Three Texts in Golden Lake Algonquin

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The three texts in Golden Lake Algonquin that are the subject of this paper\(^1\) were all collected in September of 1985 during my eighth and most recent visit to Golden Lake. The first two texts had been recounted to me in English on several occasions; the last text was, to me at least, completely new.

All three texts were first written out by my consultant, Mrs. Sara Lavalley. Due to her failing eyesight, she experienced some difficulty reading her own writing but was reluctant to record the texts in Algonquin relying solely on her memory. As a result, I copied each text over in large capital letters, using Mrs. Lavalley’s spelling and relying on her for the interpretation of hard-to-read graphs and sequences of graphs. Following this, Mrs. Lavalley did several readings of each text. I then made a phonetic transcription of each reading of each text, selected the reading with the smallest number of pauses, false starts, corrections, and so forth, and went over it word by word with Mrs. Lavalley, incorporating her comments, additions, and emendations into a more or less final version of each text along with her suggested free translation into English.

The texts that are presented here are thus the end product of a rather lengthy process: beginning with an original written version which was subsequently recopied in a slightly modified form, there were several readings of each text, a phonetic transcription of each reading, and, finally, a verification session with my consultant of the best rendering of each text. Because of this, I am confident that these texts are substantially accurate, although

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I am not naive enough to believe that they are in any sense perfect. Remaining problems can probably be ascribed in large part to two factors. First, of course, are the shortcomings of my interpretation due primarily to my limited knowledge of the language and to my inability at times to elicit maximally helpful responses. Second, and of perhaps equal importance, is the fact that Golden Lake Algonquin is a dying language. My consultant, Mrs. Sara Lavalle, is one of a very small number of speakers of this dialect and uses her native language very infrequently, as her reliance on written versions of the texts amply attests. In spite of these limitations, however, I would like to stress that, to my knowledge, there are only about a dozen texts that have ever been collected at Golden Lake in the local dialect. In that light, the texts presented here assume a significance that is disproportionate to their small number and modest length.

**TEXT 1**

a. anišinâbê gî-awi-anôkîgoban(1), mū daş gâ-iţi-waniśing(2)
   Indian (he) past-go-hunted and then past-in a certain way-he be lost
   'An Indian went hunting, and then he got lost.'

b. gî-abi nopîmîng nanâţ(3) gî-gawâkâdazoj(4): bîţîśīg goj okanîn
   he past-stay in bush until past-he starve nothing but bones
   'He stayed in the bush until he starved (to death): nothing but bones.'

c. ogî-gawâtijîmân(5) manîdôn ji(6)-widôkâgoj(7) ji-bimisa’oj(8)
   he past-ask (him) spirit future-he be helped by him future-he fly
   'He asked the spirit to help him fly.'

d. apič daş gâ-gâskîtōj(9) ji-bimisa’oj, gâkîna goj gî-babâmosa?o(10)
   when so past-he be able future-he fly all EMPH he past-fly
   'When he was able to fly, he flew all over.'

e. awiyag anišinâbêg jîbâkwëwâj(11) iskodêng,
   someone Indians (they be) cooking at fire
   mû’i?e bâgak ji-bijîmândang(12)
   this Pagak future-(he) smell (it)
   'Whenever some Indians are cooking over the fire, Pagak is going to smell this.'

f. mû’i?e ji-widôkâgoj ji-bimâdijîj(13)
   this future-he be helped by it future-he live
   'This will help him to breathe.'
TEXT 1 – NOTES

(1) AI 3s. Independent Dubative Preterit.
(2) AI 3s. Conjunct Neutral.
(3) This might be nanāś; the second vowel does not seem to be nasalized, as it is in some dialects.
(4) AI 3s. Conjunct Neutral.
(5) TA 3s-3'. Independent Neutral.
(6) This preverb is used only before verbs in dependent clauses. Although its function is unclear, it appears to indicate some sort of non-volitional future tense. It might perhaps be better written çi-.
(7) TA 3s-3'. Inverse Conjunct Neutral.
(8) AI 3s. Conjunct Neutral.
(9) AI 3s. Conjunct Neutral.
(10) AI 3s. Independent Neutral. The o preceding s is often dropped in this form, even in careful speech.
(11) AI 3p. Conjunct Neutral.
(12) TI 3s-3s. Conjunct Neutral.
(13) AI 3s. Conjunct Neutral. The usual gloss is 'live'.

