

## There's no *mii* in Potawatomi: The diachronic nature of six discourse markers in the Ojibwe-Potawatomi branch

ROBERT E. LEWIS JR.  
*University of Chicago\**

### 1 Introduction

The Ojibwe particle *mii* has been the object of research for nearly four decades (Rhodes 1979, 1998; Fairbanks 2008, 2009, 2016), and so far, it has not shown up in any Algonquian language other than Ojibwe (Goddard 2003: 82). But its absence from the rest of the family has never been investigated from a diachronic perspective which leaves its origin unexplained. Is its source the result of some sound change, a borrowing from contact with a neighboring language, or a unique innovation on Ojibwe's part? We may not be able to completely determine the origin of *mii*, but we can take a first step toward this goal by looking at languages closely related to Ojibwe. I suggest here that we start with the neighboring language Potawatomi because it is the most closely related language to Ojibwe, and as such, it is likely to hold the key to our investigation. Specifically, this paper investigates the functions of the discourse marker *mii* in Ojibwe and its analogous functions in Potawatomi in order to determine the source of *mii*.<sup>1</sup>

I conducted a search of Potawatomi archival materials in order to investigate the source of *mii*. As it turns out, the particle *mii* is entirely absent in these materials. Its absence is not in-and-of-itself surprising as it seems to confirm that *mii* is not present in any other Algonquian language than Ojibwe, but it is not total confirmation. There still remains a chance that *mii* was originally in Proto-Ojibwe-Potawatomi and lost in Potawatomi, which would rule out a unique innovation of *mii* on Ojibwe's part. Until we address this chance, a reconstructed proto form remains possible. The goal of this paper is then to answer whether Potawatomi lost a proto form of this particle or whether Ojibwe uniquely innovated it. The results suggest that Ojibwe uniquely innovated *mii*.

I claim that Ojibwe must have uniquely innovated *mii* because forms that Potawatomi uses for the parallel functions of Oji *mii* do not match, and moreover, these Potawatomi forms are cognate in Ojibwe in places other than where *mii* is used. Furthermore, there are no fossilized forms of *mii* present in Potawatomi, which suggests that Ojibwe innovated *mii* after it and Potawatomi separated.

This paper is organized as follows: In section 2, from archival materials, I explore the

---

\*I am grateful for comments from Amy Dahlstrom, Anqi Zhang, participants at University of Chicago's Language Variation and Change Workshop, and participants at the 43rd Berkeley Linguistics Society Conference. The Potawatomi examples used in this presentation are taken from Hockett (1937, 1940) and his subsequent publications of those materials.

<sup>1</sup>Thomas Loftis pointed out to me that the late Potawatomi speaker Walter Cooper used *mii*. Unfortunately, there is no documentation of this point. And to make things more complicated, Walter Cooper comes from the Spear family that Charles Hockett worked with during his fieldwork. Those Spears did not use *mii*, as it is absent from Hockett's fieldnotes. It, therefore, is surprising that Walter used *mii*.

similarities and differences between the functions of the particle *mii* in Ojibwe and Potawatomi. Preliminarily, I showed that where Ojibwe uses one discourse marker, the particle *mii*, Potawatomi uses five unrelated discourse markers *i(w)*, *wi*, *wpi*, *me*, and *ma*. In section 3, I explore idioms and lexicalizations based on the particle *mii*. *Mii* does not show up as a fossilized form in Potawatomi. In section 4, I explore the similarities and differences between the form of the particle *mii* in Ojibwe and the five discourse markers found in Potawatomi. I find that *i(w)*, *wi*, and *wpi* are not related to Oji *mii* because the time depth of when Ojibwe and Potawatomi separated is too shallow to allow for such change given the other sound changes present in the languages, as well as the fact that, these forms are able to be reconstructed into Proto-Ojibwe-Potawatomi. Likewise, I find that *me* and *ma* are not related to Ojibwe *mii* because they are easily able to be reconstructed in Proto-Ojibwe-Potawatomi and they are not borrowed. These facts lead me to conclude that Ojibwe uniquely innovated the particle *mii* after it and Potawatomi separated.

## 2 Functions of *mii*

The particle *mii* is a discourse marker (Fairbanks 2016). In other words, *mii* relates its containing sentence to a previous discourse, cf. Schiffrin (1987). Moreover, it is a special type of discourse marker dubbed a discourse connective (Schiffrin 1987; Fairbanks 2016), which takes advantage of its sentential functions for discourse purposes. Sententially, *mii* performs deictic, aspectual, and veridical functions, and at the discourse level, it performs a deictic function. In what follows, each of the sentential functions of *mii* are discussed in turn.

