

Anishinaabe Bizindamoo Makak

Episode 1: July 15, 2021

Erik Redix (ER): Boozhoo Anishinaabedoog, gibizindaan Anishinaabe Bizindamoo Makak. Miskwaa Anang indizhinikaaz. Migizi indoodem. Odaawaa zaaga'iganing indonjibaa. Gichi-Onigamiing indaa. Ingikino'amaage Ojibwemowin Oshki Ogimaag Gikino'amaadiiwigamigong.

Welcome to Anishinaabe Bizindamoo Makak, a program featuring Ojibwe first-speakers telling stories in English and Ojibwemowin, the Ojibwe language. I'm your host Erik Redix and I am the Anishinaabe language director at Oshki Ogimaag Community School on the Grand Portage Reservation.

For inaugural program I'm happy to welcome Maajiigwaneyaash, Dr. Gordon Jourdain, Ojibwe language specialist for the Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Ojibwe. Maajii is originally from the Lac La Croix First Nation in Ontario and has taught Ojibwe immersion at the Waadookodaading Language Institute in Wisconsin and Duluth Public Schools. So, welcome!

Gordon Jourdain (GJ): Ahow, miigwech, boozhoo.

ER: The first thing I kind of wanted to mention was when we were talking about the program, kind of the concept, behind the name, "Anishinaabe Bizindamoo Makak," and you kind of talked me through that, so miigwech for that; and you also kind of shared a story about, growing up in, Lac La Croix and how, the bizindamoo-makak was kind of the main communication with the outside world. I wonder if you could start us off by talking about that a little bit.

GJ: Yeah, well, I'm glad to be part of the inaugural of Bizindamoo Makak here. I grew up in a little isolated community along the Minnesota and Ontario border just north of Ely, Minnesota. And we were isolated for a long time. And by isolation I mean by land transportation. We didn't get a road into the community until 1995. And long before that there was no other way that we could communicate with anybody other than by word of mouth with people traveling by; or other relatives going somewhere to other communities and that's how we were able to communicate with one another. As a matter of fact I used to do that for my grandmother in the later part of her life and her relationship with her sister that lived in Grand Portage and that will be another thing that we'll talk about later. But the community of Lac La Croix was totally isolated from everything: communication, any normal means of communication or transportation. One way of communication at the time was, for example, if anybody from the community left to go to Fort Francis, which was the closest big town that was there. And the way that we used to go out of Lac La Croix was to go by boat, by water, to Crane Lake Minnesota and then take our vehicles from there to Fort Francis. So as a child I was exposed to a lot of radio stations from Duluth, Minnesota, because back then we, the only way we communicated was by antennae, things that were sent through the antennae system that they used to have. We used to watch television that way. Later on, after, we got the radio. But it used to be such a big event when my parents would turn on the radio and we'd all gather there and listen to what was going on. As a

matter of fact, we used to listen to baseball. My father would listen to baseball, my brother would, and then, we used to listen to hockey during this time of the year when the playoffs are on. And it left a lot of . . . I think that's probably why I'm so imaginative is that I'll listen to somebody and my mind can see what they're talking about; see the person have to be very descriptive on what they were looking at. But anyway. A lot of those, communities around Fort Francis, within, probably, I want to say, like, maybe, a maybe 80 mile radius of that community Jiima'aaganing, Nigigoonsiminikaaning, Stanjikoming, Nagaajiwanong, all those different communities up there would have, would listen . . . probably listen to the radio in in Fort Francis and the CFOB, I don't know if they still have that.¹ They would have this radio show on the, on the bizindamoo-makak in the evening. I think probably like around six o'clock in the evening. And at my community, at my home, at my mother and father's home, we'd turn that radio on just to make sure that we heard any of our relatives sending messages so that we could relay them to other people that were in the community. And that . . . they would . . . they would say: "CFOB Message Center for those without normal means of communication." That was their line. So that's how, that's how vital that communication was. It was just an extension of how when somebody was leaving we'd ask them to relay a message for them. But this one was like, oh my gosh, for us over there, it was like high tech, high tech stuff to be able to listen to somebody over the radio but we couldn't reciprocate the communication, but at least we knew the whereabouts of our relatives. That's where the idea of Bizindamoo Makak came from. It's a nostalgic memory (and) but it was actually, it actually occurred during my lifetime. Today, of course, they have, after the advent of getting the road there, they have internet services there and phone, cell phones and everything else.