TEXT 2

a. wîsâkêjâk(1) gi-awi-anokî(2)
Wiskejak  (he) past-go-hunt

'Wiskejak went hunting.'

b. zîsîban ogî-nissân(3)
ducks  he past-kill (them)

'He killed some ducks.'

c. ogî-zakaʔân(4) iškodê ji-gîizzasjâ(5)  ozişībiman
he past-light (it) fire  future-he cook (them)  his ducks

'He lit a fire to cook his ducks.'

d. ogî-ningwawẫn(6) gîzideg(7) bîngwîng
he past-bury them (which be) hot in sand

'He buried them in the hot sand.'

e. êta goj ozidan ogî-wâbândân(8)
only EMPH feet  he past-see(them)

'He could only see their feet.'

f. gîyâbaj gi-awi-anokî
again  he past-go-hunt

'He went hunting again.'
g. gā-bi-gīwēj(9) gī-giči-wī(ž)(10)-wīsini(11)
past-come-he go home he past-very-future-eat

'When he got back, he was very hungry.'

h. ogī-awi-nānān(12) ožīšibiman
he past-go-fetch (them) his ducks

'He went to get his ducks.'

i. bīžišig goj ēta ožīdensan atēniwan(13)
nothing EMPH only small feet be there

'Nothing but their small feet are there.'

j. awiyan ogī-gimōdimigōn(14) ožīšibiman
someone they-past-be stolen his ducks

'His ducks had been stolen by someone.'

k. mū daš minawāj gī-wī(ž)-wīsinij(15)
and then again- past-future-he eat

'And then he was hungry again.'

TEXT 2 – NOTES

(1) The a following s is often dropped in this form, even in careful speech.
(2) AI 3s. Independent Neutral.
(3) TA 3s-3'. Independent Neutral.
(4) TI 3s-3s. Independent Neutral.
(5) TA 3s-3'. Conjunct Neutral.
(6) TA 3s-3'. Independent Neutral.
(7) II 3s. Conjunct Neutral. This form is questionable: adjectives are usually based on changed conjuncts or on unchanged conjuncts preceded by a conjunct complementizer adjunct in Golden Lake. Neither is the case here.
(8) TI 3s-3p. Independent Neutral.
(9) AI 3s. Conjunct Neutral.
(10) This preverb indicates a volitional future tense. Why -ž sometimes occurs here is not clear to me, although it may be a reduced form of -izī 'in a certain way'.
(11) AI 3s. Independent Neutral.
(12) TA 3s-3'. Independent Neutral.
(13) II 3' p. Independent Neutral.
(14) TA 3-3'. Inverse Independent Neutral.
(15) AI 3s. Conjunct Neutral.

TEXT 3

a. bagwajininiwag babāmosēgwāban(1) nōpimīng
Little People (they) walked in bush

'The Little People were walking in the bush.'
b. ogi-wābamāwān(2) wīssākējākōn
they past-see (him) Wiskejak

'They saw Wiskejak.'

c. ogi-gagwejīmāwān(3) gišpin ji-wī-wīsininij(4)
they past-ask him if future-future-he eat

'They asked him if he was hungry.'

d. wīssākējāk ogi-gikēnimān(5) gi-gimōdimigoj(6)
Wiskejak (he) past-know (them) past-he be robbed by them
ozīšibiman
of his ducks

'Wiskejak knew his ducks had been stolen by them.'

e. ogi-nawajibinān(7) ji-bōzi'āj(8) jimāning
he past-catch them future-he launch them in boat

'He caught them to put them in a boat.'

f. ogi-bōzi'ān(9) gā wīn gégo abwī
he past-launch them NEG NEG paddle

'He put them in without any paddle.'

g. ogi-gānjwebinān(10) ji-ipidēnig(11) zāgā'iganing
he past-push it future-it slide in lake

'He pushed it so that it would slide into the lake.'

h. ogi-inān(12) bagwajiniwan : gigi(13)-wi(ż)-wīsinim
he past-tell (them) Little People you future-future-eat
gayē gīnawā nāmājī
also you later

'He told the Little People: “You, too, are going to be hungry later”.'

TEXT 3 – NOTES

(1) AI 3p. Independent Dubitative Preterit.
(2) TA 3p-3'. Independent Neutral.
(3) TA 3p-3'. Independent Neutral.
(4) AI 3'. Conjunct Neutral.
(6) TA 3s-3'. Inverse Conjunct Neutral.
(7) TA 3s-3'. Independent Neutral.
(8) TA 3s-3'. Conjunct Neutral. Gloss: ‘launch (them), make (them) embark’.
(9) TA 3s-3'. Independent Neutral.
(10) TI 3s-3s. Independent Neutral.
(11) II 3'. Conjunct Neutral.
(12) TA 3s-3'. Independent Neutral.
(13) The preverb -ga- is used before verbs in main clauses; it seems to indicate a non-volitional future tense.

REFERENCE

Dahlstrom, Amy