

LING 301: The structure of Wakashan languages*
course notes

Handout 1. Wakashan languages

Wakashan is a small language family of Vancouver Island and nearby parts of British Columbia and Washington state. Table (1) gives the English and native names for the seven Wakashan languages, as well as some of their codes and abbreviations.^{1, 2}

(1)	X	language	ISO	Glottolog	people	language
	X	Haisla	has	hais1244	χáʔisəla	χáʔisəlakala
	H	Heiltsuk	hei	heil1247	híʔdzaq ^w	híʔdzaq ^w əla
	W	Wuikala	hei	oowe1239	ʔəwíkinuχ ^w	ʔəwíkala
	K	Kwakwala	kwk	kwak1269	k ^w ak ^w əkəwək ^w	k ^w ak ^w ala
	N	Nuuchahnulth	nuk	nuuc1236	nuučaahʉʔath	quuquuʔaca, ciicqicasa
	D	Ditidaht	dtd	diti1235	diitiidʔaaʔtɬ	diidiitidq
	M	Makah	myh	maka1318	q ^w idiččaʔaatɬ	q ^w iiq ^w iidiččaʔ

Several Wakashan languages and peoples have been known by other names.

- ▶ Wuikala has also been called Oowekyala, and its people Oowekeeno.
- ▶ Kwakwala has also been called Kwakiutl and Bakwemkala.
- ▶ Nuuchahnulth has also been called Nootka, Wakash, Aht, and Taataaqsa.
- ▶ Ditidaht has also been called Nitinaht and Nitinat.

Read Jacobsen (1979), *Wakashan comparative studies*. Questions follow.³

1. What kinds of specialized vocabulary do Wakashan language have? (766)
2. What is meant by *Nootka*, *Nootkan*, *Kwakiutl*, *Kwakiutlan*? (768)
3. What is the significance of the roots $\sqrt{kircuq-}$, $\sqrt{qursap-}$, $\sqrt{ʉsap-}$? (769)
4. Who were George Hunt and Alex Thomas? (770)
5. What is meant by *pre-Proto-Wakashan*? (772)
6. What other languages are Wakashan languages in contact with? (773, 777)
7. What does Jacobsen conclude by comparing words from different languages? (776)
8. What sound changes does Jacobsen describe? (777)

* (CC BY 4.0) 2026 Adam Werle, UVic ms.

¹ iso639-3.sil.org

² glottolog.org

³ W. H. Jacobsen, 1979, *Wakashan comparative studies*, in L. Campbell & M. Mithun (eds.), *The languages of Native America: Historical and comparative assessment*, Austin: UT Press, 766-791.

Handout 2. Wakashan sounds

The following diagrams list the sounds of North and South Wakashan languages, arranging them by place and manner. These are supersets. No single language has all of these sounds.

(2) North Wakashan sounds (Wakashan Meta-alphabet)⁴

aspirated plosives	p	t	ʔ	c	k ^y	k ^w	q	q ^w	
glottalized plosives	p̚	t̚	ʔ̚	c̚	k ^y	k ^w	q̚	q̚ ^w	ʔ
voiced plosives	b	d	ɬ	ɕ	g ^y	g ^w	ɣ	ɣ ^w	
spirants			ʃ	s	x ^y	x ^w	χ	χ ^w	h
plain resonants	m	n	l		y	w			
glottalized resonants	m̚	n̚	l̚		y̚	w̚			
long resonants	mm	nn	ll						
high vowels				i	ii		u	uu	
mid vowels				e	ee	ə	o	oo	
low vowels							a	aa	

(3) South Wakashan sounds (Island alphabet)⁵

plain plosives	p	t	ʔ	c	č	k	k ^w	q	q ^w	
glottalized plosives	p̚	t̚	ʔ̚	c̚	č̚	k̚	k̚ ^w	q̚	q̚ ^w	ʔ
voiced plosives	b	d								
voiced glottalized plosives	b̚	d̚								
spirants			ʃ	s	š	x	x ^w	x̚	x̚ ^w	h̚
plain resonants	m	n	l			y	w			
glottalized resonants	m̚	n̚	l̚			y̚	w̚			
high vowels						i	ii	u	uu	
mid vowels						e	ee	o	oo	
low vowels										a aa

Read Werle (2010), *The phonology of Wakashan languages*. Questions follow.⁶

1. What are some unusual features of Wakashan sound systems? (2)
2. Write out the sounds of just one Wakashan language. (2–3, 5–6, FirstVoices)
3. Compare Wakashan sounds to those of English, French, Hawaiian, or Mandarin. (Wikipedia)
4. How do sound systems differ in features like voicing, glottalization, and vowel length?
5. Where do Wakashan languages round consonants? Compare Salish rounding. (10)
6. What is spirantization? What does it show about syllables? (11)
7. What is mutation? How does it differ between North and South Wakashan? (12)
8. What is remarkable about words like H *qqs* ‘eye’, W *t̚x̚t̚k̚^ws* ‘fish hawk’? (15)

⁴ A. Werle, 2024, Kwakwala transliteration, Wakashan Language Circle ms.

⁵ J. Powell (ed.), 1991, *Our world — our ways: Taataaqsaqa cultural dictionary*. Port Alberni: NTC.

⁶ A. Werle, 2010, *The phonology of Wakashan languages*, UVic ms.

Handout 3. World language sounds

For the purpose of comparison with Wakashan, the sounds of standard English, French, and Arabic are given here, using the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA).

