-si-li-L > disiliL	'I said'	XA-si-y-ahL > XAsiyahL	'I ate it'
dA-Li-ts'anh > diLits'anh	'd-class is strong'	qAdiLikugX	'it (stick) is brittle'

#### Language Family Bibliography: Athabaskan-Eyak

4. What are the earliest recorded language descriptions for your language family? Who recorded this information, and what is the nature of the materials? (e.g. dictionaries, grammars, *testimonios*, etc.)

*The following was found on Ethnologue.*

- a. The oldest description of Beaver (Northern Athabaskan) is from 1965, called *A Phonemic Description of the Beaver Indian Language* by Jean and Marshall Holdstock.
    - i. It covers consonants, vowels, vowel modifications, types of phonemes, phoneme distribution, and a word list.
  - b. Hupa (Pacific Coast > California) has a grammar sketch from 1910 by Pliny Earle Goddard, compiled inside of the *Handbook of American Indian Languages* by Franz Boas.
  - c. Of the three main branches of Athabaskan, Apachean has the newest language descriptions, with the oldest being Western Apache, with a series of books published in 1972, all of which are dictionaries.
    - i. There are 5 total, split between two authors: Dorothy Bray and Canyon Z. Quintero. Bray wrote two, both titled *Western Apache-English Dictionary*, while Quintero wrote the three titled *Western Apache Dictionary*.
5. When was the classification of your language family first established? If it is an uncontroversial classification, what source is identified as conclusively proving the relationship?



*The following was found in A Grammar of Eyak by Michael Krauss.*

- a. There was a lot of Russian research that got lost when Alaska changed ownership. From the perspective of Western colonizers:
    - i. William Wadden Turner showed a relationship between Apache-Navajo and Athabaskan languages in Alaska in 1852.
    - ii. Johann Karl Eduard Buschmann (who made “a “hobby” of Athabaskan” and usually worked on Aztec) suggested three groupings in 1855: Athabaskan, Kinai, and Koloschen.
  - b. And then they decided to look back at Russian research, which had already done the following:
    - i. Before Nikolai Petrovich Rezanov in 1805, Russian research had extended to a basic understanding of the relationship between languages.
    - ii. Rezanov wrote 6 parallel vocabularies while in Russia for 7 months (August 1805-February 1806).
  - c. Finally, Buschmann acknowledged the usefulness of Rezanov’s work and discovered that the relationship between Eyak and the rest of the Athabaskan languages was different, which led to the Athabaskan-Eyak language family.
6. What other interesting things appear in the sources on your language family? (e.g. indigenous scholars recording their own heritage languages, etc.)

*The following was found on Ethnologue.*

- a. Three of the four Pacific Coast Athabaskan languages in California (Wailaki, Mattole, and Hupa) have an extensive catalog of recorded songs. Intriguingly, the only recorded song they share is the Girl’s Adolescence Dance (or, Adolescent Girl Dance Song).
- b. There’s an elusive book called *Concordance of the Athapaskan Languages* by Alexander C. Anderson from 1858 that I can’t find anywhere. It contains information about Northern Athabaskan languages like Carrier, Upper Umpqua, and Hupa.



## Morphology

### Pronouns:

- There are three kinds of pronouns in Eyak:
  1. Personal pronoun prefixes
    - a. Verb subject
    - b. Verb object
    - c. Noun possessor and object of postposition
  2. Independent personal pronouns
  3. Demonstrative pronouns & relative enclitics
- Personal pronoun prefixes:
  - Appear in verb zones A and D (leftmost and rightmost) and as preverbals
  - Third person can also appear as enclitics on the verb stem

**Table 9.1:** Personal pronoun prefixes: Subject (S), Direct Object (O), Possessor (P), Postpositional object (o), with summary of patterns. Differing letters in the summary column indicate suppletion (see text for further explanation).