ER: I wonder if you could, maybe give us a little synopsis of that story in Ojibwemowin.

GJ: Yeah, of course, of course.

(6:57) Mewinzha iwidi he'iing a, ingii-tahi . . . ingii-tazhi-ombigi'igoo Kijiwanong izhinikaade ishkoniganens, oodena-ens. Gaawiin niminwendanzii izhinikaadamaan ishkonigan. Gii-oode . . . , oodenatoowag imaa anishinaabeg, Kijiwanong imaa izhinikaade, eni-izhi-kakijiwang he'ii aa, aa Nagaakwaani . . . , Nagaawaani-zaaga'igan maage Zhingwaako-zaaga'igan izhinikaade imaa eyaag, mii dash imaa eni-izhi-kakijiwang, mii imaa oodetoowaad ingi anishinaabeg.

Mewinzha dash imaa gii-onji-ikonizha'igaazowag, he'iing aa, he'iing imaa gii-ozhichigaadeg he'ii aa endazhi . . . endazhi-odaminod a'a waapishkiwed, mii imaa gaa-onji-ikonizha'ondwaa ingi anishinaabeg mewinzha. Gii-izhaawawag iwidi he'iing...aa... Kijiwanong, Jiima'aaganing...aa...minziwe go gii . . . gii . . . aa, gii-izhigozi'aawag, gii-izhigoziwag, dibishkoo go maajiiba'iwaanaawaad ini ekonizha'ogowaad imaa wii-ozhitoonid iwe he'ii Quetico Provincial Park gaa-izhinikaadeg a gaa-tanakiid mewinzha anishinaabe.

Mii dash imaa he'iing biitawe'ii imaa Kichi-mookomaanaki miinawaa imaa Zhaaganaashiiwaki mii imaa ayaamagak iwe he'ii zaaga'igaans. Mii dash he'ii gaawiin gegoo

ingii-aasiimin imaa ganage waasigan, nibi gaye biindig ji-ayaag waakaa'iganing, gaawiin ge aapiji kina awiya ogii-ayaasiin waakaa'igan, aanind igo ingikenimaag ingiw indinawemaagang waaginogaanan gii-endaawag enh. Miinawaa he'iin ogii-ozhi...wiinawaa go ogii-ozhitoonaawaan ini he'iin mitigo-waakaa'igaansan, gii-kizhizhawiziwig aapiji anishinaabeg.

Gaawiin memoch gii-on . . . , gii-ondawenimosiiwig ji-michi-oshitamawindwaa, gaawiin gaye gii-ayaasinoon he'ii ashandiwin gaa-izhinikaadeg noongom. Wiin igo awiya gii-kashkitamaazo gegoo wenji-bimaadizi'aad i wiji...odinawemaagana', wiijaanisa', kakina go. Gii-ako . . . , gii-oko-wii . . . , wiikodaadiwig ingi anishinaabeg imaa, imaa he'ii goda oodena-ens eyaag.

Mii dash iwe nakake mii gaa-inaadawi'owaad eta go gaan gegoon miikanan gii-ayaasinoon. Giishpiin awiya wii-izhaad iwidi beshiw imaa ezhi-oodenaansiwang, mii iwe goda Weskwejaako-zaaga'iganing gii-izhinikaade, miinawaa idi he'iing nawaj igo waasa Waanadaawangaag izhinikaade he'ii imaa gaa . . . , gaa-asindwaa ingi anishinaabeg gedanakiiwaad gewiinawaa. Mii sa imaa gaapi-onji'ayaad awe gaagii-oosiyaan imaa dash nimaamaayiban giipi-onji'ayaa Onamano-zaaga'iganing izhinikaade zaaga'igaan mii imaa gaapi-onji...gaa-tazhi-ombigi'inind awe gaagii-...aa...noosiban gaagii-wiijiiwaad ikwewan, mii awe gaa-ogiiyaan mindimoowenh.

