

A woven basket with a complex geometric pattern in red, white, and black. The basket is made of woven fibers and has a rounded, shallow shape. The pattern consists of interlocking lines and shapes, creating a dense, textured appearance. The basket is centered in the image, and the text is overlaid on it.

Building the lexicon for reawakening languages

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Honoring traditional values in neologisms

Hupa metaphor: Life is a journey

Traditional terms:

- *minejit na'asiya* 'center his walking' ('middle-aged')
- *nayaseL* 'they are walking together' ('they are married')

Potential new term:

- 'they walked apart' > 'they got divorced'

Tlingit

ash wutusikáayp

‘we Skyped him’

1. Coin a totally new term

Potential Chitimacha neologism

text ('send a text message')

tef-t-

text-TZR

<x> = /ʃ/

'to text s.t.'

/teʃt/

tef- 'to text' (intransitive)

verb roots = CVC

-*t* = transitivizer

2. Borrow a word

Mohawk

wak-ate-wa'-nérvious

1sg.P-MID-DUM-nervous

'I'm nervous'

Chitimacha

kahpi

'coffee'

Navajo

gohwééh

'coffee'

3. Borrow a meaning: Close languages

‘newspaper’

Iñupiaq

tusaayugaa-t

receive.news-PL

maqpiġaa-t

paper-PL

Chitimacha

ni kimti

knowledge

naakxt

paper

‘womb’

Creek

hopuetak-hute

child-home

Chitimacha

nanx xah-i

child put_in-NZR

3. Borrow a meaning: Etymology

English

sacrifice

Latin

sacer ficere

‘make sacred’

Chitimacha

heji- ‘be holy, sacred’

quci- ‘do, make’

hejici- ‘sacrifice’

4. Extend the meaning of a term

Chitimacha

<i>xux kut</i>	'orange' (fruit)	>	'orange' (color)
<i>nabin</i>	'raw'	>	'green'
<i>kuuci</i>	'bonnet'	>	'woman's hat'
<i>dzantem</i>	'soft'	>	'light in color'
<i>heex paacpa</i>	'frybread'	>	'bread'

5. Follow a common pattern

<i>duskunkatsi hana</i>	'blacksmith shop'	('metal house')
<i>nakstihana</i>	'store'	('sale house')
<i>niikihana</i>	'hospital'	('sick house')
<i>nuukmahana</i>	'classroom'	('learning room')
<i>yaapahana</i>	'police station'	('police officer house')
<i>yaamahana</i>	'preschool'	('children house')
<i>guxtihana</i>	'restaurant'	('food house')

6. Derive terms from another part of speech

Verb > Verb	<i>gaste-</i> ‘be cold’	>	<i>gaspa-</i> ‘refrigerate’
Verb > Phrasal Verb	<i>gapt-</i> ‘grab hold of’	>	<i>qapx gama-</i> ‘hug’
Verb > Noun	<i>neemaq-</i> ‘teach’	>	<i>neemaam</i> ‘teacher’
Verb > Adjective	<i>yaq-</i> ‘grow’	>	<i>yaagi</i> ‘grown, adult’
Noun > Noun	<i>kima-</i> ‘believe’	>	<i>kimti</i> ‘reason’
Noun > Verb	<i>nakti</i> ‘a dress’	>	<i>nakti-</i> ‘to dress’
Noun > Phrasal Verb	<i>qaxinjada</i> ‘old man’	>	<i>kap qaxinjatma-</i> ‘grow old’
Noun > Adjective	<i>kipi</i> ‘meat, body’	>	<i>kipink</i> ‘physical’

7. Create a compound word

hanxaqa 'door' = *hana* 'house' + *xaq* 'mouth'
jaayup- 'sunbathe' = *jaqa* 'sun' + *yup-* 'bathe'
qatinahdzi 'size' = *qatin* 'large' + *nahdzi* 'small'

8. Use a description: Lone phrase

Western Apache

t'iis *bi-tl'áh* *tú* *'o-ljǫ́*
cottonwood POSS-below water inward-it.flows
'water flows inward underneath a cottonwood tree'

Chitimacha

duskunkatsi *getuyna* *hana*
metal they_usually_hit house
'house (where) they usually beat metal'

8. Use a description: Phrase + clitic

Navajo

[łóód na'agházh]-ígíí

'the kind of sore that grows around'

('ulcer')

8.1. Describe the physical characteristics

Dene Sųtiné

Color:	<i>sqt'ie</i>	'it is black'	('grayling fish')
Shape:	<i>bqlai</i>	'that which is round'	('button' > 'French')
Size:	<i>egóthécháe</i>	'its neck is big'	('sucker (fish)')
Similarity:	<i>ghınaze</i>	'little worm (pupa, maggot)'	('rice')

Choctaw

Material:	<i>iti chąnaha</i>	'wooden wheel'	('car, cart')
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8.2. Describe the action, sound, or result

Chitimacha

<i>dzintups</i>	'crumb-eater'		('pigeon')
<i>waaswaasmank</i>	'cricket'	(< <i>waas waas</i> 'noise a cricket makes')	
<i>jaaxaqa</i>	'hot mouth'		('rice')

8.3. Describe the purpose or function

Creek

vhakv em pvtakv

‘law’s foundation’

(‘constitution’)

Dene Sų́tiné

helk’édhi / t’elk’idhi

‘the thing that shoots’

(‘gun, rifle’)

9. Use associated concepts or things

Chitimacha

Ciqix Panq ‘Leaf Month’ (‘November’)

Dene Sų́tiné

bescho nené ‘big knife country’ (‘America’)

bqlai ‘that which is round’ (‘button’ > ‘French person’)

10. Use a metaphor

Dene Sųtiné

<i>gu sedak</i>	'worms are eating me'	('cancer')
<i>dekoth sedak</i>	'phlegm is eating me'	('I have a cold')
<i>shíratth'en sedak</i>	'heartburn is eating me'	('I have heartburn')
<i>ya sedak</i>	'lice are eating me'	('I have/am infested with lice')

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Huya!