A Sahaptin Narrative Device: From Sahaptin to English and Back Again

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In a paper presented at the 1981 Salish Conference in Missoula I presented a list of linguistic devices which, on the basis of my work up to that point, I believed to be used by narrators in Warm Springs Sahaptin to organize the contents of their narratives into groups of lines which, in ascending hierarchy, have been called by Dell Hymes verses, stanzas, scenes and acts. In a close analysis of one myth told by Hazel Suppah I showed how these devices were used by her, singly and in combination, to signal her organization of the narrative.

My work at that point confirmed that Sahaptin myth narratives shared the rhetorical patterning of five's and three's found in Chinookan by Dell Hymes and that, as in Chinookan and a number of other American Indian narrative traditions, particles, line initial and/or line final, played an important role in signalling verse or stanza beginnings. In Sahaptin I found also that narrators used shifts in tense, aspect, and/or directional marking in the verb to signal new sections; that they exploited the derivational and inflectional verb morphology of Sahaptin to create parallel patterning of the lines of verses; that they used time words and rhetorical vowel lengthening to signal new units; and finally that they often used a clustering of the above features to signal major divisions such as scenes and acts. All of these devices, except the five-fold occurrence of episodes, are found in the non-myth Sahaptin narratives I have recorded and analyzed. The fondness for a three verb verse, usually in the rhetorical patterning of onset-ongoing-outcome discovered by Dell Hymes in Chinookan, is found in both myth and non-myth narratives, including conversational anecdotes.

During the fall term of 1981 I was able to continue work on additional Sahaptin narratives and, in a new course, Ways of Speaking, to examine a range of English verbal performances which had been recorded by members of the class, all folklore graduate students. These included a traditional Appalachian Maerchen, stories told in a speech at a Mormon family reunion, a medicine show "pitch", stories by a Baltimore screen-painter about his life in the carnival world, jokes and stories told by North Carolina textile workers about their work-place, women's stories told in interviews about their mid-wife assisted home births and the personal narratives told in family conversation by an elderly upper middle class Jewish man from New Jersey.

In the Appalachian traditional story we analyzed, though there was no numbering or counting of the events as they happened, as occurred in Sahaptin, there was clear and conscious organization around the number three: three trials before reaching one's goal, three houses to seek shelter in before finding the right one and so on. This was comparable to the Sahaptin and Chinookan organizations around five.

The Appalachian and all the narratives and other oral genres we looked at also used three, as do Sahaptin and Chinookan, at a less conscious level. Lists of actions performed as single lines tended to contain two verbs, lists of nouns tended to be three in length. In these English materials as in Sahaptin and Chinookan
the pattern number is achieved even if the third item has to be a repetition of one of the others, or a "something like that" or a "what ever they do" or a "what you call it".

The Appalachian narrative was clearly organized as a heirarchy of units at the levels of line, verse, stanza, scene and act. As in the case of non-myth narrative in Sahaptin, the narratives in English which were not, as was Muttismag, a maerchen or other more culturally prescribed narrative form, while not always easily analyzed as having such tight heirarchical structure, did seem to organize lines into verses and groups of verses into larger units. Linguistic devices analogous to those used by Sahaptin narrators to achieve this kind of organization were used in the English narratives we looked at: parallel patterning grouping lines into verses; use of line initial particles such as "well", "so" and "and" to indicate different levels of organization, switching of tense, aspect and/or mood to mark divisions into verses or stanzas; cohesion of these verb categories within units marked by particles and use of time words or phrases in first lines of stanzas.

Two organizing features that I had not found in Sahaptin were present in the English narratives. The first was the repeated use of a particular line to mark the end of a section. For example in Muttismag, the line "and then (they) went on." ends each section in the second part of the story. Going back to my Sahaptin narratives I found that Hazel Suppah had used a similar device in one of her Coyote stories. Once having noticed that, I found the analysis fell into place easily.

In this paper I will focus on the other linguistic device found in the English narratives we worked on and in others I have looked at since. Listening to the Appalachian Muttismag story I recognized as a feature of Appalachian speech the use of a pleonastic pronoun,4

Muttismag, she was a-screamin and a sworpin and a savin around in there.