### 2.1 Deictic

The core function of *mii* in Ojibwe is deictic in which deictic is unpacked into uses of anaphoric reference (including clefts), cataphoric reference, spacially locating, enhancing focus, temporal deictic, and discourse marker (Fairbanks 2008, 2016). This paper only considers the anaphoric reference, temporal deictic, and discourse marker functions of *mii*.

#### 2.1.1 Anaphoric reference

Anaphoric reference shows that where Ojibwe uses *mii*, Potawatomi uses *i(w)*. (1a) illustrates that in Ojibwe, *mii* is used to refer back to a previous proposition. Potawatomi, instead, uses a demonstrative to fill this function as illustrated in (1b). Note that the demonstrative used in Potawatomi is shared in common with Ojibwe, albeit in Potawatomi it often takes a phonologically reduced form: *i(w)* ‘that’ Potawatomi; *iw/i’iw* ‘that’ Ojibwe (Nichols & Nyholm 1995).<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup>I use the following abbreviations in glossing the examples: 1-first person; 2-second person; 3-third person; AN-animate; CL-clitic; CONJ-conjunct order; DISC-discourse sequencer; DIR-direct; DM-discourse marker; DP-discourse particle; EMPH-emphatic; FCT-factive; FUT-future; HAB-habitual; IC-initial change; INAN-inanimate;

- (1) a. **Mii** gaa-ikidoyan.  
 DP what you said  
 ‘That is what you said.’ (Fairbanks 2016: 67) Oji
- b. **iw** é-zhdé’ayan neko.  
 that FCT-think.so.1 HAB  
 ‘That’s what I think.’ (Hockett 1940: 1.9) Pot

### 2.1.2 Cleft constructions

Cleft constructions show that where Ojibwe uses *mii*, Potawatomi uses *wi*. In Ojibwe *mii* is used for clefts (Rhodes 1998: 286-7) such as those in (2).

- (2) a. Aanii-sh **mii** sa wi gii-ni-maajaad iidig wa. (R1, 4:43)  
 ‘So apparently what he did was leave.’
- b. ... **mii** baamaa iw da-giishkwag aw mtig. (B T15:14)  
 ‘Then, later on, I shall cut down those trees.’ Oji

Potawatomi, instead, uses the particle *wi* for clausal clefts as illustrated in (3) from (Thunder & Wensaut 1998: 46, 73). Note that the Potawatomi particle *wi* also appears in Ojibwe as *wii* (Rhodes 1985, 1993).

- (3) a. oh, éshke’-ntawét, **wi**=yé i wthe wik’kwget.  
 oh IC.new-kill.3 wi=be that why have.a.feast.3  
 ‘Oh, he killed his first deer, that’s why he’s having a feast.’
- b. Green Bay ... **wi**=yé zhi wathe=madabziygo i ktthe myéw 43.  
 Green Bay ... wi=be there FUT.IC.why=join.12 that big road 43  
 ‘Green Bay ... That’s where we’ll join up with interstate 43.’ Pot

### 2.1.3 Temporal

A temporal function shows that where Ojibwe uses *mii*, Potawatomi uses *wpi*. In Ojibwe *mii* is used for a temporal function as illustrated in (4a). Potawatomi, instead, uses the particle *wpi* to refer to ‘when’ as illustrated in (4b). Note Ojibwe also has *apii* ‘at the time; then; when’ (Nichols & Nyholm 1995) as a counterpart for the Potawatomi particle *wpi*.

- (4) a. **Mii** izhinizha’onang oodi mashkikiwigamigong ji-izhaayang mii  
 DP when.they.send.us over.there to.the.drug.store for.us.to.go DP  
 gii-ozhibii’ang imaa mazina’igan awegonen dino mashkiki ge-miinigooyang.  
 that.he.wrote there paper what kind medicine that.we’ll.be.given  
 ‘**That** is **when** they send us to the drug store with a prescription that the doctor wrote  
 out for the appropriate medicine.’ (Fairbanks 2008: 184) Oji

INDEP-independent order; INV-inverse; Mes-Meskwaki; NEG-negative; OBJ-object; OBV-obviative; Oji-Ojibwe; PL-plural; Pot-Potawatomi; PROX-proximate; PST-past; SG-singular; TA-transitive animate; VER-veridical; X-unspecified actor.