(4) English sounds (Standard English)

plain plosives	p	t			tʃ	k		
voiced plosives	b	d			ɟ	g		
plain spirants	f	θ	s		ʃ			h
voiced spirants	v	ð	z		ʒ			
resonants	m	n	l	ɹ	j	ŋ	w	
high vowels				i	ɪ		u	u
mid vowels				eɪ	ɛ	ə	ɔ	oʊ oɪ
low vowels				æ			ɑ	aʊ aɪ

(5) French sounds (International French)^{7, 8}

plain plosives	p	t						k
voiced plosives	b	d						g
plain spirants	f	s			ʃ			
voiced spirants	v	z			ʒ			
resonants	m	n	l	ɲ	j	ɥ	w	ʁ
high vowels					i	y		u
upper mid vowels					e	ø		o
lower mid vowels					ɛ	œ	ə	ɔ
nasal vowels					ẽ	œ̃		õ ã
low vowels					a			ɑ

(6) Arabic sounds (Modern Standard Arabic)⁹

plain plosives			t		tˤ	k	q	ʔ
voiced plosives	b		d		dˤ	ɟ		
plain spirants	f	θ	s		sˤ	ʃ	x	ħ h
voiced spirants		ð	z		ðˤ	ʁ		ʕ
resonants	m	n	r	l	lˤ	j	w	
high vowels					i	ii	u	uu
low vowels								a aa

⁷ en.wikipedia.org/wiki/French_phonology

⁸ en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Standard_French

⁹ en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Modern_Standard_Arabic

Handout 4. Sound change

In 1786, William Jones claimed that Latin, Greek, and Sanskrit descend from a single language, now called Proto-Indo-European (PIE). These data compare cognate and non-cognate words of English (E), German (D), Gothic (G), Latin (L), Greek (H), and Sanskrit (S).^{10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15}

(7)	E foot, D Fuß, G fōtus, L pēs, H poús, S pada	foot
(8)	E father, D Vater, G atta, L pater, H patér, S pitā	father
(9)	E three, D drei, G þreis, L trēs, H treís, S tri	three
(10)	E thou, D du, G þu, L tū, H sú, S tvam	you singular
(11)	E dog, D Hund, G hunds, L canis, H kúōn, S śvāna	dog
(12)	E heart, D Herz, G hairtō, L cor, cordis, H kardía, S hridaya	heart

During 1818–1822, Rasmus Rask and Jakob Grimm described how PIE plosives developed into those of Proto-Germanic (PG). These changes came to be called Grimm's Law.¹⁶

(13)	PIE	p	t	c	k	k ^w	>	PG	f	θ	h	h	hw
(14)	PIE	b	d	ǰ	g	g ^w	>	PG	p	t	k	k	kw
(15)	PIE	b ^h	d ^h	ǰ ^h	g ^h	g ^{w^h}	>	PG	b	d	g	g	gw

Franz Boas (1890) shows that Nuuchahnulth and Kwakwala are related. These data include some of Boas's cognate sets, as well as others that he did not mention.^{17, 18, 19, 20}

(16)	N ʔatuus, K tuʔu	star	(17)	N ʔa-, K ʔa-	stand
(18)	N ʔaʃii, K tʔaxəla	path, door	(19)	N qii, K gi-	long time
(20)	N suwá, K su	you	(21)	N -ʔaqsup, K -!aχsəm	woman
(22)	N pəpəii, K pəspəyʔu	ear	(23)	N -naak ^w , K -nuk ^w	have
(24)	N čičiči, K gigi	tooth	(25)	N -°iʔ, K -°iʔ	indoors
(26)	N taača, K təkí	belly	(27)	N -!as, K -!əs	outdoors
(28)	N ʔuʔpač, K ʔuʔpək	root	(29)	N -°is, K -°is	at the beach
(30)	N nup-, K nəm	one	(31)	N -qs, -!aħs, K -χs, -°əχs	in a vessel
(32)	N naq-, K naq-	drink	(33)	N -ćuu, K -ću	in a container
(34)	N yuʔi, K yu-	wind	(35)	N =ʔ, K =ʔ	future tense

¹⁰ W. Jones, 1824, Discourses delivered before the Asiatic Society... J. Elmes (ed.), London: C. S. Arnold.

¹¹ en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Indo-European_languages

¹² J. Wright, 1957, Grammar of the Gothic language, Oxford: Clarendon.

¹³ D. P. Simpson, 1959, Cassell's new Latin dictionary, New York: Funk & Wagnall's.

¹⁴ H. G. Liddell & R. Scott, 1889, Greek-English lexicon 7th ed., Oxford: Clarendon.

¹⁵ A. A. Macdonell, 1929, A practical Sanskrit dictionary, dsal.uchicago.edu/dictionaries/macdonell

¹⁶ en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Grimm's_law

¹⁷ F. Boas, 1890, Second general report on the Indians of British Columbia, London: BAAS, 10-163.

¹⁸ A. Werle, 2020-2026, Nuuchahnulth dictionary, Somass Valley Language Circle ms.

¹⁹ F. Boas, 1948, Kwakiutl dictionary, American Philosophical Society ms.

²⁰ F. Boas, 1947. Kwakiutl grammar with a glossary of the suffixes, TAPS 37(3), 202-377.

Handout 5. Wakashan sound changes

Gallatin (1836) called the Nuuchahnulth people ‘Wakash Indians’, after N *waakaas̥* ‘Bravo!’. Powell (1891) called the language family Wakashan. Here I describe some important Wakashan sound changes, following Sapir, Swadesh, Haas, Jacobsen, and Fortescue.^{21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27}

While South Wakashan (SW) vowels are conservative, Proto-North Wakashan (PNW) shortened long vowels, and neutralized short vowels to schwa /ə/. Modern NW long vowels are innovative.

- (36) PW a i u > PNW ə
 (37) PW aa ii uu > PNW a i u

Proto-Wakashan (PW) aspirated and voiced plosives were neutralized to /p t λ c č k^w q q^w/ in Proto-South Wakashan (PSW), and PW /g^y k^y ḳ^y x^y/ became PSW /č č̣ č̣̣ š/.

