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Directional Preverbs in Ojibwe
and the Registration of Path

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Ojibwe has a small number of preverbs of high text frequency that refer to paths: *bi-* 'coming', *ani-* 'going', *bimi-* 'going along', and *bibaa-* 'going around'.[1]

(1)	preverb	example

(1a) *bi-* ... *miinwaa gii-bi-niisaandwed.* (Bl T 35.36)
'... and again he **came** climbing down.'

(1b) *ani-* *Shpiming ekoozwaad giw mtigoog gii-ni-pizwag giw zhiishiibag.* (Bl 38.11)
'The ducks flew **off** up as high as the trees.'

(1c) *bimi-* *Aazhibikoon **bimi**-inamo miikan.* (W, p. 84, line 22)
'The road runs **along** the cliffs.'

(1d) *bibaa-* ***Bbaa**-giimii bezhgoognzhii.*
'The horse is running **around** loose.'

Calling these preverbs DIRECTIONALS, I will discuss two general sets of their properties: their morphosyntax and syntactic distribution, and their meaning and usage.

MORPHOSYNTAX AND SYNTACTIC DISTRIBUTION

Each directional preverb has a corresponding initial form, *biid-*, *anim-*, *bim-*, *bibaam-*, respectively.

(2)   preverb   initial

(2a)   *bi-*   *biid-*
        bi-zhaad 'come'   **biij**batood 'come running'
        bi = iN-yaa-   **biid**-ibatoo-
        coming = to-go-   **coming**-run-

(2b)   *ani-*   *anim-*
        ni-zhaad 'go away'   **nim**batood 'run away'
        ni = iN-yaa-   **anim**-ibatoo-
        going = to-go-   **going**-run-

(2c)   *bimi-*   *bim-*
        bmi-yaad 'go by'   **bmi**batood 'run'
        bimi = ayaa-   **bim**-ibatoo-
        along = be_at-   **along**-run-

(2d)   *bibaa-*   *bibaam-*
        bbaa-dnizid   **bbaam**sed
        bibaa = daN-izi-   **bibaam**-ose-
        around = stay-   **around**-walk-

There are many morphemes in Ojibwe that have both initial and preverb forms. The choice between preverb form and initial is governed by principles that are not fully understood, and are probably largely lexical. Most motion finals take the initial form of directionals, e.g.,

(3a)   *-(i)batoo* 'run'
        bmibtood 'run'
        bbaambatood 'run around'
        biijbatood 'come running'
        nimbatood 'run off'

(3b)   *-aadagaa* 'wade'
        bmaadgaad 'wade'
        bbamaadgaad 'wade around'
        biidaadgaad 'come wading'
        nimaadgaad 'wade off'

There is one semantic quirk regarding *bim-* 'along'. As the initial in motion verbs it is bleached in meaning, such that the meaning of motion final plus *bim-* means has the meaning of the final alone, e.g.,

(4)   *bmaadgaad* 'wade', *bmaadhed* 'skate', *bmakzhiwed* 'paddle', *bmibtood* 'run', *bmibzod* 'fly', *bmikwed* 'leave tracks', *bmooded* 'crawl', *bmosed* 'walk', etc.

We will refer to *bim-* as the NEUTRAL INITIAL for motion verbs.

For the morphemes *bi-* and *ani-*, some motion finals allow, and in some cases even require, construction with preverb plus neutral initial or relative roots, rather than using the initial form, e.g.,

(5a)   *biid-/bi-*
        biidaadgaad 'come wading',
        biijbatood 'come running'
        but
        *biijbizod / **bi**-bmibzod* 'come flying'
        *bi-zhaad / ***biijaad*** 'come'
        *bi-bmosed / ***biidsed*** 'come walking'

(5b)   *anim-/ani-*
        nimaadgaad 'wade away'
        nimbizod 'fly off',
        nimbatood 'run away',
        but
        *nimsed / **ni**-bmosed* 'walk away'
        *ni-zhaad / ***nimaad*** 'go away'

The external syntactic properties of directionals are two – one dealing with the order of preverbs, the second dealing with relative root valences.