	S		O		P/o		summary
1s		<i>x-</i> ~ <i>i-</i>		<i>xu-</i>		<i>si-</i>	aAb
2s		<i>yi-</i> ~ $\emptyset$ -		<i>'i-</i>		<i>'i-</i>	aAA
3		$\emptyset$ -		$\emptyset$ -		<i>'u-</i>	aab
1p	<i>da:</i>		<i>qa:</i>		<i>qa:-</i>		abB
2p		<i>lAX-</i>		<i>lAXi-</i>		<i>lAX-</i>	aAa
indef		<i>k'u-</i>		<i>k'u-</i>		<i>k'u-</i>	aaa
indet				<i>'i-</i>		<i>dA-</i>	-ab
refl				<i>'Ad(-)</i>	<i>'u</i>	<i>'Ad- ~ \emptyset-</i>	-ab/A
recip			<i>'iLu'</i>			<i>'iL-</i>	-aA

- Independent personal pronouns:

**Table 9.2:** Independent personal pronouns.

	Singular	Plural
1	<i>xu:</i>	<i>GAyAG</i>
2	<i>'i:</i>	<i>lAXi:</i>
3	<i>'a:</i>	<i>'uyAG ~ 'AyAG</i>

- The only set that fully distinguishes between the three persons and two numbers
- Only partly related to the pronoun prefixes (1s, 2s, and 2p are taken from Zone D in the verb, plus vowel lengthening)
- Emphasis!

(1) Independent pronouns in combination with possessive pronouns for emphasis

*xu: si-ni:k* 'my nose'

*'i: 'i-ni:k* 'your nose'

*'a: 'u-ni:k* 'his nose'

*GAyAG qa:-ni:k* > *GAyAqa:ni:k* (elided) 'our noses'

*lAXi: lAX-ni:k* 'your (pl) noses'

*'AyAG 'u-ni:k* 'their noses'

- Contrast!

(2) Independent pronouns with contrastive particle *'uwa:*

*xu: 'uwa:* 'I however', 'as for me'

*'a: 'uwa:* 'he on the other hand'

- Verb complement!

(3) Independent pronouns complement to the verb

a. *'i: x-i-Leh da:X*

2s 1s-CJ-be if

'if I were you'

b. *xu: da 'l-i:-L-Xah*

1s THM-2s-CL-have

'you have me (e.g. to depend on)'

(4) Independent pronouns with enclitic articles

a. *'i:=k'a' wAX 'a'-yi-leh*

2s-please thus CJ-2s-do

'you please do so'

b. *'i:=shuh*

2s-Q

'hello' (lit. 'Is it you?')

- Demonstrative pronouns & relative enclitics:

**Table 9.3:** Full and reduced forms of demonstrative pronouns.

	full	reduced
proximal	'A/	-A/
distal	'Aw	-Aw ~ -uh
human sg	'anh	-unh
human pl	'ahnu:	-uhnu:

- Proximal/distal distinction is used for anything that's not a person, and singular/plural distinction is used for anything that is a person
- The proximal/distal pronouns are also used as independent pronouns that can cause a bit of confusion...

'Aw XAwa: shAshehL	'it/that killed a dog' ('Aw = independent pronoun subject)  'it killed the/that dog' ('Aw = determiner)
--------------------	---

- This is based on where the stress is placed.

### Numerals:

- “essentially decimal on the grand scale” (Krauss 1007)
  - They were not replaced by English numerals as in many other Alaskan languages (yay!)

(1) Eyak numerals 1-10

1 <i>LinhG-ih</i>	6 <i>ts'i:n</i>
2 <i>la'd-ih</i>	7 <i>la'dits'i:n</i>
3 <i>t'uhLga'</i>	8 <i>q'Adits'i:n</i>
4 <i>qAlahqa'ga'</i>	9 <i>guts'de:</i>
5 <i>ch'a:n'-ih</i>	10 <i>dAGa:q'</i>

- Only 1 and 2 have Athabaskan cognates
- 3 and 4 appear to be postpositional phrases (with postposition 'ga)

- The object of 3 is unclear to speakers and might need to be broken down further
- 4 is very clear: 'each of those around the place/event' a.k.a. fingers
  - \*qwA-lah-qa'-ga', in which:
    - *ga'*, *qa'*, and *lah* are postpositions meaning 'like', 'between, among', and 'around' respectively
  - The object is from Proto-Athabaskan-Eyak meaning 'place, event'
- 5 is probably related to 'forearm'
- 6 is unclear but might be related to Athabaskan 'bone'
- 7 is '6' preceded by '2', presumably something along the lines of 'second 6'
- 8 is '6' preceded by *q'Adi-*, meaning 'last, final 6'
  - 6-7-8 seems to be a separate pattern
- 9 is unclear
- 10 may mean 'on, above', but might also be associated with 'shoulder'

#### Problem Set:

How would you extrapolate from the body part numerals in Eyak if the rest of the numerals would follow the pattern instead of being a hodgepodge?