- (38) PW b d λ ɬ g^y g ɠ ɠ^w > PSW p t λ c č k^w q q^w
 (39) PW p t λ c k^y k^w q q^w > PSW p t λ c č k^w q q^w
 (40) PW p̣ ṭ λ̣ c̣ ḳ^y ḳ^w q̣ q̣^w > PSW p̣ ṭ λ̣ c̣ č̣ ḳ^w q̣ q̣^w
 (41) PW ɬ s x^y x^w χ χ^w > PSW ɬ s š x^w χ χ^w

The following data illustrate some sound correspondences in SW languages.^{28, 29}

- (42) M bukwač, D buwač, N muwač deer
 (43) M duuwiqs(u), D duwaqs, N nuwiiqsu father
 (44) M λuuk^waalii, D λuuk^walaa, N λuuk^waana doing wolf ritual
 (45) M quuy(a), D fuuy, N fuyi medicine
 (46) M qibaad, D ſibaad, N ſimin bellybutton
 (47) M xaxapxt(a), D xaxapxt, N haahuupa teaching

This table summarizes these correspondences, and their origins in Proto-South Wakashan.

- (48) PSW m ṃ n ṇ l ḷ y ỵ w ẉ q q^w q̣ q̣^w χ χ^w
 (49) N m ṃ n ṇ n ṇ y ỵ w ẉ q q^w ɳ ɳ ɬ ɬ
 (50) D b ḅ d ḍ l ḷ y ỵ w ẉ q q^w ɳ ɳ χ χ^w
 (51) M b :b d :d l :l y :y w :w q q^w q̣ q̣^w χ χ^w

²¹ A. Gallatin, 1836, A synopsis of the Indian tribes... Archaeologia Americana 2, 1-422.

²² J. W. Powell, 1891, Indian linguistic families of America north of Mexico, BAE annual report 7, 1-142.

²³ E. Sapir, 1911, Some aspects of Nootka language and culture, AA 13, 15-28.

²⁴ M. Swadesh, 1953, Mosan I: A problem of remote common origin, IJAL 19(1), 26-44.

²⁵ M. R. Haas, 1969, Internal reconstruction of the Nootka-Nitinat... IJAL 35(2), 108-124.

²⁶ W. H. Jacobsen, 1969, Origin of the Nootka pharyngeals, IJAL 35(2), 125-153.

²⁷ M. Fortescue, 2007, Comparative Wakashan dictionary, Munich: LINCOM Europa.

²⁸ M. Davidson, 2002, Studies in Southern Wakashan (Nootkan) grammar, UNY Buffalo diss.

²⁹ A. Werle, 2008-2026, Ditidaht-Pacheedaht dictionary, Somass Valley Language Circle ms.

Handout 6. Sapir 1911

Sapir (1911) summarizes what was known to that point about sound changes that had affected Nuuchahnulth and Kwakwaka'wakw since Proto-Wakashan, and argues further that the southern wolf ritual has a 'close historic connection' (p27) with the Kwakwaka'wakw winter ceremonial. Some words from pages 20-27 are rewritten here in modern alphabets for your reference.^{30, 31, 32}

(52)	N <i>caayiq</i>	N <i>ciqaa</i>	N <i>qaḥakʷiḥ</i>	N <i>nuuḥim</i>
	N <i>caacaayiqš</i>	N <i>maackʷiiŋiḥ</i>	N <i>čihwaasʔap</i>	N <i>qʷayaciḥnak</i>
	N <i>ḥuukʷaana</i>	N <i>meeʔiʔat</i>	N <i>kʷixaa</i>	K <i>hamača</i>
	K <i>ceqa</i>	N <i>maakʷayiiḥ</i>	N <i>ʔuušiiḥnak</i>	N <i>ciŋakʷim</i>
	K <i>cičəʔiqa*</i>	N <i>qiiqiišapqa</i>	N <i>hiʔiḥiik</i>	N <i>ʔaacšič</i>
	K <i>lugʷala</i>	N <i>ŋiiŋiḥ</i>	N <i>ḥaḥmaḥuuḥ</i>	N <i>ʔee</i>
	N <i>tupaati</i>	N <i>qaamiiḥ</i>	N <i>saaḥnak</i>	N <i>huuʔacuup*</i>
	N <i>ḥuukʷaanap</i>	N <i>hiiḥa</i>	K <i>walasʔəḥa*</i>	N <i>ʔuupaal, ʔupaal</i>
	N <i>hiihuu</i>	K <i>χʷiḥa</i>	N <i>pukmis</i>	K <i>baxʷəs</i>

The words N *caayiq*, *ciqaa*, K *ceqa*, *cičiqqa* are not obviously related. Concerning the N root *ma-* 'bite', compare N *maa*, *mačič*, K *qəka*, *qəxʔid* 'bite'. The asterisks on K *cičəʔiqa*, K *walasʔəḥa*, N *huuʔacuup* mean that I do not fully understand these words, and suspect typos.

Read Boas (1890: 10-11, 126-127), Sapir (1911). Questions follow.

1. What Wakashan and Salish nations does Boas focus on in his report? (10)
2. How many Wakashan languages did Boas and Sapir think there were? (103, 116, 15)
3. What similarities does Boas mention between Nuuchahnulth and Kwakwaka'wakw? (126-127)
4. What similarities does Sapir mention between Nuuchahnulth and Kwakwaka'wakw? (16-20)
5. What is the significance of N *ḥuukʷaana*, K *lugʷala*? (20-28)
6. Give examples of Nuuchahnulth hereditary privileges. (20-27)
7. Give examples of wolf ritual words based on the N root *ma-* 'bite'. (22-23)
8. Does Sapir demonstrate a 'close historic connection' between N, K ceremonies? (27-28)

³⁰ E. Sapir & M. Swadesh, 1939, Nootka texts... Philadelphia: Linguistic Society of America.