Aapiji dash gegoo...gii-anishinaabemowag kakina, nayenzh igo gii-anishinaabemowag ingi...aa...noosibaan miinawaa awe goda gaagii-ogiiyaan mindimoowenh. Kakina go awiya gii-anishinaabemowag imaa he'iing Kakijiwanong gaan ganage awiya gii-shaaganaasiimosii wiikaa.

Mii dash owe nakake gaa-izhichigewaad ongo anishinaabeg giishpiin gegoo...mewinzha go gii-ayaadog owe nakake, mewinzha go gii-onjisin o'o waa-wiindamaadiwaad gegoo anishinaabeg. Mii dash i giishpiin kikenimaawaad awiya ingoji izhaanid mii i ezhi-gaganoonaawaad ge-ni-inaajimonid iwidi nakake ani-odisaad iwe odinawemaagana' ayaanid ingoji.

Maagizhaa ge bekaanizinid owiindamawaan ni awe, miinawaa eni-izhi-maajiiyaajimod iwidi nakake. Gekapii dash igo iwidi ezhi-oditaagod awe nakake waa-kakaganoonad gidinawemaagan ayaad iwidi pakaan ingoji. Gii-ayaa iwe aapiji gii-sana . . . gii-mishkawaa...gii-mishkawaa iwe nakake wii-izhi . . . wii-izhi-wiidookaadiwaad ingi anishinaabeg mewinzha. Amanjigo geyaabi ji-izhi-ayaagwen?

Mii igo giishpiin gii-gaganoonagwaa ongo indinawemaaganag iwidi Kijiwanong mii go ezhi-gaganoonagwaa, "Aaniish naa ezhi-ayaad ha'aa indinawemaagan bezhig a'a aaniish wiin ezhi-ayaad awe?" gi-gawejimaag aaniin ezhi-ayaawaad. Mii dash iwe minwedaagod aapiji mikwenimik awiya gidinawemaagan biidaajimotaagoyin. "Oo! Ingagwejimig a'aa goda gisayenh aaniin ezhi-ayaayin?"

Mii dash ezhi-wiindamawad awe gaabi-gaganoonik miinawaa dash ezhi . . . ingoding miinawaa waabamaad ini gisayenyan maagizha ge gidinawemaaganan ezhi-wiindamawaad

nakake. Aapiji dash mishkawaa iwe nakake ezhi-wiidookaadiwaad ingiw anishinaabeg. Gaganoonidiwaad iwe nakake, mikwenindiwaad, miinawaa weweni inenimaawaad ini wii-anishinaabemiwaan maagizhaa ge odinawemaaganiwaan.

Mii dash iwidi he'iing goda Waanadaawangaang, oodena imaa ayaamagad, mii imaa gii-miinindwaa ingi anishinaabeg mewinzha gewiinawaa gedazhi-bimaadiziwaad. Neyaashi imaa ayaamagad, ogii-makandwen dash awe gaa-waapishkiiwed, mii sa go ezhiwebizid minziwe iwe babaa-ayaad goda, babaa-gimoodid iwe anishinaabewaki. Ogii-kimoodimaa' i anishinaabe' imaa ayaanipan.

Mii dash imaa nakake gii-ayaag iwe he'ii goda endazhi-bizindam . . . endazhi . . . endazhi-gaagiigidowaad awiya, amanj ezhinikaadegwen iwe he'ii radio station ezhinikadeg gaan ingi-kendanzin ezhinikaadegwen iwe mashi. Mii dash ako he'ii naasaab igo gewiinawaa gaa-izhi-ozhitoowaagwen iwe nakake ge . . . ge-bizindamowaad awiya.

Miii dash imaa nakake anishinaabeg ogii-kikendaanaawaa iwe ayaanig. Mii go naasaab igo iwe gaa-wiindamawinaan, gii-aanike-wiindamaadiwaad iwe anishinaabeg. Gaye dash ogii-aabajitoonaawaa i bizindamoo-makak, ogii-izhinikaadan ako . . . ogii-izhinikaadaanaawaa ingi anishinaabeg imaa Kakijiwanong. Mii iwe gaa-aabajitoowaad bizindamowaad nakake...aa...gidochigewaad awiya maagizhaa ge odaminowaad i'iw zhooshkwaada'ewaad maagizhaa ge pakitejii'igewaad.