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. Fingers
5. Forearm
6. \_\_\_\_\_ (bone?)
7. \_\_\_\_\_ (second bone?)
8. \_\_\_\_\_ (final bone?)
9. \_\_\_\_\_
10. Shoulder (on, above)

#### Adverbs:

- *-dah*

Phonologically appears like a postposition but actually isn't:

- (think of postpositions as possessed nouns for the purposes of this)
- Instead of *d-* + *-ah*, it's just *-dah*

- Not found attached to personal pronouns (like a postposition would be)
- Found attached to word-classes that aren't normally objects of postpositions

<i>Xawa:-ga'</i>	'Like a dog' ← postposition
<i>*Xawa:-dah</i>	*'Dog-ly' ← not a postposition

*-dah* tends not to like consistent rules. For example, it's involved in:

- 9 deverbalizations
  - 4 of which include *-L* (a deverbalizing suffix), which Krauss speculates to be attributed to *-dah* in some way
  - Ex: *sdi't'a'dzLdah yAX da:X* 'he is walking about where it is rough going'
- No nouns
  - Except maybe these if you count them:
    - *ya:* 'thing'
    - *Li'q' ya:yu:-* 'everything'
    - *dA'u:dAX ya:kih-* 'anything'
    - *ya:kih-* 'payment'
- 3 adjectives turned adverbs
  - 'Well', 'badly', 'in a big way'
- 3 numerals turned adverbs
  - 'Two ways', 'three ways', 'one way; still, motionless'
- 11 more miscellaneous
  - Including the delightful 'exclamation of disgust' *'i:yah-*
- Not *-dah*

"There seem to be no phonological or morphological shapes typical of adverbs" (Krauss 989).

- Temporal
  - 16 in the dictionary
  - 4 nouns used as temporal adverbs
    - *se:L* 'in the evening'
    - *XAtI* 'at night'
    - *gah* 'during the day'
    - *XAla:g* 'in winter'
- Quantifying

- 5-10 of these depending on whether or not you consider if certain phrases have fully converted to adverbs
  - Postpositional:
    - *'ida'ya:IAX* 'too much'
    - *'ida'ya:'u'X* 'too little'
  - Words ending in preverbals:
    - *dA-du'X ~ di'du'X* 'almost' ← likely taken from a proclitic
- Two of note, both meaning 'very much' and often used together:
  - *'a'd*
  - *xan'Lq'*
- Manner
  - More miscellaneous than the other categories and harder to count
  - Includes demonstratives like:
    - *wAX* 'thus, that way'
    - *IAX* 'this way'
  - Possibly originally from the demonstrative pronoun as object of postposition -X '(moving) contact with'

### Clitics:

- Requirements for clitics:
  - Proclitics precede all prefixes and enclitics follow all suffixes
  - Not required by the word they're attached to
- Proclitics
  - The most important: *dA=* 'selfsame, the very'
    - Creates the sequence of CA'- in *dA'wAX* and *dA'IAX*, which
    - Produces the only minimal pair for /a/ and /A/
  - Often translated as 'right' in English, as in:
    - *dA'a:nd* 'right here'
    - *dA'q'a:L* 'right now'
    - *dA'u:ch'ahd* 'from right there'
  - All other proclitics are derived reductions of known stems and far less widespread in comparison to *dA=*
    - Ex: *q'A=* in *qid q'A-dAGALaqahGG* 'don't fall off'
- Enclitics