- b. mine ode wa-gothek gises, **iw wpi** wa-nimédiwat neshnabék.  
 and this FUT.IC-hang.3 sun that when FUT.IC-dance.3PL Indians  
 ‘and this coming month, **that** is **when** the Indian’s will dance.’ (Hockett 1940: 1.22)  
 Pot

### 2.1.4 Discourse sequencer

The discourse sequencing function shows that where Ojibwe uses *mii*, Potawatomi uses *i*. The Ojibwe particle *mii* is used as a discourse sequencer. The Ojibwe particle *mii* is often used with the second position clitic *dash* to form the contraction *miish* (< *mii=dash*). *Miish* serves as a discourse sequencer meaning ‘and then’ (Valentine 2001: 1024). This discourse sequencing usage of *mii* is given in (5a). Potawatomi, instead, uses a demonstrative plus the second position clitic *the* to achieve a discourse sequencer as illustrated in (5b). The demonstrative *i* appears to be the same one that was used for anaphoric reference. Note Hockett calls *the* ‘a biblical and’ (1948: 217). Pot *the* is probably cognate to Oji *dash*.

- (5) a. **Miish** oodi gaa-izhiwin-ind mii aw inini.  
 DISC over.there IC.PAST-take.there-X>3 DP that man.  
 ‘And so they then took that man (aforementioned, under discussion) over there.’ (Fairbanks 2016: 179) Oji
- b. **i=the** gode mithbéyek égi-nme-yathmowat wa-nabdezwat.  
 DISC those animals FCT.PST-away-say.3PL FUT.IC-how.used.3PL  
 ‘**And** so these animals went around and said what they would be.’ (Hockett 1940: 1.19) Pot

### 2.2 Aspectual

The second function of *mii* in Ojibwe is an aspectual marker. The aspectual function might show a difference between Ojibwe and Potawatomi, but there is not enough evidence to make a claim at this time. The particle *mii* is used in conjunction with the plain conjunct verb order to form a type of aspect known as IMMEDIACY aspect, a term coined by Fairbanks (2008). This immediacy aspect usage is shown in (6b). Note in Northern Ojibwe dialects, *mii* + the independent verbal order may be doing the same thing as the *mii* + the conjunct verbal order (Rhodes 1998: 290). It is unclear whether Potawatomi has a parallel in either verbal order.

- (6) (Fairbanks 2008: 198)
- a. Iskigamide.  
 boil.down/INDEP  
 ‘It’s boiling down.’
- b. Mii iskigamide-g. (completive)  
 ASP boil.down-0/CONJ  
 ‘It’s boiled down.’ Oji

### 2.3 Veridicality

The final function of *mii* in Ojibwe is to serve as a marker of nonveridicality, taboos, negative phrases, emotionally charged statements, and ribbings. This function shows that where Ojibwe uses *mii*, Potawatomi uses two evidential markers. Consider the nonvertical usage of *mii* in (7) where the addition of *mii* increases the uncertainty of the speaker.

- (7) a. Namanj.  
not.know  
'I don't know.'
- b. Mii-sago namanj.  
VER-EMPH not.know  
'I have absolutely no idea (after much thought).' (Fairbanks 2008: 200) Oji

Potawatomi, on the other hand, uses two evidential markers which show speaker certainty or uncertainty (i.e. *me* and *ma*). The particle *me* expresses speaker uncertainty as illustrated in (8a) from (Thunder & Wensaut 1998: 46). Note *me ni* is translated as 'must have' in (8a). The particle *ma* expresses speaker certainty, for example, first hand experience and general knowledge. The usage of *ma* for speaker certainty is illustrated in (8b) from (Buszard 2003: 309 glossing mine). Hockett does not translate these particles in his fieldnotes.

- (8) a. Wgwesen **me** ni gi-ntawén.  
son.OBV EVID 1SG PST-kill.something.3OBV  
'His son must have killed something (deer).' Pot
- b. gzhaté **ma**=zhe=na ode, noko.  
be.hot.3INAN EVID=EMPH=EMPH this grandma  
'It is hot here grandma.' Pot

### 2.4 Summary

The following table summarizes the forms of the particles which are used for deictic, aspectual and veridical functions in Ojibwe and Potawatomi.