Mii imaa nakake nimbichi-bizindaamin, ezhi . . . ezhi . . . kashkawaadabiyaang ako baakaapikinang a'aw nindedeyinaaban, noosinaaban iwe nakake makakoons. Ezhi-bizindamaang kakina gegoo, nimbichi-bizindaamin eta go gaawiin inganawaabandanzimin. Nimbabizaanabimin dash, mii go imaa endanakamigiziwaad ingiye nookomisiban, nimaamaayiban maagizhaa ge gashkigwaazowag maagizha ge . . . aa . . . bizaan igo gegoo ezhichigewaag, gashkawadabiwag.

Mii dash imaa nakake giishpiin oodenaang awiya baabaa-ayaad, ezhi-izhaawaagwe imaa nakake eyaag iwe waakaa'igan endazhi-wiindamaagewaad awiya, ji-biidaajimotawaawaad ini odinawemaaganan. Naa ge ingoding, ingoding igo ayaa goda biidaajimo awiya, "Mii go jidagoshinaan, niizhigon apii inga-dagoshin." Geget! Mii eget apii dagoshing awiya. Mii dash imaa nakake wenji-bizindamowaad i'iw. Mii imaa wenji-waawiindamaadiwaad.

Wiinge dash ingii-kichi-maamakaadendaan ako iwe. Noongom dash niibiwaa gegoo odayaanaawaa: Giigido-biiwaapikoonsan odayaanaawaa miinawaa iwe waasamoo-asab ezhinikaadang anishinaabe. Kakina gegoo ayaamagad noongom wenji-gaganoonidiwaad ongo anishinaabeg.

Mii dash iwe wenising nakake gaganoonind awe gijichaagon, ezhi-manidoowaadiziin, wanisin iwe nakake giishpiin weweni wii-naanaagadawenimad, wii-naanaagaji-zhawenimad sa go gidinawemaagan. Mii imaa nakake ezhi-manidoowadizid gi-michi-gaganoonaa mootsad maage awiya ji-wiindamawaad gegoo.

Mii sa go naa iw minik.

ER: You touched on it a little bit in Ojibwe about how that word, bizindamoo makak, that root word, bizindan, bizindaw, how that kind of . . . has a little bit more of a layered meaning, or I don't know what the word is, but a little richer meaning (maybe that's what I'm looking for) than we think of like, to listen to someone. Is that right?

GJ: Gii a . . . gii-ayaawiyaan goda, gii-abinoojinwiyaan nakake mii go apane gaa-izhi-andawenimigooyaan weweni ji- . . . ji-bizindamaan gegoo e-zhichigewaad miinawaa ji-naanaagajitoowaan gego e-zhichigewaad ingi a'aa nookomisiban mii awe gaa-nitaawigi'id, Bepakwewidamook gii-izhinikaazo, haa'aan moonzoon ogii-odoodeminan. Miinawaa dash awe gaagii-ogiiyaan, waasisiin ogii-odoodeminan awe. Miinawaa dash haa'aa...indedeiyaban dash wiin Bizhiwan ogii-odoodeminan.

Mii dash owe nakake gaa-izhi-ombigi'igooyaan, weweni gegoo ji-naanaagajitoowaan apane, jii-dadiibaabandamaazowaan gegoo apane miinawaa gegoo ge-onji-kikendamaan. Mii dash igo ezhi-ayaad awe . . . ezhiwebizid awiya gii-abinoojiinwaadizid. Gaawiin igo daa-kishkawaadabisii memooch awiya mii go imaa ayaad, beshiw imaa babaa-ayaad, mii goo imaa wenji-bizindang a'a abinoojiinh gegoo. Mii dash imaa inakake wenji-kikendang a'a, haa'aa anishinaabe abinoojiinh.