First, the directional preverbs appear in the second position in the preverb complex. They follow the tense/modal preverbs:

(6a)   ..., miinwaa **gii-bi**-niisaandwed. (Bl T35.36)
        '... and again he **came** climbing down.' (cf. *gii-* 'past')

(6b)   ... **ji-bi**-naadmawwaad ji-miigaan'gidwaa ... (Bl T31.24)
        '... **to come** help me fight them ...' (cf. *ji-* 'conj. future')

But they precede adverbial preverbs:

(7a)   **Bi-ndaso**-giiwed wnichiiwhigoon. (Bl S540)
        '**Every time** he **comes** home, she scolds him.' (cf. *(e)ndaso-* 'every time')

(7b)   Jibwaa niizhgon'gak **wii-bi-gchi**-nimkiikaa. (Bl T10.16)
        'Before two days have passed there **will be** a **big** thunderstorm.' (cf. *gchi-* 'much, very')

(7c)   ..., **bebaa-nda-nshiwejig.** (OLP 1.1.4)
       'those who were **going around looking to** kill people.' (cf. *nda-*
       'seeking')

The second syntactic property of directional preverbs we will discuss here has to do with relative root valences. Relative roots always license an extra argument in the clause they appear in.[2] When the initial or the verb root following the directional is a relative root, the preverb directionals can function as the complement of the relative root:

(8a)   *Mii dash giw mhiingnag gii-**bi-yaawaad**, ...* (Bl T35.43)
       'And then the wolves **came**, ...' (cf. *yaa-* 'be [there]')

(8b)   *Ddibew dash ngii-**ni-patoo**, ...* (Bl T3.2)
       'I **ran away along** the shore, ...' (cf. *patoo-* 'run to [there]')

(8c)   *Eni-**zhitgweyaag** ziibi.* (Bl T36.15)
       'Where the river **heads away**.' (cf. *zhitgweyaa-* '[the river] runs to [there]')

MEANING AND USAGE

The directionals fall into two groups, a deictic group, comprising *bi-* 'coming' and *ani-* 'going, away, off', and a path group, comprising *bimi-* 'along [simplex path]' and *bibaa-* 'around [complex path]'.

The deictics are anchored to a point of reference from which the coming and going is calculated, as is suggested by their glosses. The neutral anchor position is the location of the participant in focus at the relevant point of the text. In example (9), the speaker, a partridge chick, tells his mother where Nenabozh has gone, referring to Nenabozh's path as *ani-* 'away' with respect to where he, the chick, was at the time:

(9)   *Wgii-naan dash, "Ddibew gi-**ni-zhaa**."* (Bl T35.17)
       'So he said to [his mother], "[Nenabozh] headed **off** along the riverbank."'

The participant in focus can be the narrator, as in (10), where the work order comes (*bi-*) to the shop where the narrator is working at the time:

(10)   *Ngoding dash ggizheb gii-**bi-yaamgad** iw* order. (Bl T9.29)
       'Then early one morning, a work order **came**.'

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2.   The sole exception is in idioms; see Rhodes (2005).

As is familiar to those who work with deixis, the deictic anchor can be transferred to be the homebase of the participant in focus, as in (11) where the narrator describes his arrival at the well (lit., the place where we draw water), as being *ani-* 'away', i.e. from the place where he was staying:

(11)   *E-**ni**-dgoshnaan wiinaagmi iw nbiish e-ndhamaang.* (Bl T10.7)
       'When I got to the well, the water was dirty.'

In addition to deictic directionals, Ojibwe has an andative morpheme, *bi-*, historically related to the directional *bi-*. It can be distinguished from the directional *bi-*, not only in that it functions as an auxiliary preverb, but also because its deictic opposite is *awi-/awa-* rather than *ani-* and it has no initial form. For example:

(12a) ... *myagi-nishnaaben waa-**bi-nsigwaajin*** (Bl T31.19)
       '... foreigners (obv.) who would **come to** kill them.'

(12b) *Wa-waabndan wegdagwen nendwendaagdogwen.* (Bl T8.28)
       '**Go** see what they want.'