- Generally more important in syntax and discourse than morphology, but at least there's a system, with three classes (plus miscellaneous)
- The Used-To-Be-Relativizers
  - =*inh* 'human singular' (originally '(singular) he whom')
  - 
  - =*inu*: 'human plural' (originally '(plural) they whom')
  - Probably taken from =*inh* plus plural marker =*yu*:
  - Attached to open stems cause all stem vowels to shift to /in/ or /'un/
- The Consonantal Ones
  - =*q*' 'focus, emphatic'
  - =*sh* '(yes/no) interrogative'
  - =*d* WH-interrogative final to interrogative pronouns, & emphatic
- The Reduced Demonstrative Pronouns
  - =*Aw* 'nonhuman, distal, unmarked'
  - =*Al* 'nonhuman, proximal'
  - =*unh* 'human singular'
  - =*uhnu* 'human plural'
  - =*unhAw* \*'distal human singular'
    - Only appears a couple times in existing texts
  - =*unhAl* \*'proximal human singular'
    - Only appears a couple times in existing texts
  - =*uh*
    - weird in comparison the other ones in its category
    - It appears alone in certain contexts (not as an enclitic) as nonhuman direct object of imperatives
    - Acts as an empty morpheme to attach onto clitics like =*q*' that can't appear on their own at the end of a word
- Total of 23 possible enclitics once they're combined with each other
  - The enclitic series: Consonantal + [Reduced Demonstrative Pronoun+]

### Problem Set:

You might have noticed that there are two sets of enclitics to refer to humans: the Used-To-Be-Relativizers =*inh* and =*inu*:, and =*unh* and =*uhnu* from the Reduced Demonstrative Pronouns. What patterns do you notice in how they're used?

65. *wAX q'-uhnū: 'u-tl' dAxlēh.*

thus EMPH-HUM.PL 3-to 1s.said

‘Thus it was I said to them.’

(pg. 1150)

(40) *'Aw 'AXAkih-ya' q'=uhnū: 'anhū: GA-L-Xe'dz-L*

DIST canoe-in.vessel EMPH-3p HUM.PL INC-CL-carry.on.shoulder-PFV

‘They were shouldering her along in the canoe.’ (A25.10)

(pg. 1084)

(17) *'u-Xa' x-tsu'd=inh*

3-with 1s-sleep=HUM.SG

‘I am sleeping by him.’

(pg. 15)

(28) a. [*'anh qe'L*] *sA-sheh-L=inh*

HUM.SG woman CJ-kill-PFV=HUM.SG

‘S/he killed the woman.’ or ‘S/he who killed the/that woman.’

(pg. 1079)

## Eyak Syntax

### The Narrative Problem:

Almost all of Eyak's corpus is in narrative form, specifically oral storytelling, and when Krauss was doing fieldwork, he wasn't focused on syntax almost at all.

- There is only one recording that was fully colloquial, and while there are noticeable differences, they can mostly be chalked up to the deliberate speech style of oral storytelling and not to how this one person spoke.

### Word Order:

Eyak is an SOV language, and nominative-accusative.

(20) Basic word order

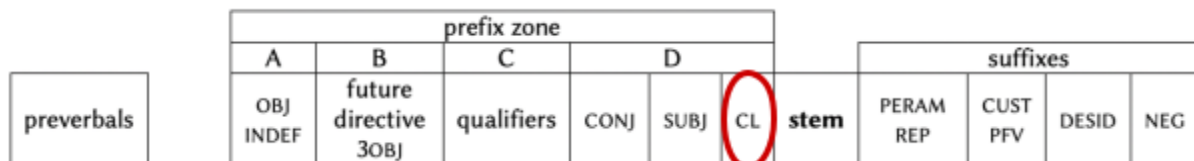
[ 'anh    LinhGih k'u-'ehd ]<sub>S</sub> [ 'Aw t'ahL ]<sub>O</sub> [ giyah-ya'X ]<sub>P</sub>  
 HUM.SG other    INDEF-wife that leaf    water-into.broad.opening  
 [ yAX ]<sub>P</sub>    [ q'e' ]<sub>P</sub> [ ti:lA-tsu:x ]<sub>V</sub>  
 downward back    QUAL-thrust

'That other wife thrusts the leaf back down in the water.'

(Krauss 16).

### Valency:

You might remember that verbs contain a classifier prefix, also called the transitivity indicator.



**Figure 1.3:** Idealized Eyak verb template.

All verbs have a lexical classifier in this slot: *L*, *dA*, *di*, *LA* ~ *Li*.