As I first listened to the story, the "Muttismag, she" was to me just another dialect feature like the "a" prefix of "a-sworpin" and "a-screamin" and the change of final velar to alveolar nasal. It was not until, using initial particles, tense and aspect and content, we had laid the story out into lines, verses and stanzas that we noticed that this pleonastic pronoun occurred only at beginnings of at least stanza size units. Looking more closely we found that it seemed always to occur to introduce a new character or to re-focus on a character as the one who would be the protagonist of the section that followed.

Turning to the other English oral materials we found that it was not confined to traditional or to Appalachian narratives. In the Mormon family reunion speech,5 family members absent when stories are told are often first mentioned this way.

Now Uncle Alex, he always came down to visit

In the New Jersey Jewish man's stories of his life, after a stretch of "so I... and I... and I..., So I... so I" there appears, with no particle marking to signal a new section,

Billy, he writes away and enters us both in the tournament

What Billy does sets off the chain of events narrated for the rest of the story, events in which both Billy and the "I" of the story
are involved. There are a number of this device in the medicine show "pitch" or "spiel", and in the North Carolina mill workers' stories it occurs frequently and always to introduce or refocus on a character.¹

Recently, in the return from English to Sahaptin referred to in the subtitle of this paper, I have begun to consider whether Sahaptin might not have a device for introducing or refocusing on characters analogous to the use of pleonastic pronouns with nouns. That, if it existed, such a device would be unlikely to take the same form in Sahaptin as in English was immediately clear. In contrast to English, where pronouns replace the nouns they refer to, Sahaptin clauses always and obligatorily mark the person and number of subject, and in transitive sentences, of object. This marking is achieved by a system which uses the interactions and combinations of a set of first and second person and number marking clitics with a set of mostly third person and number marking verb prefixes to indicate the basic case relations of the clause. If in Sahaptin a noun subject or object is used, the marking of its person and number in the clitics and verb prefix is still obligatory and is not available therefore as a stylistic device. In addition, in transitive clauses, the case role of the nouns is made completely unambiguous by suffixation of case markers. Nouns in oblique cases are also marked by suffixation.

Sahaptin does have independent personal pronouns. They are declined in paradigms for case and number. Adding one of them to a clause emphasizes one of the case roles(subject or object) indexed in the clitics and prefixes. One might ask then whether one could not, as in English, place an independent pronoun next to a Sahaptin noun as a device for focus on that noun as a character in a narrative.

To understand why this did not seem to me likely to happen one must look at Sahaptin word order.

Despite the almost completely unambiguous marking by person and number marking clitics and prefixes, noun case suffixes and independent pronoun case and number inflections, Sahaptin word order is free in principle only. Most clauses in Sahaptin have a word order in which noun subject and/or object follow the verb. Independent and other pronouns, demonstratives and interrogatives almost always precede the verb. Thus when a noun subject and its independent pronoun are both used in Sahaptin they are usually separated by the verb.

The pre-verb position of independent pronouns, whose emphatic function if fairly obvious and recognized by native speakers who discuss their language with linguists, suggested to me the possibility that pre-posing subject noun to the verb might be the stylistic device I was looking for. All of us who have worked on Sahaptin have been aware of the existence of SV clauses aside from those which occur in elicitation from English glosses. Attempts to elicit from native speakers any differences in meaning of isolated sentences rearranged so that the subject preceded the verb have been largely unsuccessful. Those sentences were acceptable but meant the same as the more usual VS ones. If one assumes as I do that difference in form implies difference in function then looking for that difference in discourse function makes sense. The remainder of this paper then deals with my claim that SV word order serves in Sahaptin narratives to introduce or to refocus on characters.

To investigate the validity of this claim a body of data consisting of sixteen texts was used. Two are ethnographic and fourteen are narratives. Six of the fourteen are myth narratives. The
texts used were recorded on tape from four people at Warm Springs, Oregon: Linton Winishut, Susan Moses, Ellen Squiemphen and Hazel Suppah. They are all active in the traditional ritual and economic life of the tribe. All are, of course, bilingual in English and Sahaptin, though Ellen Squiemphen is reputed to have spoken only Sahaptin, though she knew English, until her last child was raised. The list below gives next to each person’s name his/her age at time of recording and a brief description of each story.

Linton Winishut, age ca. 70.
1. A personal experience narrative about encountering a snake while riding horseback.
2. An excerpt from his Coyote cycle: the revenge of a boy on the man who beheaded his father, Waxupkaiyai.