The differences between the andative *bi-* and the directional *bi-* are as follows:

(13) | *bi-* | directional | andative |
       |---|---|---|
       | initial | *biid-* | none |
       | opposite | *ani-/anim-* | *awi-/awa-/oo-* |

Now let us turn our attention to matters of usage. There is a class of productive uses of the deictic directionals *bi-* and *ani-* which occur with a small class of motion verbs in what could reasonably be called CLICHÉS. The meanings are compositional, but the individual constructs are so frequent as to warrant being considered lexicalized, hence the term cliché. The verb stems involved are *ayaa-* 'be [there], come to be [there]', *izhaa-* 'go [there]', *maajaa-* 'go', *giiwe-* 'go home', *dagoshin-* 'arrive', and *onjibaa-* 'arise from [there]':

(14a) *ayaa-* 'be [there], come to be [there]'
           bi-yaad 'come'
           ni-yaad 'go'

(14b) *izhaa-* 'go [there]'
           bi-zhaad 'come'
           ni-zhaad 'go'

(14c) *maajaa-* 'go'[3]
      ni-maajaad 'leave'

(14d) *giiwe-* 'go home'
      bi-giiwed 'come home'
      ni-giiwed 'go home'

(14e) *dagoshin-* 'arrive'
      bi-dgoshing 'arrive (coming)'
      ni-dgoshing 'arrive (going)'

(14f) *onjibaa-* 'arise from [there]'
      bi-wnjibaad 'come from [there]'

Note that the forms in (14a) and (b) are examples of directionals satisfying the valence of the relative verb root, as discussed above in connection with the examples in (8). The relative root in the form in (14f) does not have its valence satisfied by the directional.

     Another specialized usage of a directional involves the morpheme *ani-* 'away'. In a sizeable number of examples, *ani-* has the sense of 'stepwise'. Depending on the context, the most common glosses for this sense in English are 'along' or 'down', e.g.,

(15a) *Gakina ogii-**ni**-goji'aan.* (W, p. 20, line 12)
      'He tied them all, **one after another.**'

(15b) *Gye go mii gii-**ni**-bkahmowaad iw sabaab.* (Bl T 38.12)
      'And then they **went along** breaking the string.'

(15c) *Wgii-**ni**-waabmaan dash widi bnensan gidaatig nmadbinid.* (Bl T36.2)
      'He looked **down the line** where the partridge chicks were sitting.'

(15d) *Nnaazh go kina gii-**ni**-ggwejmaad ezhnikaaznid maa niibdeyaakbinid.* (Bl T36.5)
      'He went **down the row** asking each of them their names all the way to the end.'

     A further point about usage is related to this. The morpheme *ani-* 'away' also appears in future contexts:

(16a) *Ni-gnawenmishnaang niigaan giizhgadoon!* (Bl T 11.10)
      '*Bless us* in the days ahead!'

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3.   The combination *bi-maajaad* also occurs, but it is not common.

(16b) *Mii dash gii-boozyaan, gaa-shkwaa-giishpnadood iw mzinhigan ge nii waa-**ni**-aabjitooyaan ji-bmidaabaan'goyaan shkode-daabaaning.* (Bl T9.11)
      'Then I got on board, after he bought the ticket *that I would use* to ride the train.'

(16c) *... gye go giw sa kwewag iw gegoo wii-gkendmowaad iw niigaan waa-**ni**-mno-aabjitoowaad.* (Bl T23.2)
      '... and the women would learn things *that they could make good use of* in the future.'

A particularly clear instance is found in my fieldnotes where, in a discussion about weather, the consultant volunteered several semantically parallel sentences; those in (17) are future in sense, in contrast to (18):

(17a) *Mii go baamaa jiigyihaang **ni**-dbikak, ji-**ni**-dkeyaamgak.*
      'Then later, towards *evening*, *it'll get cold*.' (lit. 'as it becomes evening')

(17b) *Naangim go **ni**-dbikak, da-gzhaate.*
      'Usually it'll be hot until *it gets to be evening*.'

(18) *Mii go baamaa e-gmiwang, gii-dkeyaamgak.*
      'After *it rained*, *it got cold*.'

The difference between the sentences in (17) and that in (18) is that, in addition to futurity, those in (17) have a sense of change over time. From this one can surmise that pure future usages like those in (16) are generalized from ones like those in (17). These latter are metaphoric from the specialized usage of stepwise action exemplified in (15), based on a time-is-space metaphor.

     In addition to the temporal usages of *ani-* in future-tensed clauses, there are temporal senses of *ani-* in past tense contexts, e.g.,

(19a) *Eshkam dash ngii-**ni**-nsitaan iw nokiiwin.* (Bl T8.23)
      'Little by little *I came to understand* the work.'