Gaawiin memooch a bizaaninizha'waasii imaa ji-kashkawaadabid, mii wiin awe gaa-waapishkiiwed ezhichiged wii kino'amawaa gegoo ini anishi-, haa'aan goda abinoojiinyan. Mii imaa ezhi- . . . ezhi-aanikebi'aad gakina. Animikobiitaadiwag gaye, oganawaabamaan imaa animikobinid ini wiiji- . . . wiiji-gwiiwizensan. Mii dash imaa endazhi-gidaazod a'a gekino'amaaged, "Bizaanayaawak, bizaanayaawak, bizindawishiwak!" Gaawiin memooch ingii-igoosiimin, ingoding saa wiin igo ingii-pizaaninizha'ogoo, gii-giibaadiziwaad ingi indinawemaaganag, nisayenyag miinawaa awe nishiiminh gewiinawaa idi gii-tazhi-ombigiwag.

Mii dash owe inakake he'ii bizindamaa awiya, mii iwe ezhi- . . . mii imaa wenji-kikendaman wenen eyaawiyen, miinawaa aandi ayaayin, miinawaa wegonen gegoo eyaamagak weweni bindamaayin. Mii imaa dash ge iwe inakake dagosing iwe inakake he'ii gizhewaadiziwin imaa dagosin imaa giishpiin nakake aabajitooyin iniw gaagii-izhimiinig- . . . gaagii-izhi-maamiinigooyin inakake gezhi-nisidawaawiziyin gegiin anishinaabewiyin gegiin babaa-ayaayin omaa.

Babaa-ayaamagak gegiin imaa ezhi-manidoowaadiziyin owe he'ii goda giwiiyaw. Mii sa gaa-izhi-maada'ooninangid giinawind awe manidoo, weweni ji-inaadiziying, weweni ji-bizindamang gegoo. Mii dash wenji-ozhibii'igaadesinog iwe nakake he'ii Ojibwemowin ingoji. Mii giinawind owe gaa-ina'ooninangid a manidoo weweni ji-oizhishing owe nakake gitigwaaninaan ji-gagwe-minjimendamang kina gegoo.

Gaawiinch wiin igo awiyag, kakina awiya bezhig . . . bezhigod awiya kina gegoo odaaminjimendanziin. Memeshkod igo, bebangii, entashiwaad ingiw kakina Ojibwe-anishinaabeg, bebangii gegoo omikwendaanaawaa. Oganawendaanaawaa, gaa-apiichi-

pisikaagowaad owe nakake ezhi- . . . ji-nisidotamowaad iwe nakake ezhi-nisidawaawizid a'a anishinaabe.

Mii dash imaa maawandoo-ayaawaad maage ingoji mootsidiwaad ingi anishinaabeg, Mii imaa apii nakake mashkawaamagak iwe kakina oko-ayaawaad ingi anishinaabeg maamawisidoowaad i'i gewiinawaa gaa-izhibizindamaawaad megwaa imaa nakake gii-abinoojiinwiwaad. Biinash igo ani-kichi-ayaawid awiya nawaj niibiwa ani-mishkawaamagad iwe gaagii-izhinoondawad awiya gagiigidod anishinaabe mewinzham gii-abinoojiinwiwin.

Gaawiin eta go gi-bizindanzii gegoo weweni ji-michi-minawaanigoziyin giishpiin giigidochiged awiya, gaawiin eta go inaabadasinoo ini gitawagan. Gaawin ge eta go ini otawagan awiya onji-bizindamaasii, gishkiinzhigoon gaye, miinawaa giwiiyaw ezhi-kikendaman gegoo daanginaman, mii go imaa wenji-kikendaasoyin. Kakina go gegoo epogok gegoo, miinawaa ezhimaagok kina gegoo, kakina gegoo enikaagoyin imaa giibinjinaang. Mii imaa inakake ayaag i'iw inakake bizindamowin.

ER: So I was wondering if you could provide a little synopsis in English.

