Remarks on Lexical Innovation and Extension in Ojibwe

Ikidowinikeng

Michael Migizi Sullivan Sr, PhD. Waadookodaading Ojibwe Language Immersion School
Waadookodaading
Ojibwe Language Institute

Ojibwemowin

PK-PhD
Indigenous Language Medium

Community Language Revitalization and Indigenous Outreach

Curriculum and Immersion Teacher Development

Language Revitalization Research and Development
Resources

- Elders
- Historical archives
- The Center for Advanced Research on Language Acquisition
- Center for Applied Linguistics
- American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages
- Peer organizations
- Speakers
Indigenous Language Medium Classroom Approach

- We are not engaged in translation, we work IN Ojibwe leaving English OUT.
- Realistic scope and sequence
- Levels of production and accuracy
Scholars of our own sound.

Make the academy ours.

Research in practice.
Other Algonquian Language Programs
Lexical Innovation

- Making “new words”
- Recycling existing word parts to create new combinations
- An ancient tradition and creative process
Old Neologisms

- New items introduced to the culture:
  1. *ishkodewaaboo* ‘liquor’
     - *ishkodew* = ‘fire’, *aaboo* = ‘liquid’
  2. *giboodiye_gwaazon* ‘pants’
     - *gibw* = ‘block’, *di* = ‘buttocks’, *PMF* = *gwaazo*
     - *sew*, *NOM*
  3. *baashkizigan* ‘gun’
     - *baashk* = ‘explode’, *iz* = ‘by heat’, *ige DETRANS* →
     - *igan NOM*
More Recent Coinage

(4) mazinaabikiwebinigan ‘computer’
mazin= ‘design’, =aabik= ‘metal’, =webin ‘fling w/ hand’, =ige DETRANS → =igan NOM

(5) mazinaatesijigan ‘television’
mazin= ‘design’, =aate= light, =sid ‘lay; set; drop’, =ige DETRANS → =igan NOM
(6) daataanginigan ‘tablet’
daataanginige vai ‘s/he touches things over and over’ → =igan NOM

(7) daataanginigaans ‘ipod’

(8) naabitawagebizon(an) ‘headphone(s)’
naab= ‘copy; replace’, =tawag= ‘ear’, =e PMF, =bizo ‘tied; dressed’, =n NOM
Extending the meaning of an existing word to a new referent:

(9) *odaabaan* ‘sled’ → ‘car’
Severn Ojibwe- *aadamoobiin*
SW Ojibwe- *zhooshkodaabaan* ‘sled’

(10) *zaaga’am vai* ‘s/he goes to the bathroom’
Lit. ‘s/he goes out; exits’
Humor

“It was always about who could come up with the best description while using the fewest words possible” - Larry Amik Smallwood

(11) ingii-paagidooneganaamaa
in-gii- baag- -doon –e –ganaam –aa
1-PST-swell-mouth-PMF-punch-DIR
‘I punched him and gave him a fat lip’ (AS)
Humor cont.

(12) *inigaayaakogaade*
inigaa- -aak- -gaade
pitiful- org. solid- legs
‘s/he has pitifully skinny legs’ (AS)

Funny names:
(13) *moogwaagogaabaw*
moogwaag- -gaabaw
dingle.berry- stands
‘Stands with Dingle Berries’
Humor cont.

(14) boogidiminens\(ag\)
boogidi- -min –ens (ag)
farts- -berry-DIM (PL)
‘beans’ Lit. ‘fart berries’

(15) nibwaakaaminens\(ag\)
nibwaakaa- -min –ens (ag)
is.smart- -berry-DIM (PL)
‘rabbit turds’ Lit. ‘smart berries’
‘run’ words: bimibatoo, babaamibatoo, animibatoo, giiwebatoo, apatoo/ipatoo, biijibatoo

biij = ‘toward here; in this direction’

biijibizo vai ‘s/he is driving here; toward here’

biijibii’ige vai ‘s/he writes here; sends letter here’

*biijoode vai ‘s/he crawls here’
biid=

- *biidoode* vai ‘s/he crawls here’
- *biidaasamose* vai ‘s/he is walking toward here’

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{biid=} & \rightarrow \text{biij=} / \_\_ V^{\text{HIGH}} \\
\text{biid=} & \rightarrow \text{biid=} / \_\_ V^{\text{LOW}}
\end{align*}
\]
\[ \text{aak}^w = \text{‘wood; bone; organic solid’} \]

(16) \textit{inigaay}aako\textit{dozo} vai \text{‘s/he is pitifully skinny’}

(17) \textit{gibaakwa‘igaade} vii \text{‘it is blocked; dammed up’}
Ozhibii’igeng ‘Writing’

Complex Final = bii’ige
(18) ozhibii’ige vai ‘s/he writes’
(19) mazinibii’ige vai ‘s/he draws’
(20) zhizhoobii’ige vai ‘s/he paints’
Examples for comparison:
(21) $mangibii'ige$ vai ‘s/he writes in upper case’
(22) $mamaangibii'ige$ vai ‘s/he writes in all caps; caps lock’
(21) $waagibii'ige$ vai ‘s/he writes letter bent’
(22) $wawaagibii'ige$ vai ‘s/he writes in cursive’
(23) $anaamibii'ige$ vai ‘s/he underlines things’
(24) $waawiyebii'ige$ vai ‘s/he circles things in writing’
Transitive alternations

(25) mazinizhaga‘ebii’igaaazo vai
mazin- zhaga‘- -e –bii’ –gaazo
design- skin- -PMF- -write –PASSIVE
‘s/he has a tattoo’ Lit. ‘is written on h/ skin’

(26) mazinizhaga‘ebii’w vta
‘tattoo h/’
(27) mazinizhaga‘ebii’ige vai ‘s/he gives tattoos’

(28) mazinizhaga‘ebii’igan ni ‘tattoo’

(29) mazinizhaga‘ebii’an vti ‘tattoo it’
Examples of school innovation

apiitaabikise vii ‘it (a mineral) goes to a certain level’ (as in mercury in a thermometer)

apiitaagamisin vii ‘it (a liquid) lies at a certain level’ (as in mercury in a thermometer)

waasamoo-asab na ‘internet’ Lit. ‘electric net’

aasamaatesijigan ni ‘a projector’

giiwewijigan ni ‘homework’

mamigodiyebagizo vai ‘s/he twerks’
Gagwejimishin!

- sulli720@umn.edu
- 715-634-8924 ext. 1245