³¹ Boas (1948)

³² Werle (2020-2026)

Handout 7. Wakashan literature: Boas and Hunt

The Boas-Hunt texts, also called the Kwakiutl texts, are Kwakwala texts collected by Franz Boas and George Hunt, and edited by Boas. Hunt was sometimes acknowledged as a coauthor with Boas, and sometimes not. Berman (1994) reviews Hunt's contributions.³³

The Boas-Hunt texts were published in twelve volumes through the American Museum of Natural History (AMNH), Columbia University Contributions to Anthropology (CUCA), the Bureau of American Ethnology (BAE), and Columbia University Press (CUP).

(53)	Boas & Hunt	1902	AMNH 5(1)	Kwakiutl texts I
(54)	Boas & Hunt	1902	AMNH 5(2)	Kwakiutl texts II
(55)	Boas & Hunt	1905	AMNH 5(3)	Kwakiutl texts III
(56)	Boas & Hunt	1906	AMNH 10(1)	Kwakiutl texts: Second series IV
(57)	Boas	1910	CUCA 2	Kwakiutl tales
(58)	Boas	1921	BAE 35	Ethnology of the Kwakiutl I
(59)	Boas	1921	BAE 35	Ethnology of the Kwakiutl II
(60)	Boas	1925	CUP	Contributions to the ethnology of the Kwakiutl
(61)	Boas	1930	CUP	The religion of the Kwakiutl Indians I
(62)	Boas	1930	CUP	The religion of the Kwakiutl Indians II
(63)	Boas	1935	CUCA 26	Kwakiutl tales: New series I
(64)	Boas	1943	CUCA 26	Kwakiutl tales: New series II ³⁴

Compare these spellings in the Wakashan Meta-alphabet (WMA) to those provided by Berman.

(65)	WMA k ^w ək ^w ak ^w ə ^m , Boas kükwak!üm, Hunt kwəkwak!wəm	clan name	p493
(66)	WMA čičiqa, Boas ts!ē'ts!eqa, Hunt dzidziqa	winter dance	p494
(67)	WMA babak ^w a, Boas babak!wa, Hunt papagwa	warrior	p495
(68)	WMA ?o?əmlawisi, Boas âem ^l lawese, Hunt âem-lawese	and it is said just	p496

Read Boas & Hunt (1902: 3–4), Berman (1994). Questions follow.

1. Whom did Boas consult, in addition to Hunt? (3)
2. Was Hunt Kwakwakawakw? (483-484)
3. How did Hunt's marriages affect his life and work? (486-489)
4. How does Berman contrast Boas and Hunt's ethnographic practices? (488-491)
5. What is Berman's evidence for Hunt's ability in Kwakwala? (491-492)
6. Define the terms *transcription*, *grammaticality*, *style*, and *lexicon*. (492-497)
7. Define the terms *obstruent* and *sonorant* (resonant). (499-501)
8. What do Emma Hunt's observations tell us about George Hunt's Kwakwala? (507-508)

³³ J. Berman, 1994, George Hunt and the Kwak'wala texts, *Anthropological Linguistics* 36(4), 482-514.

³⁴ I repeat this reference from Berman (1994). I have been unable to find the book myself.

Handout 8. Wakashan literature: Sapir, Thomas, and Swadesh

The Sapir-Thomas texts are Nuuchahnulth texts collected by Edward Sapir and Alex Thomas, but similarly to George Hunt, Thomas was not acknowledged equally with Sapir. The texts were published in six volumes through the Linguistic Society of America (LSA), the International Journal of American Linguistics (IJAL), and the Canadian Museum of Civilization (CMC). They were edited by Sapir, Swadesh, Arima, Klokeid, Robinson, and Kammler.

(69)	Sapir & Swadesh	1939	parts 1–3	LSA	Nootka texts
(70)	Sapir & Swadesh	1955	parts 4–8	IJAL	Native accounts of Nootka ethnography
(71)	Sapir et al.	2000	part 10	CMC	Tales of extraordinary experience
(72)	Sapir et al.	2004	part 9	CMC	Legendary hunters
(73)	Sapir et al.	2007	part 12	CMC	The origin of the wolf ritual
(74)	Sapir et al.	2009	part 11	CMC	Family origin histories

South Wakashan stories include at least three genres.

(75)	N	verb: himwiča	noun: himwičaqʷak	folktale, myth
(76)	N	verb: ?aʔiičaʔin	noun: ?aʔiičaʔinʷak	ancestor story
(77)	N	verb: ʔiiqʰuk, ʔiicʔiiqʰa	noun: ʔuyaqʰmis	history, narrative, news

These are some important words from the reading, with their roots. What do these roots mean?

(78)	ʔumʔ–	ʔumʔiiqsu ‘mother’, ʔoomni (ʔoomʔi) ‘O Mom’
(79)	naʔaq–	naʔaqak ‘baby’, naʔaqnakʂiʔ ‘have a baby’, naʔaqpaʔu ‘cradleboard’
(80)	ʰis–	ʰisnaq ‘vampire’, ʰiʔiis ‘drinking blood’, ʰiiʔiiʰ ‘going after blood’
(81)	qaʰ–	qaʰak ‘dead’, qaʰʂiʔ ‘die’, qaʰsaap ‘kill’, qaʰqaʰa ‘dying repeatedly’
(82)	qaʰ–	qaʰkʷaʔiʔ ‘group dies off’, qaʰkʷaʔiʔ ‘dying off’, qaʰkʷaʔap ‘killing off’
(83)	kʷis–	kʷistuup ‘extraordinary’, kʷiikʷiisithinʔas ‘other end of village’

Read Sapir & Swadesh (1939: 9–19). Questions follow.