(19b) *Mii go zhaazhi go eshkam **ni**-mngagmaag wi, **ni**-mchaag go naa wi nbiish.* (OLP 1.3.44)
      'Already *the lake was getting bigger and bigger*, the water *was expanding*.'

(19c) *Mii gii-**ni**-noojimod.* (W, p. 22, line 9)
      'He had gotten **progressively better**.'[4]

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4.   Gloss in the original: 'Now he was all well.' This original translation does not reflect the crucial point implied by this sentence: that the sick man recovered by stages.

(19d) *Gegaa dash go kina e-ni-nsaad mii iw gii-gnjibhiwenid.* (Bl 31.38)
  'Then *he killed* almost all of *them one by one* as they were fleeing.'

These examples show that the extension of the 'stepwise' sense of *ani-* to temporal situations precedes the extension to a sense solely connected to the future.

The fact that *ani-* has a stepwise sense explains its common cooccurrence with *eshkam* 'gradually, more and more', e.g.,

(20a) **Eshkam** *dash ngii-ni-nsitaan iw nokiiwin.* (Bl T8.23) (=19[a])
  '**Little by little** *I came to understand* the work.'

(20b) *Mii go zhaazhi go* **eshkam ni-mngagmaag** *wi,* **ni-mchaag** *go naa wi nbiish.* (OLP 1.3.44) (=19[b])
  'Already the lake *was getting bigger and bigger*, the water was expanding.'

(20c) *Aanii-sh ddan'ziwaad go iidig zhiwi,* **eshkam** *giiwenh go maanda ni-mchaadig.* (OLP 1.5.56)
  'As they remained there, **little by little** [the island] *got bigger*.'

Having surveyed the specialized types of directional usage, let us turn to the last, most difficult, usage. In such cases, directionals occur in clauses in which they add no information beyond that which is already in the frame of the sentence, e.g.,

(21) *Megwaa bminaazhhigeyaan, gegaa go naa ngii-bmi-nbaa.*
  '*I almost fell asleep (going along)* driving home.'

The frame that sentence (21) refers to – one of driving – makes it clear that the driver was going along, *bimi-*, while nearly falling asleep. This use of a directional adds no information to the sentence. Such PLEONASTIC uses of directionals are fairly common. For example:

(22a) *Nga-bmi-naabgwehgoo zaam zhiibzoyaanh.*
  '*I'll get caught (going along)* if I drive too fast.'

(22b) *Ngii-ni-aabnaab gmaapii e-ni-yaayaan.* (Bl T3.3)
  'Afterwards I looked back **away** *where I had been (away)*.'

(22c) *Maapii-sh giiwenh iidig gaa-ni-aanwitood wa, ... mii sa iidig gii-ni-nbod.* (OLP 1.1.37-39)
  'After a while he could **go no further**, ... *he died (heading away)*.'

The clearest cases of pleonastic directionals are like those in (21) and (22), where the verb sporting the directional is not a verb of motion, nor one, like *aabnaabid* 'look back' in (22b), that implies a directionality,

A particularly telling group of examples is found in a text about the Thunderers collected by the Odawa Language Project. In it a sickly man is chosen by the Thunderers to help them kill a monster. They take him with them up to the clouds. The excerpt in (23) tells how they got him there:

(23a) *Aanii-sh mii sa gii-zaagjiitmawaad.*
  'So they took [the sickly man] outside.'

(23b) *Mii-sh giiwenh egod, ...*
  'And [one of the Thunderers] told him, ...'

(23c) *"Naagdawaabmishin ...*
  '"Follow me with your eyes, ...'

(23d) *... ji-ni-dkokiiyaan go, mii go zhiwi ji-bi-dkokiiyan."*
  '...where I step (**heading away**), you step there (**coming**)."'

(23e) *Aanii-sh mii sa gii-ni-dkokiid zhiwi eni-zhaanid go, ...*
  'So [the sick man] stepped (**heading away**) where [the Thunderer] went (**heading away**), ...'

(23f) *... mii go ge-wii go ni-naagdawaabmaad ni-dkokiinid.* (OLP 1.4.22)
  '... he followed him (**heading away**) with his eyes where he stepped (**heading away**).'

(23g) *Mii sa go gii-ni-mbishkaawaad iidig aankodong.* (OLP 1.4.23)
  'So they walked **away** upwards into the clouds.'

