

Wichita Narratives

Project for the Documentation of Endangered Languages

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pp. 257-269

TEXT ANALYSIS

The sample text presented below was chosen from among several because it is better understood than most and it contains a variety of tense, person, number, and adverbial forms, including some impressively long polysynthetic constructions. Moreover, it is a cute story, and was narrated smoothly and in good literary style (cf. the number of participles indicating parallel activity, the lack of 'fillers' or hesitation forms such as ickiri? and ka:kiri? which abound in conversation, and the paucity of events told out of order).

The format consists of two lines. The lines contain the following information:

line a: The Wichita surface structure form, punctuated parallel to its English counterpart.

line b: A free translation of the form.

Turtle, Buffalo, and Coyote

1. a. ka:ʔa:ʔa:kó:kha:rʔa
b. Once upon a time
2. a. kíkʔi:s khiʔas kiyakihiteʔecaki
b. turtle poor thing he was sitting at the edge, they say.
3. a. kiya:kiʔi:khíyaʔa hakihiʔiyaskwah.
b. he was wishing, they say to go across the water.
4. a. "ka:kiyaʔ isí:ʔa!
b. Somebody come!
5. a. iskirhiʔiyaskwa!"
b. Take me across the water!
6. a. ka:ʔa:ʔa:kíhi:ʔiké:sʔa né:rhirʔa
b. then along down in came buffalo
7. a. a:ko:kʔa "a:h neʔewá:r!
b. He said, "Hey, friend!
8. a. é:kiriʔ ha:waʔ nasí:wakharakʔas ?"
b. "What then are you talking about?"

9. a. "tatí:ʔikhiyaʔa hakihiʔiyaskwah," a:ko:kʔa.
b. "I am wishing to cross the water," he said.
10. a. "tiʔrih híriʔ iskiteʔe:ki
b. "Here then sit on top
11. a. nackwi:rʔicʔírih ," a:ko:kʔa né:rhirʔa.
b. Where my shoulder is," said Buffalo.
12. a. a:ko:kʔa kíkʔi:s "kíriʔ! keʔesawi:rʔictakwi;
b. said turtle, "No! You will shake your shoulder;
13. a. keʔeskiha:hanniwihi." "háʔwi:ʔ híriʔ
b. You will throw me into the water." "Okay, then
14. a. natí:ʔarihkiteʔerʔi:ʔarikírih
b. Where my horns stick out on top
15. a. harah isteʔerhí:kawa." a:ko:kʔa, "kíriʔ !
b. There go into the brush. He replied, "No!
16. a. á:h, kíriʔ! keʔesé:cʔiriyari hinníʔ
b. Oh, No! You will shake your head and
17. a. keʔeskiha:hanniwihi." "á:h, ti:ctawi::ʔi!
b. You will throw me into the water "Oh, it's hard!
18. a. háʔwi:ʔ, híriʔ, iskawa, natíriʔiskirikʔírih."
b. Ok, then, go in where my anus is."
19. a. hiriwaʔ na:hissah harah a:kikawa.
b. Then going, there he went into it.
20. a. hiriwaʔ nakhissah harah waʔ naka:ʔicakah
b. then going in, there now sitting inside
21. a. a:kíhiʔiyaskwa. hiriwaʔ nahité:tiskih
b. he went across the water. Then when he was getting onto the bank
22. a. nahiʔiyassissah, "haʔawí:ro:ʔ é:ka:ʔ hiriwaʔ
b. after crossing the water "Okay, then now where (is it) then
23. a. kiyakí:ctawi::ʔi hiriwaʔ hako:citih.
b. It was hard for him then to get out.
24. a. a:kíʔirakhann kíkʔi:s á:kiwicka:ʔa,
b. Suddenly, turtle thought,
25. a. "tiʔi híriʔ ickaʔac!" ka:kiriʔáre:rʔi
b. "this then let me eat it!" He didn't know what it was
26. a. nakaʔacskih nako:ke:hárih.
b. that he was eating deep inside him.