1. Describe the organization of this volume. (5-7)
2. Why do Sapir and Swadesh call the volume ‘long delayed’? (9)
3. Compare the genres described in the introduction to those identified above. (10)
4. What is the structure of Nuuchahnulth syllables? Give examples. (13)
5. Why is the boy’s father not mentioned? (14)
6. Why is *kaaʔuucʂiʔlukʷitqas* ‘my former grandchild’ in the past tense? (15)
7. What is the purpose of the loon passage? (17)
8. Is this story just an etiology, or does it convey a moral or other message? (14-19)

Handout 9. Sapir, Thomas, and the phoneme

Edward Sapir contributed significantly to the concept of the phoneme, which is a foundational unit in phonology. Alex Thomas, in turn, influenced Sapir's thinking:

Alex's orthography, as is natural, is phonologic in spirit throughout and it is largely from a study of his texts that I have learned to estimate at its true value the psychological difference between a sound and a phoneme. (Sapir 1933, 1963: 54)^{35, 36}

Some of Sapir's examples follow. I have adapted Sapir's transcriptions to the Island alphabet and the IPA. Page numbers refer to his 1963 paper. Some key comparisons concern short /i/ in *hisiik*, *hisaa*, single and double /s ss/ in *λasaλ*, *k^wissila*, and glottalized /p̚ m̚/ in *p̚apii*, *maamiiqsu*.

(84)	S63: 55	/i/	hɪs:i:k ^h	hisiik	via
(85)	S63: 55	/i/	ħɛs:a:	hisaa	bleeding
(86)	S63: 55	/s/	tʃəs:ətʃ ^h	λasaλ	stand on beach
(87)	S63: 55	/ss/	k ^w ɪs:ɪtʃ ^h	k ^w issila	do different
(88)	S63: 56	/p̚/	p̚əp̚'i:	p̚apii	ear
(89)	S63: 56	/m̚/	ʔma:ʔmɪəq ^h su ^h	maamiiqsu	older sibling

Sapir's experiences with Thomas and other L1 speakers of American languages influenced the recommendations in Herzog et al. (1934), in which six authors including Sapir, Swadesh, and Haas proposed symbols like *ʃ*, *ʔ*, and the following, most of which are still used today.³⁷

(90)	labialization	ex.	p ^w b ^w t ^w d ^w k ^w g ^w	instead of	p ^w b ^w t ^w d ^w k ^w g ^w
(91)	palatalization	ex.	p ^y b ^y t ^y d ^y k ^y g ^y	instead of	p ^y b ^y t ^y d ^y k ^y g ^y
(92)	nasalization	ex.	^m p ^m b ⁿ t ⁿ d ^ŋ k ^ŋ g	instead of	mp mb nt nd ŋk ŋg
(93)	affricates	ex.	ʃ λ c ʒ č ž	instead of	tʃ dl ts dz tʃ dʒ

In the words of Herzog and his coauthors (1934: 629):

A suitable orthography for... a given language should provide a unit symbol for each phoneme, i.e., for each psychologically unitary sound, even though such a phoneme can be analyzed into two or more sounds from the strictly phonetic standpoint.

A comparison of Sapir's transcription of Nuuchahnulth in 1924 versus 1939 evinces a stark contrast between his phonetic and phonemic approaches to writing American languages.³⁸

³⁵ E. Sapir, 1933, La réalité psychologique des phonèmes, *Journal de Psychologie*... 30, 247-265.

³⁶ E. Sapir, 1963, The psychological reality of phonemes, in D. G. Mandelbaum (ed.), *Selected writings of Edward Sapir in language, culture and personality*, Los Angeles: U California Press. 46-60.

³⁷ G. Herzog, S. Newman, E. Sapir, M. Haas, M. Swadesh & C. Voegelin, 1934, Some orthographic recommendations, *American Anthropologist*, new series 36, 629-631.

³⁸ E. Sapir, 1924, The rival whalers, *IJAL* 3(1). 76-102.

Handout 10. Wakashan literature: Wild Woman

The reading below involves a character who appears in various mythologies of the Pacific Northwest. She is a big woman who lives in the woods, carries a basket on her back, and kidnaps children. Her Wakashan names include M *qaqʔawacaaʔaʔ*, D, N *ʔiʔiʃsuʔiʔ*, N *ʔiyikaʔamu*, *maʔliuʔhas*, *niipit*, K *ɬunuqʷa*, W *ʔəɬi*, H *ʔáʔa*, X *ɕáʔqikəla*, *ɕáʔkəməla*. I call her Wild Woman.^{39, 40, 41}

If you want to read more about Wild Woman, she figures in Sapir-Thomas text 21, and in stories on the Nakwala-Gwatsala and Wuikala FirstVoices archives.^{42, 43}

We will ask and discuss to which of these genres the Wild Woman story belongs.

- | | | | | |
|------|---|----------------|---------------|------------------------|
| (94) | K | verb: nusa | noun: nuyəm | folktale, myth |
| (95) | K | verb: nəwiʔa | noun: nəwiləm | family myth |
| (96) | K | verb: ɕəkaʔəla | noun: ɕəkaləm | news, narrative, story |

Some of the names from the reading are written here in the WMA.

- | | | | |
|-------|-----------------------|---------------------------------|--------------|
| (97) | wəyʷuqʷəməyi | the very first ones | BH02: 86, 93 |
| (98) | ʔodi | Kodi, a personal name | BH02: 86 |
| (99) | ʔidiʔilakʷ | she who will be made a princess | BH02: 86 |
| (100) | hamanikʷila qəʔχasəmʔ | nightmare bringer nest mask | BH02: 92 |
| (101) | kʷənχʷəlasuʔgʷilakʷ | she who will be sought after | BH02: 93 |
| (102) | ɬunuqʷa gigəməya | dzunuqwa chief | BH02: 93 |

Read Boas & Hunt 1902: 86–93, *The Dzō'noq!wa*. Questions follow.