Once the directionality becomes relevant in (23d), every clause in the passage is marked for directionality on every verb that is a motion verb for which direction might be relevant that takes place during motion, in spite of the fact that the four actual instances of *ani-* in (23e) and (f) are redundant.

This observation leads to the following analysis: at the point in the text that speaker deems directionality relevant to the frame, all the clauses connected with that frame and involving motion must be registered for directionality. Note that this principle clearly distinguishes pure directional uses of directionals from other uses. The specialized uses do not trigger pleonastic copies. This is exemplified for cliché uses in (24a), for 'stepwise' *ani-* in (24b), and for the future sense in (24c), discussed above.

(24a) cliché
*Mii dash gii-**ni**-maajaad ezhtigweyaag iw ziibi.* (Bl 35.9)
'Then he **left** heading along the river.'

(24b) 'stepwise' *ani-*
*Wgii-**ni**-waabmaan dash bnensan niibdeyaakbinid.* (Bl 35.2)
'He looked **down the line** where the partridge chicks were sitting in a row.'

(24c) future *ani-*
*Mii maanda niigaan da-**ni**-giizhgak ge-mno-aabjitooyan.* (Bl 31.13)
'This is what you **will** make good use of in the days ahead.'

As one might expect, the clichéed usages can also optionally trigger pleonastic directionals. This option is demonstrated by a telling pair of sentences found in two versions of Nenabozh and the partridges told by Andrew Medler to Bloomfield (1958). The sentence from the first telling is given in (25a) (= [24a]). The corresponding sentence from the second version is given in (25b). The first has no pleonastic directional, the second nearly identical sentence does:

(25a) *Mii dash gii-**ni**-maajaad ezhtigweyaag iw ziibi.* (Bl 35.9)
'Then he **left** heading along the river.'

(25b) *Mii dash miinwaa gii-**ni**-maajaad ziibi **eni**-zhitgweyaanig.* (Bl 36.8)
'Then he **left** heading along the river.'

Pleonastic directionals are also suppressed, as one might expect, in parentheticals. For example the full version of the excerpt cited in (22c) is given in (26). Notice that it contains a long parenthetical (26b-e) which has no directionals, even though the burning through referred to in (26b) and (26e) happens as the man is trying to get away, and would normally be marked for directionality.

(26a) *Maapii-sh giiwenh iidig gaa-**ni**-aanwitood wa.*
'After a while he _could go no further_.'

(26b) (*Aanii-sh mii go naa iidig gii-zhaabwaakzod zhiwi wbaknaang, ...*
'He was burned through at the back.'

(26c) *... gii-bgaskjiiwind wi ziisbaakod.*
'He had been slapped [on the back] with the sugar.'

(26d) *Gwetaankamig naa gaa-piichi-gzhideg wi ziisbaakod, nendaajiihang wa.*
'The sugar that she was stirring was terribly hot.'

(26e) *Mii go iidig gii-zhaabwaakzod.*)
'He was burned through'

(26f) *Mii sa iidig gii-**ni**-nbod.* (OLP 1.1.37-39)
'_He died (**heading away**)_.'

Pleonastic preverb usage is not limited to directional preverbs. In (27) the preverb *noonde-* 'short of the goal' is used pleonastically:

(27a) *Gye go ngodwewaan niw mkiznan aagwiita miinwaa gii-tamwaa go maa mkakong, ...*
'And they put an extra pair of moccasins in the casket as well, ...'

(27b) *... giishpin ni-**noonde**-biigsidood niw wmakzinan **jibwaa dgoshing widi ezhaad e-bngishmog**, ...*
'... lest _he wear out_ his moccasins **before arriving in the west where he was going**, ...'

(27c) *... ji-wnjibdood neyaab miinwaa ji-biiskang niwi mkiznan.* (Bl 24.9)
'... he might take those other moccasins from there and put them on.'

At the moment I have no analysis for sentences of this type. I suspect that this is a sentential level realization of a kind of repetition common in Ojibwe texts.[5]

CONCLUSION

A number of unexpected properties are found in a class of directionals which register paths in Ojibwe. These uses include morphological quirks in word formation, clichéed usages with a limited class of motion verbs, a series of idiomatic uses of the directional *ani-* 'away', and a frame-based pleonastic use, commonly found in both narrative and conversation.

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5.   An example is found in the parenthetical passage in (26). The first clause in (26b) has the same lexical content as the clause in (26e). This is a matter for future research.

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