Functions	Ojibwe	Potawatomi
Deictic	<i>mii</i>	<i>i(w), wi, wpi</i>
Aspectual	<i>mii</i>	?
Veridical	<i>mii</i>	<i>me, ma</i>

Table 1. Six Discourse Markers in Ojibwe and Potawatomi

We can make a few observations about Table 1. First, there is no *mii* in Potawatomi. This is superficially true. There is no form in Potawatomi which exactly matches Oji *mii*. There

are a lot of phonological similarities however, especially labials. Yet, in spite of these similarities, there is no relation between Ojibwe *mii* and the forms in Potawatomi. In what follows I argue, from the pattern in Table 1, that Ojibwe innovated *mii*. In other words, it was not in Proto-Ojibwe-Potawatomi (hereafter Proto-Oji-Pot). Further evidence for this claim comes from section 3 on idioms and lexicalizations where I show there are no fossilized forms of *mii* in Potawatomi; and section 4 on deictics and evidentials. Deictics are ruled out by phonological disimilarities given the relatively shallow time depth for which Potawatomi and Ojibwe must have separated. Potawatomi evidential *me* comes from Proto-Oji-Pot \**manj* and Potawatomi evidential *ma* comes from the Proto-Algonquian (PA) adverbial locative \**maah*. Thus, Ojibwe, alone, uniquely innovated *mii*.

### 3 Idiomatic and lexicalized uses of *mii*

Idioms and lexicalizations can be great diagnostics to test historical reconstructions. If *mii* were an older form in Proto-Oji-Pot, then we should see fossilized forms of *mii* in Potawatomi. Evidence from idioms and lexicalizations show this is not the case.

#### 3.1 Idioms

Many of the idiomatic uses of *mii* in Ojibwe are not present in Potawatomi. Ojibwe uses *mii* in the idioms in (9), among others.

- (9) a. *Mii iw.*  
 DP that  
 ‘That’s all (conclusory expression)’ (lit. that is it) (Fairbanks 2008: 209)
- b. *Mii sa go minik* (K 154:8)  
 ‘That’a all’ (Rhodes 1998: 292) Oji

While Potawatomi, instead, uses *i(w)* for the same idioms in (9) as illustrated in (10).

- (10) a. *iw*  
 ‘That’s all (conclusory expression)’ (Hockett 1940: 1.7)
- b. *i zhe na tso wi’i.*  
 ‘That’s all’ (Hockett 1940: 1.6) Pot

The fact that Potawatomi does not use *mii* in idioms where Ojibwe does suggest that *mii* was not present in Proto-Oji-Pot because it was not old enough to be fossilized in the same idioms present in Ojibwe and Potawatomi.

### 3.2 Lexicalizations

Lexicalizations based on *mii* in Ojibwe are also absent in Potawatomi. Ojibwe uses *mii* in the lexicalization in (11), among others.

(11) Lexicalization based upon *mii* (Fairbanks 2008: 211)

- a. miigwech  
DP.sufficient  
'thanks'
- b. miigwechiwendam  
thanks.in.thought.AI  
'be thankful'

Oji

These lexicalizations are missing from Potawatomi. In Potawatomi, there is *migwéché*, but it appears alongside *igweyenligwiyen* 'thank you'. These forms are given in (12) from Forest County Potawatomi Community (2014) and (Thunder & Wensaut 1998: 41). Other lexicalizations with *mii*, which are present in Ojibwe, are not listed in Potawatomi dictionaries (Forest County Potawatomi Community 2014; Kansas Heritage Group 1997).

- (12) a. migwéché  
'Thanks'
- b. i gwshe gweyen  
'Thank you very much'
  - c. igwiyen  
'I am grateful'

Pot

The appearance of *migwéché* in Potawatomi is easily explained by an alternative source than shared reconstruction of *mii* in Ojibwe and Potawatomi. Potawatomi most likely borrowed *migwéché* from Ojibwe because *migwéché* is a trade word that shows up across the Algonquian family. That *mii* was borrowed then clearly explains why this is the only putative example of a lexicalization of *mii* in Potawatomi.

While we are on the subject of putative examples, I would like to note that it was pointed out to me that the Potawatomi verb *mikchéwi* in (13a) from (Forest County Potawatomi Community 2014) looks as though it contains *mii* (i.e. *mi-kché-wi*). Interestingly, Potawatomi *mikchéwi* is not present in Ojibwe. Instead, Ojibwe uses *anokii* 's/he works' (Nichols & Nyholm 1995). Note Potawatomi also has *noki* 's/he hires someone to have something done' (Forest County Potawatomi Community 2014: 102). Moreover, if *mikchéwi* really were to contain *mii*, it would come as a surprise for *mikchéwi* to remain in Potawatomi and not in Ojibwe which has a robust usage of *mii*. In fact, upon closer examination, it turns out that *mikchéwi* is a borrowing from the Fox Branch as illustrated in (13) from (Goddard & Thomason 2014: 391) alongside the Potawatomi form.