45. a. ka:ʔ híriwaʔniʔírhissah kʔíta:ks na:hissah
b. So then going off Coyote going along
46. a. é:h, ka:kiyáki:his. a:kiʔi:rakhánn
b. Oh, he was going along, far away. Suddenly
47. a. híriwaʔha:waʔ wéraʔ na:ciriye:sʔakhirʔi:raskih.
b. then too I guess he found his children.
48. a. ti:ʔ a:ʔákire:wa:r kíkʔi:s. hinniʔ
b. At once he set to work turtle. and
49. a. wá:cʔarʔa a:ko:kʔa, "é:kiriʔ há:waʔ, neʔewá:rʔ"
b. Squirrel said "What (is it) then, friend?"
50. a. kiyakiriwa:cá:hkwi
b. There was a big tree
51. a. hassiya:rhiʔi:rika:wih
b. with a branch hanging down over
52. a. nare:he:hárih.
b. where the creek is.
53. a. "tatí:ʔi:khíyaʔa tiʔi ʔaras hatakiccare:hih."
b. "I want this meat for me to put mine up on top."
54. a. a:ko:kʔa wa:cʔarʔa, "haʔwiʔ. itactate:ti."
b. said Squirrel "OK. Let me help you."
55. a. wa:cʔarʔa kiya:kiriwa:cʔarasarikitaʔahí:riks
b. Squirrel He brought the big quantity of meat up to the top, repeatedly
56. a. niya:hkwírih. hí::raka:h
b. where the tree is. Far off
57. a. a:kiriwa:cʔárasecare:hi. híriwa:ʔ kʔíta:ks
b. he put the big quantity of meat on top. then Coyote
58. a. na:ʔaskih niye:s kiyako:khátataʔariki
b. coming child they were following
59. a. hinniʔ naré:ʔakʔih. nachissʔaskih
b. and his wife when they arrived
60. a. í:ya:h! ká:kiriʔ kiyaki:ʔi. "é:h!
b. Oh! My! nothing there was. "Oh!
61. a. ká:kiriʔ wati:ʔi é:ka:ʔ wéraʔ
b. nothing there is left I wonder where he is?
62. a. té:riya:h icihirʔi:rasah!
b. He better watch out if I find him!

63. a. néʔaʔ kiyaki:cha:ris kʔíta:ks.
b. he was growing angry Coyote
64. a. khiʔas niye:s nire:rʔih
b. poor child the plural
65. a. khiʔaski:kihanteʔerʔas
b. poor ones were licking the ground
66. a. wa:cka:riksʔa na:ckitawa:hah.
b. blood clots those scattered around.
67. a. a:kiʔi:rakhann a:kiʔickhité:s nare:he:hárih
b. Suddenly he peeked over the edge of the creek
68. a. niya:rhiʔi:rika:wírih. wéraʔ chiyaré:sirih
b. Where the branch hung down over it. It seemed in plain sight
69. a. kirikiyakirhare:sʔi, hinniʔ
b. They were deep in the water, and
70. a. hi:ríka:ʔ i:ye:h akwithaʔ. "há:riʔ iskiriheʔecaki!
b. way off all the time they were above. "He is sitting in water!
71. a. hí:raka:h iskirihí:keʔecaki!" niye:s
b. way off he is sitting down in!" child
72. a. nire:rʔih. "té:riya:h!"
b. [it was] the plural. "He better watch out;"
73. a. a:ʔákiciye:sʔakwa:ri, "háʔwi:ʔ
b. He told his children, "OK.
74. a. ika:ʔ tiʔi hiʔiski:cikiwiki
b. rock this you all tie it around my neck
75. a. hinniʔ hiʔiskiha:hanniwihi.
b. and throw me in the water.
76. a. ha:rí:h hárah keʔeckwissskwa naheʔecakírih."
b. where he is there I will go + arrive where he is sitting in the water."
77. a. í:ʔi:h! ikaʔaki:cíwa:cʔika:rikiwiki.
b. Oh! Alas! They put a big rock around his neck.
78. a. a:ʔákiciye:sʔakwa:ri, "ha:s ʔata:cʔa
b. He told his children, "if manure
79. a. wahácshiceʔerʔáskih
b. when they come to the surface
80. a. wahí:cshiceʔeriya:skih
b. When they are floating around

81. a. keʔesa:kʔi:kha:rʔ né:rhirʔaská:hkaks
b. You will know the buffalo intestine
82. a. waʔaracackaʔaskih hinniʔ issiriʔ
b. They have been cut open and that kind
83. a. ke:ʔiki né:rhirʔasʔata:cʔa." haʔwi:ʔ híriwa:ʔ
b. they will be buffalo manure." OK. then
84. a. hiri:cʔika:ríkiwiskih hinni, hiraha:hanniwiskih
b. They, tying a rock around his neck and throwing him in the water
85. a. khiʔas wéraʔ a:kihi:ko:teʔes
b. poor thing I guess he drowned
86. a. kíkʔi:s hinniʔ wá:cʔarʔa, "hí:ró:h!
b. Turtle and Squirrel "Ha! Ha!
87. a. ariya:cʔiʔássi:sha:hanniwih! ariya:ciʔiʔassi:ssiyakʔaw."
b. They threw their father in the water! They killed their father!"
88. a. ka:kí:kiciwa:cʔiriki niye:s hinniʔ
b. Then they cried greatly child and
89. a. wiʔiyacʔasa:sko:raraʔe:ya:k
b. Mrs. Coyote
90. a. ka:khiʔáskiyakiʔiciʔiriki.
b. poor thing was crying.
91. a. a:ki:cé:ʔero:ckwa ni:ckwakhárisah
b. They left going along
92. a. ni:ri:há:skih. ísaʔ tikitawisʔi.
b. mourning thus it is that way.
93. a. ka:ʔa:wakháʔas kʔíta:ks í:ri:ha:ss
b. There are times coyotes they mourn
94. a. híriwa:ʔ hi:wasʔa ní:ʔi
b. Then the very ones they are
95. a. keʔiyákicʔiʔassi:shí:ko:teʔesíki.
b. who drowned their father, they say.