

## Consonant Elision in Southwestern Ojibwe Prefixation

Dustin Morrow

University of Minnesota

The purpose of this talk is to look at the speech patterns of a first speaker of Ojibwe from the Mille Lacs reservation located in Onamia, MN. This speaker's idiolect is different from what is commonly taught to language learners. In particular, certain consonants predictably delete in certain environments. When deletion takes place in a medial position, it also leads to deletion of the preceding vowel to avoid hiatus. This process applies differently, depending on environment. Going forward, I plan to compare stem-initial consonants to tense and person prefixes.

In this speaker's Ojibwe, we see elision of stem initial [g] in certain environments. This elision is evident when looking at the example below in the imperative *agwejim* 'ask h/' compared to that of the expected form *gagwejim*

(1)	<i>gagwejim</i>	a'aw	akiwenzi
	<i>agwejim</i>	a'aw	akiwenzi
	ask.IMP	DEM	old man

"Ask the old man"

This process seems to extend into tense and expand, including [d]. It seems the only prefixal position in which [g] is safe from elision is in word initial person morphology. In (2), we see [gii], and in (3) we see [ga].

(2)	<i>gi-gii-goshko'in</i>
	<i>g-ii-goshko'-in</i>
	2SG.PST.Suprise.>2
	"Did I startle you"

(3)	<i>gi-ga-amwaa</i>	<i>manaamin</i>
	<i>g-a-amw-aa</i>	<i>manaamin</i>
	2SG.FUT.eat h/.>3	corn
	"You will eat corn"	

What would normally be understood as past and future tense morphology, appears to be both person and tense contracted down into one syllable. This is evident below in (4) where the 3rd person null is present with past tense, and in (5) with the 1st person [n] and past tense.

(4)	<i>gii-aanjigozi</i>
	<i>ii-aanjigozi</i>
	3SG.PST.change.move
	"s/he moved from here to there"

(5)	<i>nin-gii-minikwe</i>
	<i>n-ii-minikwe</i>
	1SG.PST.drink
	"I drank/was drinking"

It is important to note that this seems to be part of an ongoing process within this particular dialect.