- (13) a. mikchéwi  
work.3SG  
'He works' Pot
- b. mihkechêwî-wa  
work-3SG  
's/he works' Mes

The same individual, who raised *miktthéwi* as a possible lexicalization based on *mii*, also suggested to me that *mii* could have come from a Proto-Oji-Pot form *\*mii'iw*. This would essentially mean that Ojibwe uses the reduced form *mii* and Potawatomi uses another reduced form (*i*)'iw. This calls for a closer look at the demonstrative and deictic system which I take up in the next section, but note that this etymology of *mii* would only explain the usage of *mii* in the idioms of conclusory expression.

#### 4 Diachronic relation between Ojibwe *mii* and Potawatomi deictics and evidentials

This paper claims that Ojibwe innovated *mii*, but what sort of innovation was this? This section considers the relation of the Potawatomi deictics and evidentials to Oji *mii*. I first consider if Oji *mii* is related to the Potawatomi deictics. I show it is not, rather deictics are not related to Ojibwe *mii* because they are phonologically dissimilar given the relevant time depth is too shallow, and we can reconstruct them back to Proto-Oji-Pot. I second consider if Ojibwe *mii* is related to Pot *me* and *ma*. I show it also is not, rather Pot *me* comes from Proto-Oji-Pot *\*manj* and Pot *ma* comes from an adverbial locative. Moreover, Pot *ma* and Oji *maa* were not borrowed from the Fox branch, as they can be reconstructed to the Proto-Algonquian (PA) adverbial locative *\*maah*. I conclude that the source of Ojibwe's innovation of *mii* is unclear.

##### 4.1 Ojibwe *mii* is not related to Potawatomi deictics

The phonological structure of Ojibwe *mii* looks similar to Potawatomi deictics *i(w)*, *wi*, and *wpi*. But, we must consider the following when deciding if these deictics are related to Ojibwe *mii*. First, Potawatomi does not retain contrastive vowel length (Hockett 1942). Second, the time depth for which Ojibwe and Potawatomi separated is not great enough for us to posit any spreading of features. That is, except for the loss of labialization on velars (e.g. *k* < *kw*), no spreading of features have been reported (Hockett 1942). Third, Ojibwe does have *i'iw* 'that', *wiin* 'contrastive particle', and *apii* 'when' (Nichols & Nyholm 1995); *wii* 'emphatic expressing unexpectedness' (Rhodes 1985, 1993). We must then rule out Potawatomi deictics as being related to Ojibwe *mii* because of phonological distance to Ojibwe *mii* and the appearance of Potawatomi counterparts to Ojibwe *mii* with similar functions which allow us to reconstruct them back into Proto-Oji-Pot.



The same arguments that I just presented for the three deictics in Potawatomi hold for the Proto-Oji-Pot form *\*mii'iw* that was proposed to me, but we must also consider that segments could have been deleted from this form. Such a deletion analysis for the Proto-Oji-Pot form *\*mii'iw* does account for the daughter forms, Oji *mii* and Pot *iw* with a deleted glottal stop for both forms (or a deleted *h* as Potawatomi lost or changed almost all *h* segments to a glottal stop). However, as I mentioned in the previous section, the Proto-Oji-Pot form only accounts for the idioms of conclusory expression, and leaves other idioms and lexicalizations in Ojibwe that use only *mii* unexplained. This account also does not explain why other forms than *iw* are being used in Potawatomi for functions that Oji *mii* achieves. This account does have the merit of at least partially explaining the source of *mii* as coming from a Proto-Oji-Pot form *\*mii'iw*, but the reconstructed form would need to be demonstrated further and the differing non-Pot *iw* functions (i.e. *i(w)*, *wpi*, *me*, and *ma*) would need to be explained before we should give this account more attention.

#### 4.2 Ojibwe *mii* is not related to Potawatomi *me* and *ma*

One might think that *me* and *ma* come from a hypothetical proto form of the Ojibwe *mii* because of similar phonological forms and clause positions, but they do not. At first blush, the particles *me/ma* appear as the first enclitic in enclitic clusters which could be derived from a clause initial Proto-Oji-Pot *\*mii*. That is, it is commonly known that *mii* can contract with the second position clitic *dash* in Ojibwe to form *miish* (Valentine 2001). In Potawatomi, the particles *me* and *ma* come before other enclitics. Potawatomi can have a string of enclitics. If *me/ma* are in the string they come first as show below:

(14) (Hockett 1937: 4.15) and (Hockett 1940: 1.18)

- a. **Miish** oodi      gaa-izhiwin-ind      mii aw inini.  
 DISC over.there IC.PAST-take.there-X>3 DP that man.  
 ‘And so they then took that man (aforementioned, under discussion) over there.’ (Fairbanks 2016: 179) Oji
- b. i=**me**=se      éwdodanwat      neshnabék  
 that=DM=so FCT.be.town.3PL Indians  
 ‘There once was a town with Indians.’
- c. o=**me**=the      yé o yawet.  
 that=DM=and be that be.3  
 ‘That might be the one.’ Pot

Unfortunately, the position of *mii* varies by dialect (Rhodes 1998: 287) as illustrated in (15). This data suggests that *me* and *ma* were not grammaticalized from *mii*.