Susan Moses, age 82.
1. A story about going for tule reeds with three women friends and the man who drove them there outdid them all in women’s work.
2. The myth of Coyote releasing the salmon from the 5 Swallow Sisters’ dam, his learning how to catch salmon and his being tricked by and tricking the Wolves.

Ellen Squiemphen, age 70.
1. A story about going berry-picking for the Huckleberry Feast with Susan Moses and another friend.

Hazel Suppah, age 55-60 in the years the stories were told.
1. The myth about Chipmunk and his grandmother and his getting his stripes from T’atl’aiiya.
2. The myth about how Coyote tricked T’atl’aiiya into pounding her legs on a rock so they would sound pretty, and how she collapsed.

Before the research for this paper was begun, all these texts had been transcribed in lines and analyzed for their organization into verses or stanzas, or in the case of the last two what might more appropriately be called paragraphs. The longer narratives were found also to be organized in larger units, scenes or acts. My procedure...
was first to mark all occurrences of SV where subject was a noun. I also marked cases of SV when subject was an independent pronoun and of OV. These two categories of clauses are not dealt with in this paper, but will be investigated later in the light of its findings. There were one hundred and ten occurrences of SV in the sixteen texts. This confirmed my earlier sense that it was infrequently used in discourse. My next step was to evaluate each occurrence, checking those that seemed clearly to fit the hypothesis and, as other categories of its use began to emerge, marking those with some symbol, such as M for metanarrative comment, P for pronouncement, C for contrast or comparison, Pr for prediction and Ma for manner clause. Overall, as a result of this first count, slightly more than two thirds of the occurrences of SV fit the hypothesis. They are used to mark the first appearance of a "character" or to refocus on one already introduced. It should be clear that the claim is not that all entrances of a character or focus on one are marked by SV but rather that when SV occurs in this body of data, in roughly two out of three cases it seems to serve the function of introducing or refocusing on a character. Table 1 gives the figures for each text.

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After having classified all occurrences of SV in this way, I went back a second time to weigh the decision in each case in light of my developing sense of the other uses of the SV device in these stories, refining the minor categories somewhat, and making notes on insights into the meaning of particular passages in stories arising from attention to this device.

Several examples of how attention to such a rhetorical device can illuminate previously vague or unclear parts of a narrative can be given from my experience with Linton Winishut's "Revenge for the death of Waxupkaiyai." As the story begins, Coyote is going along after his last adventure. He comes up into view of a scene below. He sees that there are lots of people living below. Then, in two SV sentences:

Kaatlam átkaišā, A longhouse is setting there.
Pá:xat jáwáisič kwá:aáwáisitša, Five smoke holes are putting out smoke.

Then he sees a young boy twisting trees and training himself in other ways. They greet and the boy tells Coyote how his grandparents had raised him, taught him to develop his strength and endurance, and finally told him how his father had died when he was a baby. He had been beheaded by a man who had then set himself up in his place as a named leader. He was told that it was in order to avenge his father's death that he was being trained. Coyote, having first predicted that when the people came there would be training of oneself as this boy does and taking of revenge as he will do, then goes on. Asked by the boy to keep their meeting and what he has told him secret, Coyote agrees and does some more predicting of how people will keep promises and secrets. He then goes on toward the village.

So far then we have Coyote having commented on the long house and its five smoke holes in SV sentences and having first heard of the boy's grandparents in an SV sentence, the grandparents who have set the boy on a course of revenge for his father's death. Looking,
back from the end of the story one can see why the long house and the five smoke holes are given prominence by SV, as characters might be. Most of the action of the story takes place in the long house and most importantly the revenge killing takes place there. The possibility of its going on unnoticed is provided for in the stanza quoted below. (The preposed subjects are underlined)

Kw'áli tíaaxw payášmlaitnxámta aukú. They all will come in a crowd then. Auku tíaaxw kwaani au pá:::xnau paxaaxnátítxa. And then all five crawl out from there. Č'a'aiíiča aukú ilkwaía wačiča kwaan lakisá. Just at that moment then the firemaker stayed over at the end. Okay. All ran out now.

Il au. Tíaaxw payáíktn au.

Il:::kašínata páwapiatsimiýa lamtxnut ikúña nčtyšalin.

