Part VIII

THE THANKSGIVING - PART ONE

A traditional act before any Iroquoian gathering is for someone to give the Thanksgiving address or the "opening" as it is often called. This is a part of the oral tradition and can be quite short or very lengthy depending on the speaker's skill and the occasion. It is not a memorized text but varies from speaker to speaker and from occasion to occasion. It involves the thanking of creation from the earth to the sky world and how much gets included is part of the variation. What follows is a list of one version of the parts of the world that are thanked. Later we will offer a simple way to turn this list into a short version of the thanksgiving itself.

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katyóhkwa the people
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yukhinulhá ohwátsya mother earth

(yukhi- she to us; -nulha- be mother to; o- prefix; -hwatsy- earth; -a suffix)

onekli?shúha? the grasses

(o- prefix; -anekl- grass; -i? suffix; -shuha? plural suffix)

áhsa na?tekutahnu·téle three sisters (corn, beans, and squash)

(ahsa three; na?te- partitive and dualic; -ku- feminine plural; -atahnutle- sibling)

aw\(hihte? \) strawberry

onuhkwatho·kú medicines

(o- prefix; -nuhkwat- medicine; -hoku plural suffix)

oyukwa⁹u·wé tobacco

(o- prefix; -yukw- tobacco; -a? suffix; -uwe- native or original)

kaluta⁹shúha⁹ trees

(ka- prefix; -lut- tree; -a? suffix; -shuha? plural suffix)

kutíli animals

(kuti- feminine plural prefix; -lyo- animal)

ohnekanusho·kú waters

(o- prefix; -hnekanus- water, -hoku plural suffix)

otsi[?]t^ha[?]shúha[?] birds

(o- prefix; -tsi?tha- bird; -? suffix; -shuha? plural suffix)

owela?shúha? winds

(o- prefix; -wel- wind or breath; -a? suffix; -shuha? plural suffix)

latishakayu·té·se? thunderers

(lati- plural prefix; -shakayute- thunder, -?se? serial suffix)

shukwa?tsiha otahala? elder brother the sun

(shukwa- he to us prefix; -?tsiha- elder brother, o- prefix; -tahal- sun; -a? suffix)

yukhihsótha? wehní:tale grandmother moon

(yukhi- she to us prefix; -hsot- grandparent, -ha? suffix; w- prefix; -ehni?tal-moon)

yotsistohkwa·lú stars

(yo- prefix; -tsistohkwal- star, -u- distributive suffix)

kayé niyukwé take tehutlihwatenyá tha? the four messengers

(kaye four; ni- partitive; -y- someone prefix; -ukwe- person; -?t- nominalizer; -ake counting verb; te- dualic prefix; -hu- they prefix; -at- reflexive; -lihw- tradition; -atenya?t- bring; -ha? serial suffix)

shukwaya⁹tísu

the creator

(shukwa- he to us prefix; -ya?t- body, -is(a?)- create; -u perfective suffix)

COMPLEX SENTENCES

Since an Oneida verb is essentially a clause, a sentence in Oneida is complex when it has more than a single verb in it. The syntax of the language helps specify the relation between the verbs. There are many possible relations, but here are a few basic types.

Adverbial subordination

In this type one verb expresses the time, place, manner, condition, comparison or extent of the other verb. In English we typically do this with subordinating conjunctions such as when, if, because, or until. Oneida has particles or combinations of particles that perform similar functions.

ta·t if if to·kát né tsi? because né aolí wa tsi? because (the reason that) né tsá kat tsi? the same as tsi? ni·yót tsi? the way that tsi? niyo·lé tsi? until, as far as tsi? niyosno·lé tsi? as soon as, as fast as kanyó when

Seldom in languages is there just a single way to express an idea and so there are alternatives to these particles. Consider, for example, several ways to express when. Besides the regular particle **kanyó**, there is a verb prefix called the coincident (see page 115) that can be used. Sometimes the subordination is implied rather than expressed as when the particle **on** then or now is repeated with verbs.

kanyó Ahatuhkályake? when he gets hungry
tshikeksá when I was a child
(coincident prefix tshi-)
oná wahatuhkályake? oná wahatekhu·ní when he got hungry, he ate

Complementation

Many verbs express relations about beings and objects, but many also express relations about events and situations. He wants some pie expresses a relationship between him and the pie, but he wants you to get her some pie expresses a relationship between him and an event of your getting her some pie. We can say that your getting her some pie is expressed by a verb that completes (is a complementation of) the verb want. English has a number of syntactic constructions for this type of complementation including a that clause, with or without the that expressed

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I hear (that) he's going hunting an infinitive clause
I want him to go hunting or an -ing clause
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I prevented him from going hunting.

Oneida also has several syntactic constructions for verb complementation. Here are four of them.

1. coordination

Sometimes two independent verbs are used without any coordinating particle and the complementation is simply inferred.

lothu'té wa'tyoha'léhte' he hears it yelled = he hears some yelling tahatáhsawa' wahatekhu'ni' he began he ate = he began to eat

2. particle subordination

The particle **tsi?** can be used like the English word *that* to mark a complement clause.

lonúhte tsi? wahatolátha?

washakohlo·lí· tsi? Ahatolátha?

lothu·té tsi? wahutolátha?

ka·túhe? tsi? wahatolátha?

he knows that he is going hunting

he told them that he will go hunting

he heard that they are going hunting

it means that he is going hunting

3. indefinite prefix

Many times the complement verb is expressed with the indefinite prefix a-.

washakohlo·lí· ahutolátha?

he told them to go hunting

they decided to go hunting

4. future prefix

The complement verb can also be expressed with the future prefix A-. wa?thotilihwayA·tá·se? Ahutolátha? they decided that they will go hunting

Here are some very common verbs that typically are used with complement verbs:

Relative clauses

Sometimes a sentence becomes complex because one of the nouns in it is described by another verb - a situation or event. We can start with a simple verb lóthale?

he is talking

and then add a noun to identify the pronoun lo- in the verb lóthale? (ne?n) Wilu Bill is talking

- or we could add a verb used as a noun to identify that pronoun lóthale? ne?n shakotátyahse? their spokesman (he speaks for them) is talking
- or we could describe that pronoun with another verb directly lóthale? ne?n ká·tho lanákle? the one who lives here is talking
- or by using the particles tsi? ka·y\u00e1\u00bc the one who.

 l\u00f3thale? tsi? ka·y\u00bf\u00bc k\u00e1\u00bc the one who lives here is talking
- The particles tsi? náhte? that which or whatever can be used for objects or abstractions. lothu té tsi? náhte? wa?kí·lu he hears what I said