- (15) a. Walpole Island Ottawa  
Gye go **mii** gii-aanzkonyeyaang ... (B T9:15)  
 ‘And then we changed clothes ...’

b. Manitoulin Island Ottawa

**Mii** gye go gii-bskaabnaashkwindwaa. (R2, 1:153)

‘And then they were driven back.’

Oji

And more importantly, any clause initial element could form an idiomatic clitic, so we should not necessarily look to *mii* exclusively. In fact, *me* and *ma* have other sources as I next show.

#### 4.2.1 Potawatomi *me* comes from Proto-Oji-Pot \**namanj*

Pot *me*, like the particles (*ne*)*metth/met*, comes from Proto-Oji-Pot \**namanj*. Consider the Ojibwe particle *namanj* given in (16a) from (Fairbanks 2016: 106). The Potawatomi particles *nemetth* in (16b) from (Hockett 1940: 2.1), *metth* in (16c) from (Hockett 1940: 3.15), and *met* in (16d) from (Forest County Potawatomi Community 2014: 75).

(16) a. Mii-sa go namanj.

VER-DM.CL EMPH I.don’t.know

‘I have no idea.’

Oji

b. nemetth=zhe=na=zhi ga-bme-zhewébzegwén.

not.know=EMPH=EMPH=where PST.IC-along-happen.DUB.3

‘I don’t know where what happened to him.’

Pot

c. iw=se ibe égi-zhyat é-byat gete é-bmagzonet metth=bzhe ...

that=DM there FCT.PST-go.3 FCT-come.3 sure FCT-lay.out.3 not.know=EMPH ...

‘So he went there he came sure enough he was laid out, guess ...’

Pot

d. met=se=na

not.know=DM=EMPH

‘I don’t know.’

Pot

Clearly all of these forms are expressing the same meaning of speaker uncertainty. Thus, I take the related meaning and forms to indicate the reconstruction of Pot *me* to Proto-Oji-Pot \**namanj*. Note it is unclear whether the first syllable of *nemetth* was the first person marker. It appears only with first person usages in archival materials, but can be left off in reduced forms of the idiom as (16c) and (16d) illustrate.

#### 4.2.2 Potawatomi *ma* comes from Proto-Oji-Pot \**maa*

Pot *ma* likely was derived from a Proto-Oji-Pot adverbial locative. It bodes well that Potawatomi uses a different set of adverbial locatives in place of the Ojibwe counterparts (Hockett 1940; Nichols & Nyholm 1995; Rhodes 1985, 1993).<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup>Hunter Lockwood suggested to me that *mii* looks as though it could be a folk etymologization of PA \**maah* (or Proto-Oji-Pot \**maa*) which undid initial change. I leave it to future research to see how explanatory this approach might be.

Ojibwe		Potawatomi	
(o)maa	‘here’	shode	‘here’
(i’i)maa	‘there’	zhi	‘there’
(i’)iwidi	‘over there’	ézhi/ibe	‘over there’

Table 2. Ojibwe and Potawatomi adverbial locatives

Lastly, let us consider the possibility of *ma(a)* being borrowed.

### 4.3 Pot *ma* and Oji *maa* are not borrowed from the Fox branch

Ojibwe *mii* could still be historically reconstructed for Proto-Oji-Pot if Potawatomi borrowed *ma* or Ojibwe borrowed *maa* after they separated. The most likely source of a borrowing would have come from the Fox branch, but such a borrowing is ruled out by the shared reconstruction of Ojibwe *maa* and Potawatomi *ma* into Proto-Algonquian.

To start with, Ojibwe is not a big borrower. It may have borrowed a little from Cree but not the Fox branch. Furthermore, Ojibwe did not have a recent sustained period of contact with speakers of the Fox branch. So, it is unlikely that Ojibwe borrowed *maa*.

On the other hand, Potawatomi had been in recent sustained contact with the Fox branch and borrowed considerably from it. As Costa (2013) has aptly shown, Potawatomi has lexical borrowings which include numbers and many animal names, as well as grammatical borrowing of the negative/irrealis *bwa-*. Furthermore, Potawatomi had a sustained period of contact with the Fox branch after the Neutral tribe pushed Michigan Potawatomis into Wisconsin in 1642 (Edmunds 1978: 4). Therefore, it would not come as a surprise if Potawatomi also borrowed some of its discourse markers from the Fox branch. For at least one discourse marker, this may in fact be the case. The Fox branch uses the demonstrative *iini* ‘that’ for a discourse deictic function (Dahlstrom 2015: 182) in a similar fashion to Potawatomi using the demonstrative *i(w)*. The similar usage of the demonstrative as a discourse marker is illustrated in (17).