### Valency Problem Set

How is *Li* changing the sentence?<sup>1</sup>

a. *xu-:-L-dAtl'-g*

1S-2S-CL-hurt-REP

'You're (repetitively) hurting me.'

b. *xu-s-Li-dAtl'-L*

1SG-CJ-CL-hurt-PFV

'I was hurt.'

(Krauss 17).

### Interrogatives:

- Yes/no questions are simple: add =*sh*.

*dAsAche'Lsh* 'Are you hungry?'

- Wh- questions are a bit more complicated.

(1) Content questions words

*de*: 'what?'

*du*: 'who?'

*da*: 'where?'

*dAX* 'how?'

*k'e*: 'how?'

(Krauss 1019).

- All content question words take the particle =*d*
  - This particle can occur directly, after suffixes, or on other words

Why are there two 'how's?

- *dAX* seems to match the other content question words
  - -*X* 'by means of, in non-punctual contact with'
  - Only found in:
    - *k'u-dAX* 'cannot, impossible' < 'no way to'
    - *dAX-k'=d* 'how much/many?'
- *k'e*: is used more generally
  - Not found without a particle, either =*d* or =*sh*
  - Not found in negatives

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<sup>1</sup> It makes the sentence intransitive, and perfective.

## Negation:

preverbals	prefix zone						stem	suffixes			
	A	B	C	D				PERAM	CUST	DESID	NEG
	OBJ INDEF	future directive 3OBJ	qualifiers	CONJ	SUBJ	CL		REP	PFV		

Figure 1.3: Idealized Eyak verb template.

There are four different kinds of negation. Three of them use the suffix -G.

- Content Question Negatives = content question prefixed by *k'u-*
  - k'u-dAX* 'cannot'
  - k'u-de:* 'nothing'
  - k'u-du:* 'no one'
  - k'u-de:-dah* 'no way'
- Thematic Negative = -G is incorporated into the stem of the verb
  - dAla'G* 'is soft, weak' < *dila'* 'is hard, tough'
  - 'Ad dAgAwG* 'is numb' < *'Ad dAgAwih* 'feels it'
- Cautionary Prohibitive = GA- imperative conjugation prefix, -G suffixed
  - Also use the adverbial participle *q'ah* 'now!, already!'
    - 'Aw q'ah Gi:sehdG* 'don't trip on it!'
    - 'iXa' q'AGAq'ashGinh* 'let him not choke "on" you!' ('don't let baby choke on bone in your care')
- Full Negation = *dik'* 'no, not' and -G suffixed to the verb
  - dik'* can appear on its own, as in: *dik', dik' 'AdxLA'e:k'G* 'no, I don't keep marrying (with ulterior motives)'
    - The commas are included because it functions the same was as "no" in English, like "no, I didn't do that"
  - Full negation isn't just applied to verbs, but also nouns, adjectives, and postpositions

### Negation Problem Set

Given the following sentences that use full negation, where would *dik'* most likely appear in the word order of SOV?

- a. *XAwa: dik' dAXunh 'AsqahL-G*  
dog NEG man bit-NEG  
'dog didn't bite man' (most natural)
- b. ? *dik' XAwa: dAXunh 'AsqahL-G*  
NEG dog man bit-NEG  
'dog didn't bite man' (OK but marked)
- c. \* *XAwa: dAXunh dik' 'AsqahL-G*  
dog man NEG bit-NEG  
(hardly OK, marked, "not sure even who didn't bite whom") (Krauss 1050).

### **Oral Tradition**

Professor Michael E. Krauss recorded many stories as he was researching Eyak. Thankfully many of these recordings survive today. Additionally, he edited, translated, and heavily footnoted a story collection called *In Honor of Eyak: The Art of Anna Nelson Harry*. Anna Nelson Harry was one of the last fluent speakers of Eyak. The story is called "Giant Rat." Krauss' extensive work with Eyak means that we have access to audio, orthography, and translation of this story. Please follow along if you can.

The audio: <https://uafanlc.alaska.edu/Online/ANLC0089/ANLC0089Aonly-reel.wav>.