Kwaamíxi pákxwéxamí xapiłí. He who had done that in a one-sided way to the chief lying there headless, that same one put up his knife. He follows them out.

Kwaamí xi wamáatétwanaxákt'é. When I first worked on this narrative I was puzzled by the pa:::xnau who crawled out in the second verse of this stanza, as well as by the repetition three times of tíaaxw coming out in a crowd, crawling out, running out. But mention of the five smoke holes, made prominent by SV, at Coyote's first looking down at the village, prepares the listener for this detail in the emptying of the long-house in this stanza. The "all five" who crawl out are not five people but five family groups whose five fires in the longhouse the five smoke holes serve. The SV prominence of tíaaxw three times in this climactic stanza points up the fact that the avenger and his victim are alone when the deed is done, and that the dead leader is entirely alone after the avenging boy puts back his knife in the verse that begins with a subject clause, and then "follows them out".

Another previously unclear aspect of the story which was clarified by close attention to SV clauses is Coyote's role. He seemed at first and subsequent readings of this myth to be merely an onlooker, brought in because this story is in a Coyote cycle. Of course he is also useful in doing the predicting which, as a narrator, Linton Winishut uses profusely to show Coyote as the one who laid down ("like the Supreme Court" he once told me) the way the laws should be.

The clue to Coyote's real role comes after he has left the boy and comes to where the longhouse dwellers can see him. They recognize him right away and say,

"Hehehe, whatever has he Coy-ináčičáwa?" He goes into the longhouse then and they say,

"Nahai ċuyau iwiyálaviša Spilyáí? " What's Coyote coming for?" Čaunamúčau tun čačáiwit načičita."

This is the first time the people there focus on Coyote and it is marked by SV construction and followed immediately by a curious line about "It's snowing a little." Then come their suspicions of his bringing something bad. This mention of snow looks ahead to snow's entry as a noun subject in an SV sentence. It is snow that brings the people close to starvation, to avert which all and sundry are ordered by the leader to dance and sing to bring the warm rain. (This too takes place in the long house.) The suggestion highlighted above is that Coyote has brought the snow. The long unsuccessful dancing and singing to call the warm wind keeps the people inside
the long house. It prevents their discovering that the real
wood-cutter-carrier fire-maker who must give as his password to
go in and out of the long house the sentence "Inis awaq'uwunka
Waxupkaiyaina." 'I beheaded Waxupkaiyai.' has been knocked out
by the avenging boy who has taken his place in order to have
access to the long house. It is when the supposed wood-cutter
makes a mistake, saying, "I'm going to behead Waxupkaiyai" that
the ensuing fight between the door keepers Bullhead and Crayfish
over what he really said leads to their falling in the water and
to everyone's running out of the longhouse to watch. This gives
the boy his chance for revenge.

Coyote is focused on as someone the people believe brings bad
things. In almost the same breath they say, "It's snowing a little." If Coyote
did bring the snow it was no small thing to have done,
setting off the whole chain of events that made the revenge suc-
cessful. Thus attention to the signals Linton Winishut gives with
these SV sentences shows Coyote's presence in the story to be by
no means gratuitous. Another example of how attention to the use
of SV sentences can illuminate a narrative is in Susan Moses' story
about going for tule reeds. She goes with three other women in a
car driven by Mr. Elston, the Baptist minister, who takes along his
rifle to hunt deer as the women cut tule for mats. There are only
three occurrences of SV in this narrative. The first singles out
K'iyámsa from the group of women, all of whom when they get there
actually feel too lazy to cut much, as one who is not cutting much.
It is to her that Mr. Elston, having returned from hunting without
success, turns to ask about how much she has cut. Then in a SV
sentence.

Au ci "Mr. Elston" iwípn xapími. Now this Mr Elston takes the knife.
Ku au ísáxtl'kn
au ísáxtl'kn
au ísáxtl'kn.
He brings out the reeds, bundles them and ends up giving them away
to the women who have cut so little. The section then ends with an-
other SV sentence.
'Awatás ci wínánm wálkut wá'au íku. This man of reputation outdid us,
wá'au íku pi'nápmán.' outdid the four of us.