- (17) a. **iini**=keehi                    wiih-in-enekehe  
           that.inan=moreover FUT-say.thus.to-X>2/irrealis  
           ‘and that is what you would have been told’ (Dahlstrom 2015: 182)                    Mes
- b. **iw** é-zhdé’ayan    neko  
           that FCT-think.so.1 HAB  
           ‘That’s what I think.’ (Hockett 1940: 1.9)                    Pot

While Potawatomi may have borrowed this discourse marker function from the Fox branch, this is not the case for Pot *ma*. It can soundly be reconstructed as coming from PA *\*maah*. Meskwaki has =*maahi* ‘you see’ and *maahi* ‘over there, over here (non-deictic)’ (Goddard 2015: 111). Ojibwe has *maa* ‘here, there, emphatic particle expressing cooperation or a request for cooperation’ (Rhodes 1985, 1993: 210). Note there is a difference for at least Larry

Smallwood between *oma* and *omaa*. The latter is an emphasized form of the former (Fairbanks p.c.). And, Shawnee has *maa* locative oblique (Goddard 2015). So, we are not dealing with language borrowing when it comes to Pot *ma* or Oji *maa*, but rather shared reconstruction (see (Goddard 2015: 111) and citations within).

The history of PA *\*ma-h* appears to be a typical case of metaphoric abstraction followed by metonymy (see (Brinton 1996: 50) and citations within). First, metaphorically, the movement of discourse markers along the “grammaticalization chains” (propositional > textual > interpersonal) represents a movement from a purely locative demonstrative meaning (propositional) to a more textual meaning. Then, metonymy may have been used to grammaticalize the adverbial locatives into evidential constructions like (18a) that uses *mii imaa* for ‘that’s why’. Note Potawatomi makes use of the preverb *wje-* ‘that’s why’, so it must have fully grammaticalized *ma* as an evidential.

(18) (Fairbanks 2008: 196) and (Thunder & Wensaut 1998: 41):

- a. **Mii imaa** gii-wanitoo-waad noongom abinoojiin-yag.  
 DP there PAST-lose.it-3P now child-P  
 ‘That’s why children these days have lost it.’ Oji
- b. oh, éshke’-ntawét, **wi=yé i wthe** wik’kwget.  
 oh IC.new-kill.3 wi=be that why have.a.feast.3  
 ‘Oh, he killed his first deer, that’s why he’s having a feast.’ Pot

This is supported by the fact that some Ojibwe dialects still use *maa* as an adverbial locative and emphatic while other dialects have removed *maa* from their adverbial locative system and only use *maa* for an emphatic (Goddard 2003: 62). The latter is like Potawatomi.

Minnesota	Walpole	Golden L.	Potawatomi	Gloss
(o)maa	maa		shode	‘here’
(i’i)maa	zhiw(i)		zhi	‘there’
(i’)iwidi	widi,wadi(i)	iindio, iindazhi	ézhi/ibe	‘over there’

Table 3. Ojibwe, Odawa, and Potawatomi adverbial locatives

Lastly, other Fox discourse markers filling the functions of *mii* seem to be orthogonal in form, for example, =*ipi* marks hearsay (Goddard 2015: 80). Once again, in this paper, I am restricting myself to considerations of feature spreading. I leave it to future research whether a reconstruction of the labial segments exists when the time depth is extended to when the Ojibwe and the Fox branches separated. This additional evidence corroborates my argument in this paper.

## 5 Conclusion

This paper provides the first diachronic description of discourse markers in the Ojibwe-Potawatomi branch. In section 2, from archival materials, I explore the similarities and differences between the functions of *mii* in Ojibwe and Potawatomi. Preliminarily, I showed that where Ojibwe uses one discourse marker *mii*, Potawatomi uses five unrelated discourse markers: *i(w)*, *wi*, *wpi*, *me*, and *ma*. In section 3, I explored idioms and lexicalizations based on *mii*. *Mii* does not show up as a fossilized form in Potawatomi. In section 4, I explored the similarities and differences between the form of *mii* in Ojibwe and the five discourse markers found in Potawatomi. *i(w)*, *wi*, *wpi* are not related to Oji *mii* because their time depth is too great and they are able to be reconstructed into Proto-Oji-Pot. Similarly, *me* and *ma* are not related to Oji *mii* because they are easily able to be reconstructed into Proto-Oji-Pot (even back into PA for \**maah*) and not borrowed. The upshot of this paper is that Ojibwe appears to have uniquely innovated *mii*, but the source of this innovation is unclear.