The translation and orthography:

[https://chugachheritageak.org/resource-files/In\\_Honor\\_of\\_Eyak.pdf](https://chugachheritageak.org/resource-files/In_Honor_of_Eyak.pdf)

#### Abstract:

(Taken from *In Honor of Eyak: The Art of Anna Nelson Harry*)

A man and woman and their child were boating along, looking for berries, when they came upon the cliff where the monster reputedly had its hole.

"I wish we might see it," said the woman.

The man said, “Shhh! Don’t ask for trouble!” And just as he spoke the rat emerged behind them, capsizing their canoe. The woman was lost. The man grabbed the child and jumped onto the back of the big rat.

It took them into its hole, where they jumped off. The man held the child. She was afraid of the monster. Nevertheless, they lived a long time with this giant monster rat. When it got dark the rat would go out hunting. It would bring home seals and ducks for the man and his child. Then it would lie down on top of them to cook them. When the food was cooked, the rat gave it to the man and his child and they ate it. They were living this way for some time. The man would try climbing the spruce-roots which hung from above, while the rat was gone. He got out. But he knew the rat would look for them as soon as it came back, so he hurried back in. When the rat returned, they were sitting there. It lay in under itself what it had killed and gave it to the man and his child to eat.

His child was a little girl.

When it was pitch-dark the rat would leave, returning as it began to get light out. One day just before it got light the man put the girl on his back and climbed out of the rat-hole. He was going along, but had not yet gotten very far, when the rat returned. It immediately missed them and started banging its tail around, knocking everything down.

The man and his daughter returned to their people safely. He told them, “Go get some young ravens. Snare them. Snare lots of them.” They did as he asked.

When the moon was full, they went there. (The rat would stay in and never go out when the moon was full.)

They sharpened their knives and axes, packed the young ravens on their backs, and headed for the rat-hole. “Now dump the ravens down into the rat-hole to see if they’ll be quiet.” (If the birds remained quiet, that would mean the hole was empty.) Immediately they clamored. The rat jerked his tail partway down but the people chopped it off, thus killing the monster.

The rat moved forward as it died, but only about halfway out. They were going to tow it down to shore but it was too big. They had to leave it there, until a big tide came and carried it down to the shore.

The monster rat was more massive than a very big whale, and had enormously long upper teeth. Its hair was longer than black bear’s fur.

The corpse of the giant rat floated out and as it washed around, they towed it ashore. They butchered it to get the skin. When they cut it open, they found all sorts of things in its stomach. People who had been disappearing mysteriously, they now found, had been killed and

eaten by this big rat. They found people's skulls in its stomach. The people butchered it for its skin. The hair was already going in some places, but where it was good they dried it.

After this, they called a potlatch and exhibited before the people's eyes what had been killing their relatives. Now, not just anyone could use that rat-skin, only a chief could sit on the monster rat-skin. At the potlatch the people kept saying, "No cheapskate will sit on it. Only chiefs. Too many people have fallen victim to this rat. Those poor wretches, all killed. That's why only chiefs will sit on it."

Word spread of the giant rat-skin and a tribe from some distant land wanted it for themselves. These people from another land came and made war over it. Many people died, but the rat-skin was not wrested from them. The chief who used to sit on it was the first to be killed in the war for the rat-skin. Therefore it could not be abandoned. It was of no concern to them how many would perish on its account, or how many would die in the pursuit of that skin. They fought to the finish.

When the battle ended, they took the chief's corpse from among the other dead people and put it inside the rat's tail. Then they wrapped it in the rat-skin and burned it.

(in the old days people didn't bury one another. Whoever died was cremated and his charred remains were gathered in a box.)

Thus they did to their chief's bones. But then the other tribe found out about the box and stole it and packed it up the mountain and threw it in the water.

Then there was another battle, between that other tribe and those whose chief's bones had been thrown into the water. They were all wiped out, except for old men and women and children. They killed all the young men. That's what happened to those whose chief's bones were thrown in the water.

Their children grew up and wanted revenge, but never got revenge. They got wiped out, those whose chief's bones were thrown in the water.

These people were just like each other, though living in a different land. There are people from Sitka living here at Yakutat just like we do. Though they are foreigners, they live harmoniously with us. But these people waged war over that rat-skin, people just like each other. What good is a rat-skin? They did that, though, and nothing more could happen to them, no more wars with anyone. They were wiped out completely.



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