

Notes on Lushootseed problem

1. Skagit is a dialect of Lushootseed, which is a Salishan language spoken on the east coast of Puget Sound, in Washington state. URLs:
The Ethnologue: <http://www.ethnologue.com/>
Salishan languages: http://www.ethnologue.com/show_iso639.asp?code=sal
Lushootseed: http://www.ethnologue.com/show_language.asp?code=LUT
2. All Salishan languages, including Lushootseed, are *polysynthetic*. This means that they tend to have many morphemes per word, and that sentences often consist of one heavily inflected word. Polysynthetic languages make heavy use of morphology and relatively little use of syntax; they are at the other end of the typological spectrum from *analytic* languages, which make little (sometimes no) use of morphology, and heavy use of syntax. English is an analytic language.
Glossary of linguistic terms: <http://www.sil.org/linguistics/glossaryoflinguisticterms/index.htm>
3. Lushootseed has a *CVC root system*. This means that the roots of *open classes* (nouns, verbs, etc.) tend to be very simple in structure, usually consisting of a single syllable, with a consonant (or two) at the beginning, a vowel in the middle, and another consonant (or two) at the end. However, the words formed from these roots are not simple, since many other morphemes get added to the root. The first thing to do in this problem, therefore, is to identify the root in each sentence. Several of the CVC roots in this problem occur with -VC derivational suffixes, so that the unchanging part is actually two syllables long. One verb root (borrowed from Quileute, an unrelated Chimakuan language on the Olympic Peninsula) is actually three syllables long.
What is a root?: <http://www.sil.org/linguistics/glossaryoflinguisticterms/WhatIsARoot.htm>
What is an open class?:
<http://www.sil.org/linguistics/GlossaryOfLinguisticTerms/WhatIsAnOpenClass.htm>
Quileute: http://www.ethnologue.com/show_language.asp?code=QUI
4. Lushootseed does not have *tense*, but it has a very complex *aspect* system. Several different aspect markers can co-occur, but – like all morphology – they must occur in the correct order. Classes of aspect morphemes that occur in a specific position in the word relative to other aspect markers are called *positional classes*.
What is tense?: <http://www.sil.org/linguistics/GlossaryOfLinguisticTerms/WhatIsTense.htm>
What is aspect?: <http://www.sil.org/linguistics/GlossaryOfLinguisticTerms/WhatIsAspect.htm>
5. *Imperative* forms of a verb are used to issue orders, and are usually either uninflected or less inflected than other verb forms; if bare roots or stems exist anywhere in a language, they will often appear in an imperative.
What is imperative?:
<http://www.sil.org/linguistics/GlossaryOfLinguisticTerms/WhatIsImperativeMood.htm>
6. The term ‘adverbs’ is put in ‘scare quotes’ in the questions to indicate that it is not a very good name for the class of morpheme that it refers to. ‘Adverb’ is used to identify this class because the Lushootseed morphemes in the class translate into English adverbs, but they don’t work at all like English adverbs in terms of their grammar. **Hint**: Look for the s- that occurs with them. What other roots begin with s- in this language data? What could the function of s- be?
7. Unsurprisingly, there is internal structure in the word for ‘tomorrow’ (*ʔuʔuk^wačiləs*), but we don’t have enough data to determine what it is, so we must simply consider it a single word, for now.