## REFERENCES

- BRINTON, LAUREL J. 1996. *Pragmatic Markers in English: grammaticalization and discourse functions*. Mouton de Gruyter.
- BUSZARD, LAURA ANN. 2003. *Constructional Polysemy and Mental Spaces in Potawatomi Discourse*. Berkeley, California: University of California, Berkeley dissertation.
- COSTA, DAVID J. 2013. Borrowing in Southern Great Lakes Algonquian and the History of Potawatomi. *Anthropological Linguistics* 55.3.195–233.
- DAHLSTROM, AMY. 2015. Highlighting rhetorical structure through syntactic analysis: an illustrated Meskwaki text by Alfred Kiyana. *New Voices for Old Words: Algonquian Oral Literatures*, ed. by David Costa, 118–197. University of Nebraska Press.
- EDMUNDS, R. DAVID. 1978. *The Potawatomis: Keepers of the Fire*. University of Oklahoma Press.
- FAIRBANKS, BRENDAN. 2008. All About Mii. *Papers of the 39th Algonquian Conference*, ed. by Regna Darnell and Karl S. Hele., 166–221.
- FAIRBANKS, BRENDAN. 2009. *Ojibwe Discourse Markers*. Minneapolis, Minnesota: University of Minnesota-Minneapolis dissertation.
- FAIRBANKS, BRENDAN. 2016. *Ojibwe Discourse Markers*. University of Nebraska Press.
- FOREST COUNTY POTAWATOMI COMMUNITY. 2014. *ézhe-bmadzimgek gdebodwéwadmizheshmomenan: Potawatomi dictionary*. Forest County Potawatomi Community.
- GODDARD, IVES. 2003. Reconstructing the history of the demonstrative pronouns of Algonquian. *Essays in Algonquian, Catawban and Siouan linguistics in memory of Frank T. Siebert, Jr*, ed. by Blair A. Rudes and David J. Costa, vol. Memoir 16, Algonquian and Iroquoian Linguistics.
- GODDARD, IVES. 2015. The Twenty-Nine Enclitics of Meskwaki. *Papers of the 43rd Algonquian Conference*, ed. by J. R. Valentine and Monica Macaulay, 72–116. Albany: SUNY Press.
- GODDARD, IVES, and LUCY THOMASON. 2014. *A Meskwaki-English and English-Meskwaki Dictionary: Basked on the Early Twentieth-Century Writings by Native Speakers*. Mundart Press.

- HOCKETT, CHARLES F. 1937. Potawatomi Field Notebook IV. California Language Archives: Berkeley, California.
- HOCKETT, CHARLES F. 1940. Potawatomi Field Notebooks I, II, and III. California Language Archives: Berkeley, California.
- HOCKETT, CHARLES F. 1942. The Position of Potawatomi in Central Algonkian. *Papers of the Michigan Academy of Science, Arts, and Letters* 28.537–542.
- HOCKETT, CHARLES F. 1948. Potawatomi IV: Particles and Sample Texts. *International Journal of American Linguistics* 14.4.213–225.
- KANSAS HERITAGE GROUP. 1997. Potawatomi Dictionary. Online: <http://www.kansasheritage.org/PBP>.
- NICHOLS, JOHN D., and EARL NYHOLM. 1995. *A Concise Dictionary of Minnesota Ojibwe*. University of Minnesota Press: Minneapolis.
- RHODES, RICHARD A. 1979. Some aspects of Ojibwa discourse. *Papers of the 10th Algonquian Conference*, ed. by William Cowan, 102–117.
- RHODES, RICHARD A. 1985, 1993. *Eastern Ojibwa-Chippewa-Ottawa dictionary*. Walter de Gruyter.
- RHODES, RICHARD A. 1998. They syntax and pragmatics of Ojibwe mii. *Papers of the 29th Algonquian Conference*, ed. by David H. Pentland, 286–294.
- SCHIFFRIN, DEBORAH. 1987. *Discourse Markers*. Cambridge University Press.
- THUNDER, JIM, SR., and KIM WENSAUT. 1998. *Bodewamimwen Nswe Mbok (Bodewadmi Language Book Three)*. Jim Thunder and Kim Wensaut, publishers.
- VALENTINE, J. RANDOLPH. 2001. *Nishnaabemwin Reference Grammar*. University of Toronto Press.