GJ: Yeah, hay. . . ah . . . the word "bizindam," the way that I understand it to be. Mii iwe nakake ezhi-nisodamaan: The community where I grew up, and by community I mean everybody that was involved in my upbringing, whether it was, direct or indirectly. And that's a profound thing in our Indigenous communities, mewenzha Anishinaabe, is the power of community and how that can shape the identity of the children that are immersed in that kind of space. When I was a child, geyabi abinoojiwiyaan, it was an expectation of me to . . . to be mindful of what was going on around in my environment. It could be the weather, it could be the birds, the animals, gakina gegoo, the water, the ceremonies that were happening, and the activity around gathering fish or, fleshing out a deerhide. I was expected to go be around, not amongst the activity, but around the periphery and listening to the dialogue or the discourse of the of the people that were engaged in all those different rich traditional activities in the community where I grew up. And my understanding of "bizindam" is that you use all of your senses. Gakina gegoo gaawiin eta go dash traditional five senses gaa-dazhindang a'a wemitigoozhi. Mii go kina gegoo i'i ezhi-kikendaman i'i ji-bimiwidooyin i'i gi-bimaadiziwin, the way that you carry yourself in the community and in your relationship with all those different elements of the environment. That's where you have "bizindam." Because all those . . . all those things that are that our manidoo made, gaa-gii-ozhitood aw gimanidoominaan, mii omaa wenji-gikinomaagowizing ingii-nawende, that is where we learn from and if we miss the teachings of those critical parts of, who we should be in, in developing our identity in that space then we're kind of out of balance . . . and to have certain consequences that go with, giishpin bizindaaziwaan gego ezhiwebag imaa agwajing manidoon, when you don't pay attention to all those teachings of the natural world that we live in as Anishinaabe people. So, when you think about it that way and when you grew up in a community that has a profound development of what it means to be community with all these things, they don't have to say anything to you to "bizindam," they

exude that themselves already. They, they are like that. So if the community and the people in it do not show you those things then you're kind of at a disadvantage on how you should be, how you should conduct yourself in different situations that arise in life. So the word "bizindam" does not necessarily just mean the ability to hear things, but to be aware of listening to the communication from other things that are in this natural world that that we were placed in as Ojibwe Anishinaabe people. Mii dash iwe "Anishinaabe Bizindamoo Makak" ezhinikaade. Of course people developed, because of that understanding of what "bizindam" is, and Ojibwe is an extremely descriptive and action oriented language, we actually did that word "bizindamoo-makak" to anything that you can listen to, right? But in this in this case, it's just a listening advice . . . device, I should say. It probably would be something that you would learn from if the knowledge that you gained from the people who were distributing that information, in that form were something that you wanted to really really incorporate into your own sense of your identity. So you also have the choice to just turn it off. But that is not so with a community of people and also with the environment. The environment continues long after our body has expired. So . . .

ER: And do you think, is it possible, I guess, that you know, that the term that you just said, the way to describe Ojibwe is that "Ojibwe is a very action-oriented language," do you think that's because the Ojibwe traditional lifestyle was so action-oriented? Like you described how you know starting from being just a little kid people had to watch, and observe, and it was just, you know, all those actions.

GJ: I think that's a great question and it has to do with a lot of what I was describing about, about our relationship with things and how we generally, in the overall philosophical thinking of Ojibwe thought, we are part of all that . . . all the growth and action that's happening around us in order for us to be . . . to actually take knowledge and things that are mindful of overall health and well-being we become part of that action. And in order to be a part of that action, in order to understand that our language evolved, developed, into something that is representative of the natural movement of the beautiful earth that we live in, the universe that we're at. As a matter of fact, the beginning of all things started because there was activity in the void of space where our creator started to imagine itself to be. So that is why Ojibwemowin is, I think, how I understand that, how it came to be, and why it is very useful as a descriptor of the phenomenon of Ojibwe bimaadiziwin. It's a deeper understanding of just, you know, the facade of speaking a scripted language.

ER: Miigwech for tuning in to Anishinaabe Bizindamoo Makak. Support for this program comes from the Grand Portage Band of Lake Superior Ojibwe and the Minnesota Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund. Our producer is Staci Drouillard. The theme song is by the Stonebridge Singers. Until next time, this is Erik Redix. Giga-waabamin!

Ojibwe Transcription by Gordon Jourdain

¹ At that time, CFOB was the call letters of the CBC radio affiliate in Fort Frances. It became a private radio station in 1973 and today broadcasts a classic hits format under the frequency 93.1 FM.