



GRAMMAR NOTES – CONVERSATION: WHERE DID YOU GO?

English is often clear in distinguishing the past, present and future tense. There are extra words that help us recognize the tense, such as: *did*, where *did* you go?; and *will*, where *will* you go? Present tense can use the word *are* plus the suffix *-ing*, Where *are* you *going*?

In Lushootseed, one way to ask someone about going somewhere is as follows:

(1) čad k^w(i) ad-s-ʔuχ^w.

where k^wi your-nominalizer-go

‘Where did you go?’/‘Where are you going?’/‘Where will you go?’

The first word in (1) is the question word *čad* ‘where’.

k^wi is the second word, and is used when the certainty, location or existence of something is in question. In (1), *k^wi* is used because the speaker does not know your destination. In addition, the speaker might not know if you went, are going or will go anywhere. In (1), the /i/ in *k^wi* is in parentheses because the /i/ is often silent when *k^wi* occurs before the prefix *ad-* ‘your’. When this occurs, the /k^w/ merges with *ad-*, and is pronounced *k^wad-*. However, it is not uncommon for the /i/ to be pronounced, i.e, *k^wi ad-*.

Note that the last word in (1) is made up of three parts: *ad-s-ʔuχ^w*. *ad-* is a prefix that means ‘your’. *s-* is another prefix that is very common called a nominalizer. It turns a verb into a noun. It is similar to the English suffix *-ation* in the word *civilization*. *-ation* is a nominalizer that turns the verb *civilize* into the noun *civilization*. The *s-* nominalizer in (1) is followed by the verb *ʔuχ^w* ‘go’.

The literal translation of (1) is ‘where k^wi your-going’. Nothing in (1) tells you when this question is referring to. It can be asking about the past, present or future. The way a Lushootseed speaker knows the tense of a question like (1) is by context. If someone does not



GRAMMAR NOTES – CONVERSATION: WHERE DID YOU GO?

know the tense by the context of the conversation, the person asking the question can add a reference to the time within the question. For example, note the bolded parts in (2a-c):

(2) (a) čad kʷ(i) ad-s-ʔuχʷ ʔal tə tul'əɬdat.
 where kʷi your-nominalizer-go **on the yesterday**
 'Where did you go **yesterday**?'

(b) čad kʷ(i) ad-s-ʔuχʷ ʔal ti sləχil.
 where kʷi your-nominalizer-go **on the today**
 'Where did you go **today**?'

(c) čad kʷ(i) ad-s-ʔuχʷ ʔal kʷi dadatu.
 where kʷi your-nominalizer-go **on kʷi tomorrow**
 'Where are you going **tomorrow**?'

Lushootseed does have a future tense prefix *tu-*. It is used quite often and is only omitted when the future tense is very clear. In other words, questions like (1) and (2c) can occur, but these questions are preferred with *tu-* for clarity. When the future tense prefix *tu-* is used as a prefix in the question 'where did you go?', it is part of the verb. Note how it is used in (3) (in bold), and that it only has a future tense translation:

(3) čad kʷi **t(u)-**ad-s-ʔuχʷ.
 where kʷi **FUTURE**-your-nominalizer-go

'Where **will** you go?'/ 'Where are you **going to** go?'/ 'Where are you **gonna** go?'



GRAMMAR NOTES – CONVERSATION: WHERE DID YOU GO?

In (3), notice that the /u/ in *tu-* is in parentheses. The /u/ is often silent when *tu-* precedes the prefix *ad-* ‘your’. When this occurs, the /t/ merges with *ad-* and is pronounced *ʔad-*. However, it is not uncommon to pronounce the /u/.

In replying to the question, *čad k^w(i) adsuʔuʃ^w* ‘Where k^wi your-going?’, a way to reply is by saying the following (4):

	VERB		DOER		
(4)	<i>lə-ʔuʃ^w</i>	<i>čad</i>	<i>tx̣əl</i>	<i>ti</i>	<i>ʔələdalʔtx̣^w</i> .
	PROGRESSIVE-go	I	to	the	restaurant

‘I went to the restaurant.’/‘I am going to the restaurant.’/‘I will go to the restaurant.’

Note that the verb is the first word of the sentence followed by the person (*čad* ‘I’) doing the action. The person or thing doing the action is called the DOER. For sentences, Lushootseed prefers a VERB-DOER word order.

The *lə-* prefix on the verb expresses progressiveness. It is commonly used with verbs that describe movement from point A to point B. In (4), it expresses a progressive movement of going. More about *lə-* will be discussed in more detail in a later lesson.

In (4), *tx̣əl* means ‘to, toward, for’. More will be discussed about this word in a later lesson.

In (4), notice that after *ti* ‘the’, the destination occurs (*ʔələdalʔtx̣^w* ‘restaurant’). This word was only inserted as an example, but any noun can be used in its place.



GRAMMAR NOTES – CONVERSATION: WHERE DID YOU GO?

As in (1), note that there is nothing in (4) that expresses the tense. The tense of me going to the store is understood by the context of the conversation.

For future tense, the *lə-* prefix on the verb in (4) can be replaced with *tu-*. See how *tu-* is used in bold in (5).

	VERB			DOER	
(5)	tu- ʔuχʷ	čəd	txʷəl	ti	ʔələdəlʔtxʷ.

FUTURE-go I to the restaurant

'I **will** go to the restaurant.'/'I am **going to** go to the restaurant.'/'I am **gonna** go to the restaurant.'