1. What is the purpose of the taboos observed by the young woman? (87)
2. Describe the stout woman's different way of speaking. (88)
3. What can we conclude from the careful description of regalia? (89)
4. How does the word *ɕiɕiqa* (ts!ē'ts!ēqa) concern Sapir (1911)? (93)
5. Why does the chief give away the skins? (93)
6. Is this story any more than an etiology explaining the status of the *wəyʷuqʷəməyi*? (93)
7. How do the meanings of names relate to the point of the story? (see above)
8. Compare this story to another Wild Woman story. (see above)

³⁹ www.firstvoices.com/hailzaqvla

⁴⁰ N. Lincoln & J. Rath, 1986, Phonology, dictionary and listing of roots and lexical derivatives of the Haisla language of Kitlope and Kitimaat. Ottawa: National Museums of Canada.

⁴¹ Charles Murphey (pc.) shares Haisla *ɕáʔkəməla* 'Wild Woman'.

⁴² www.firstvoices.com/wuikala

⁴³ www.firstvoices.com/nakwala-gwatsala

Handout 11: Written assignments

This course involves two kinds of written assignments, summaries and papers. The syllabus gives some general guidelines for these. This handout expands on those guidelines.

A summary gives the main idea of an article or other reading, with some supporting details. It is impossible to include every detail, so you must think carefully about what to include, and what to omit. The summary should say both something about the big, and something about the small. That is, it should give an idea of the article's structure and parts, then focus on selected details. There are at least two general approaches. You might introduce the topic with one or two interesting examples to encourage further reading. Alternatively, the summary can be an index to many subtopics, helping the reader find whatever part they are interested in.

In this course, a paper is an essay about some aspect of Wakashan linguistics. That is, it describes the topic, then makes some point about it. Following are several suggestions for finding a paper topic. I strongly encourage you to run your ideas for paper topics by me, so that I can help you find a manageable topic that will fit within the relevant length.

- ▶ Compile a set of illustrative words, and explain their structure and teachings.
- ▶ Develop and explain a cognate set that illustrates a sound change.
- ▶ Take a generalization from Jacobsen (1979), Werle (2010), Inman & Werle (2025), or other technical paper, and provide concrete examples to illustrate the pattern.
- ▶ Analyze a language pattern using linguistic theory.
- ▶ Find and present evidence to support or refute claims made about a pattern.
- ▶ Develop a learning resource to help a layperson learn and understand a pattern.
- ▶ Develop and present an interlinearization of a previously unanalyzed text.

The following general recommendations apply both to summaries and to papers.

- ▶ Be objective.
- ▶ Make your purpose clear in the introduction.
- ▶ Cite your sources. Any style is fine, but be clear and consistent.
- ▶ Do not plagiarize.

Please submit written assignments as pdfs, in 11-12 points, and single-spaced. Please include page numbers, a wordcount, and your name. Name the file as follows.

- ▶ File names for summaries: Surname-LING-301-summary-1
- ▶ File names for papers: Surname-LING-301-paper-1

Your first three assignments should be about 1–2 pages, and your final paper 2–4 pages. These lengths assume about 500 words per page, but the right length will depend on your topic, layout, and other considerations. I will mark quality over quantity.

You may not interview anyone for these assignments, because our course does not have human ethics approval, but you can cite oral sources as personal communications (pc.).

Handout 12: Wakashan sentences

The following parses show that Kwakwala (K), Ditidaht (D), and SENCOTEN (sən't[ɑθən] (S) are typically predicate-initial. By contrast, European languages tend to be subject-initial. What do you notice about words and word parts meaning ‘the’?

(103) K kʷidzəkwi da nə'ange.
 kʷis -°əkʷ =i =da R~ nəge =∅
 snow-topped = D3 = the PL~mountain = D3
 The mountains are snow-topped. (LH, FirstVoices)⁴⁴

(104) D kʷisqeeʔsa dučʔiʔbadx̄aq.
 kʷis -qiʔ -!as =!a dučiʔ -b̄adx̄ =!aq
 snow-topped-topped = REAL.3SG mountain-PL = the
 The mountains are snow-topped.

(105) D ʔix̄kʷa šačkaapx̄aq.
 ʔix̄uk-!a šačkaapx̄ =!aq
 red -REAL.3SG sea.urchin = the
 The sea urchin is red.

(106) S NEŹIM TFE XIWE.
 nəkʷim tθə χix̄wə
 red the sea.urchin
 The sea urchin is red. (IM, FirstVoices)⁴⁵

The preceding diagrams are interlinear parses. That is, they show the structure of words and sentences by segmenting (that is, breaking, parsing) them into morphemes (meaningful parts), and then glossing (defining) those parts between the first and last lines, hence the term *interlinear*.

Inman & Werle (2025) propose the Wakashan Glossing Rules (WGR) as a standard. The following Makah (M) example clarifies the structure of interlinear parses according to the WGR.⁴⁶

(107) M 1. datum daaʔpadačits ʔiyax̄ax̄ bituulii
 2. segmentation daaʔ -L.padač = (b)it = s(i) ʔiyax̄(a)-(x̄)x̄ bituulii
 3. glosses watch-around = PST = REAL.1SG at -LK Victoria
 4. translation I was sightseeing in Victoria. (J79: 112) (IW25: 8)⁴⁷

In the following handouts, we will look in more detail at the structure of Wakashan words and sentences, using the Wakashan Glossing Rules and the Skeletal Model.

⁴⁴ www.firstvoices.com/kwakwala

⁴⁵ www.firstvoices.com/sencoten

⁴⁶ Inman & Werle, 2025, The Wakashan Glossing Rules, Wakashan Papers 1.

⁴⁷ Jacobsen, 1979, Noun and verb in Nootkan, Victoria: BCPM.

Handout 13: Wakashan glossing

interlinear glosses

are sometimes English paraphrases

but sometimes are abbreviations.

The Wakashan Glossing Rules (WGR) are based on the Leipzig Glossing Rules (LGR).
See the last two pages of Inman & Werle (2025) for lists of LGR and WGR abbreviations.

Inman & Werle (2025)

() The Wakashan Glossing Rules

basic conventions:

() edge symbols (– = ~) are repeated on lines two and three.

() glosses consisting of multiple words are separated by periods (ex...)

What is inflection?

Read Inman & Werle 2025: 1–5, 84–85.

As an exercise...

identify all of the abbreviations in examples...

Read Inman & Werle 2025: 14–20, 28–30. What do the following glosses mean?

(108) $guk^w\acute{a}l\acute{a}l\acute{a}?\acute{e}da\ galesida\ \acute{d}zawad\acute{a}?\acute{i}nu\chi^w\acute{i}\ la\chi\ w\acute{a}\chi\acute{i}da\acute{c}i...$

$guk^w -la = \acute{a}a(?) = i = da\ gale = sida\ \acute{d}z. = i\ la = \chi\ w\acute{a}\chi\acute{i}da\acute{c}i = \emptyset$

house-CT = H = D3 = ART first = OBL.D3.ART D. = EU at = ACC.D3 Wexidatsi = D3

The first of the Dzawade-inuxw lived at Wexidatsi... (BH02: 86)

The following sentence is segmented for you. Gloss its parts. Hint: start by identifying and glossing the content words (*chief, child, daughter*). Then identify and gloss the inflection.

(109) $\acute{h}aw\acute{i}l\acute{i}twe?\acute{i}n\ \acute{t}a\acute{n}a\acute{n}ak\ \acute{h}aak^waa\lambda uk.$

	$\acute{h}aw\acute{i}l\acute{i}$	$= (m)it$	$= we?\acute{i}n$	$\acute{t}a\acute{n}a$	$-nak$	$\acute{h}aak^waa\lambda$	$= uk$

There was a chief who had a daughter. (HG, SS39: 14)

*

Handout 14: Wakashan inflection

the Skeletal Model

Kwakwala inflection

Nuuchahnulth inflection

- inflection
- SW mood
- NW determiners

(2) ʔuucaḥtaksa ḥicwisa naʔaḡnakšičaʔ meʔičqacʔisuk.

	ʔuucaḥtaksa	ḥic	-wisa	naʔaḡnakšičaʔ	meʔičqac	= ʔis	= uk
		pregnant	-by.accident	have a baby	boy		

Then she got pregnant and gave birth to a boy.

(3) muučičnakḥʔaʔweʔin qahnaakaʔ k^wiik^wiisithinʔasʔi...

	muučičnakḥʔaʔweʔin	qahnaakaʔ	k ^w iik ^w iisithinʔasʔi...

Four days after someone died at the other end of the village

Handout 15: The southern wolf ritual

Building on Sapir (1911) and Sapir & Swadesh (1939), Ernst (1952) describes how the wolf ritual was practised by the Quileute, Makah, and Nuuchahnulth people.⁴⁸

Read Sapir & Swadesh (1939: 178-183), *Frank Williams' wolf ritual experience*. Questions follow.

1. Should we talking about this, or is it too private?
2. Were girls initiated into the wolf ritual, or just boys?
3. What is the overall purpose of the wolf ritual?
4. What is the purpose of the imitative dances (*?uušii'nak*)?
5. How do we know that the ceremony is partly pretend?
6. What observances mark the biting away (*mee?ʔl*) and the following year?
7. What are some special words that are used only for the wolf ritual?
8. How old was Frank when this happened?

⁴⁸ Ernst, 1952, *The wolf ritual of the Northwest Coast*, Eugene: The University Press.

Handout 16: The Kwakwakawakw winter ceremonial

Our main sources will be Boas (1890, 1897) and Umista (2026). Be aware that Boas (1966) presents some of the latest information on this topic.^{49, 50, 51}

exhibitions.bgc.bard.edu/storybox

(110)	K	bā'xus	bax ^w əs	people, secular	B97: 418, B48: 117
(111)	K	ts!ä'qa, ts!ē'ts!eqa	čeqa, čičiqa	winter ceremonial	B97: 418, B48: 221
(112)	K	yä'wix ^y ela	yewixəla	host a ceremonial	B90: 62, B48: 49
(113)	K	me'əmgwat	mi?əmg ^w at	seals	B66: 174, B48: 142
(114)	K	ğwē'ğwədza	g ^w iG ^w əɟza	sparrows	B66: 174, B48: 328
(115)	K	hā'mats!a	hamača	cannibal dance	B48: 87

social rank, ceremonial rank (gens, gentes, class)

How do dances differ by tribe? (70...)

Read Boas (1890: 62-73), umistapotlatch.ca/potlatch-eng.php. Questions follow.

Pages refer to Boas (1890).

1. Compare the presentations of Kwakwakawakw ceremonies in our sources.
2. Did the hamatsa really eat corpses? (B90: 65)
3. Compare the terms *ceremonial* and *potlatch*.
4. How do heredity, rank, and initiation count in the winter ceremonial? (63-64, 71)
5. Explain the terms *mi?əmg^wat*, *g^wiG^wəɟza*, *hamača*. (62-65, 71)
6. What are the duties of the *yewixəla*? (62-63, 71-72)
7. How are new members initiated into the various societies? (71-73)
8. What is a *łaq^wa* 'copper'?

⁴⁹ Boas, 1897, The social organization and the secret societies of the Kwakiutl Indians, in the Report of the U.S. National Museum for 1895, Washington: Government Printing Office, 311-738.

⁵⁰ Boas, 1966, Codere (ed.), Kwakiutl ethnography, Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

⁵¹ U'mista Cultural Society, 2026, Living tradition: The Kwakwaka'wakw potlatch... umistapotlatch.ca

Handout 17: Chinuk Wawa

In 1805, when Meriwether Lewis and William Clark arrived at the mouth of the Columbia River, they encountered the beginnings of a trade language that came to be called Chinook Jargon or Chinuk Wawa (CW). A Clatsop man said (116) to Clark about his rifle.⁵²

- (116) CW ʔush məskit, wik kəmtəks məskit.
 good musket not know musket
 It's a good musket. I don't know (this kind of) musket. (Lang 2008: 15)

Following are some important dates in the development of Chinuk Wawa.

- (117) 1778 Captain Cook visits Yuquot (yuk^waath, Friendly Cove) in Nootka Sound.
 1805 William Clark encounters Chinook Jargon on the Columbia River.
 1811 Fort Astoria is established on the Columbia.
 1825 Fort Vancouver is established on the Columbia.
 1857 The Grand Ronde reservation is established in Oregon.⁵³
 1875 Chinuk Wawa speakers number around 100,000.⁵⁴
 1891 Father Le Jeune founds the Kamloops Wawa, a Chinuk Wawa newspaper.⁵⁵

Scholars conjecture that Western sailors brought some Nuuchahnulth words to the Columbia, where they were augmented by Chinook, English, and French. This precursor is called Nootka Jargon. Although Nuuchahnulth words in CW are few, they are frequent and important.⁵⁶

- | | | | | | | | |
|-------|---|-------------|------------------|---|----|----------------------|-----------------|
| (118) | N | ʔuucsma | woman | > | CW | ʔuchmən | woman |
| (119) | N | ʔaʔaʔis | child | > | CW | tənas | child, small |
| (120) | N | muwač | deer | > | CW | mawich | deer |
| (121) | N | ʔuʔ | good | > | CW | ʔush | good |
| (122) | N | pišaqa | bad | > | CW | p ^h ishak | bad |
| (123) | N | mamuuk | weaving, working | > | CW | mamuk | do, make |
| (124) | N | ʔatwaa | paddling | > | CW | ʔatwa | go |
| (125) | N | wawaa | saying | > | CW | wawa | say, word |
| (126) | N | ʔaʔaʔičš | examining | > | CW | nanich | see |
| (127) | N | kaamatʔaks. | I know. | > | CW | kəmtəks | know |
| (128) | N | maakuk | buy | > | CW | makuk | buy |
| (129) | N | ʔaʔuyi | trade, exchange | > | CW | huyhuy | trade, exchange |
| (130) | N | wik | not | > | CW | wik | not |

⁵² George Lang, 2008, *Making Wawa*, Vancouver: UBC Press.

⁵³ en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Grand_Ronde_Community

⁵⁴ J.V. Powell & S. Sullivan, 2006, *Chinook Jargon*, thecanadianencyclopedia.ca

⁵⁵ en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kamloops_Wawa

⁵⁶ Confederated Tribes of the Grand Ronde, 2012, *Chinuk Wawa: As our elders teach us to speak it*.

Handout 18: Chinuk Wawa etymologies

The numbers, pronouns, and other core words of Chinuk Wawa are Chinookan in origin.

(131)	CW	tilixam	person, friend	CW	nayka, nsayka	I, we
	CW	kənim	canoe	CW	mayka, msayka	you, you all
	CW	łaxayam	poor, hello	CW	yaka	he, she, it
	CW	tsəqw	water	CW	łaska	they
	CW	təmtəm	heart, think	CW	ukuk	this, the
	CW	ixt, makwst	one, two	CW	k ^h apa	at, in, to, from

Chinuk Wawa got many nouns and verbs from English and French.

(132)	E	man	man	>	CW	man	man
(133)	E	cold	cold	>	CW	k ^h ul	cold, year
(134)	E	Sunday	Sunday	>	CW	santi	Sunday
(135)	F	la bouche	the mouth	>	CW	lapush	mouth
(136)	F	courir	run	>	CW	kuri, kuli	run
(137)	F	puis	then	>	CW	pi	and

The important word *potlatch* was borrowed from Nuuchahnulth into CW and back again.

(138)	N	pačič	give a potlatch gift (Compare <i>hini</i> , <i>łuyii</i> 'give'.)
(139)	CW	pałach, palach	give
(140)	N	pałaač	potlatch
(141)	N	łiičuu, łii?ił	hosting, attending a potlatch
(142)	K	pəsa, pəs?id	flatten, host a potlatch (B48: 126)

Jacobs (1936) presents several CW texts. Read Robertson's (2020) edited version of the text *Sametl*, as told by Saanich elder Thomas Paul. Questions follow.^{57, 58}

1. Where is qeýə (Keya)? See *Sametl*, Robertson footnote 22.
2. Where are x^wáałəp (WJOŁEŁP) and łəwəłəx^w (ŁÁU, WELNEW)? See *Maple*.^{59, 60}
3. What is the significance of the hauling and jumping in paragraph 4? (3-5)
4. Why does Sametl take the wolf cubs? (3, 5)
5. Why does Sametl tie cedar bark onto the wolf cubs? (6-7)
6. What do these words mean in French and Wawa? *dileit* (*dret*), *kuli*, *pi*, *lapot*, *lima*
7. What are some new English borrowings in this story? What words did they replace?
8. Are the fog and the tide characters in *Sametl*? See Robertson footnote 1.

⁵⁷ M. Jacobs, 1936, Texts in Chinook Jargon, UWPA 7(1).

⁵⁸ D. Robertson, 2020, Texts in Chinook Jargon collected by Melville Jacobs, Spokane ms.

⁵⁹ tsartlip.com

⁶⁰ wsanec.com