This second SV (subject underlined) is not a focus on Mr. Elston
as an important actor in what follows, the journey home and how all
their tule reeds came to grief instead of getting made into mats for
wrapping their bodies when they died. Rather, this SV sentence is the
point of the story, the joke on these four women of a man's doing
women's proper work and outdoing them at it. If it also pokes a bit
of fun at Mr. Elston that is a sign of his acceptance as belonging
at Warm Springs. Looking back now at the first sentence in this quote-
verse, one understands why it is that, though he re-enters the scene
when he comes back from hunting with nothing to show for it, and
though he speaks with K'iyámsa in the verse preceding this one, it is
at the point when he takes her knife and begins to do the womens'
work that he is focused on with SV.

A similar relationship of two SV occurrences to each other, with
one summing up the point of the story, is seen in Linton Winishut's
story about encountering a snake while riding on horseback. Again
there are only three SV sentences in a story of similar length. The
first introduces his horse.
Tl'xát k'úsí iwačí, čautún xalq’uklá. 'Gentle that horse was, never afraid of anything.' The next twenty four lines tell not of gentle fearlessness but of his startling, shying, almost throwing his rider and of attempts to control him. The second SV sentence introduces the villain, the rattlesnake, never mentioned by name but hinted at and glimpsed. Then it is for the first time mentioned by a noun: Wauk’ánmas šapáqapalułúuxna. "That damned thing almost got me in the water." This SV sentence (subject underlined) is followed by descriptions of Linton Winishut’s killing of the snake. Now in a reference back to the first sections, we are told that the horse was jumpy all day and that it never had been a jumpy one. This is followed by the third SV occurrence. Čiyavánummačičači k'úsí. 'That no good one spoiled my horse.' This mention of the snake again (though still not by name) in an SV sentence is the point of the story and ties it back up to the first SV sentence where the horse is described as gentle, not afraid of anything.

In choosing these examples to discuss at some length I would not want to suggest that all uses of SV are as interesting. In fact, of the seventy-seven instances of SV which I have classified as confirming the hypothesis that SV serves to introduce or refocus on characters, most were quite simple and straightforward examples. Hazel Suppah’s story about Raven and her children serves well to illustrate simple straightforward occurrences of SV as an introducing or refocusing device. It has thirteen SV in all. Ten were classified as in the hypothesized category. Of these nine are clear and simple.

The first mention of the woman Raven, the first appearance and mention of T'at'aliya, the first appearance of T'at'aliya’s children, and the first appearance of Crane are all SV. Raven’s children are focused on in SV as all alone after she has flown off. They are rementioned in SV by T’at’aliya when she first becomes aware of them and just before she catches them and puts them in her bag. T'at'aliya is refocused on in SV as she arrives back home where her children are, and again as she arrives at the river just after the Raven children have escaped across it. Crane is refocused on in SV as he begins his prediction speech after T'at’aliya has drowned.

The one other case counted as a case of focus, but problematically, occurs in the scene where the children are calling out that Ālitičas' children have burned. The first two times T’at’aliya stops and comments that someone is calling her name. The third time, though their call is still in VS, she stops and repeats it as an SV "Miyálnams luun." 'Your children have burned.' After another call, she says again "Miyánamáluu luun", drops her basket and runs home. Whether or not one wants to count this as a case of focus on a new character(s) or not, since the children have been saying Miyána, it is the case nevertheless that it is not until the time of the first SV involving miyaná, which T'at'aliya herself speaks, that she is responding to their calls as being anything more than "someone calling my name". It marks her first hearing of the fact that it is her children that they are calling out about.

At times SV is used not so much to refocus on a character as to focus on some aspect of his identity. An example of this occurs in Hazel Suppah’s story of Coyote’s release of the salmon which had been dammed up by the Five Swallow Sisters. As Coyote, who has been posing as a baby, begins serious work on breaking the dam, one of them breaks her digging stick and taking it as an omen they rush home. As they arrive they call out, in an SV sentence, "Oh where is our baby?" This refocus on Coyote’s identity as their baby comes just
before they see the tip of his tail as he works at breaking the dam. Then as Mrs. Suppah phrases it, "They clubbed him, they clubbed him, they clubbed him, those mothers."

In her story of Coyote's encountering T'at'aliya and eventually tricking her into pounding her legs with a stone to make them sound as pretty as his magically transformed ones which say ~ai'~ai'~ai', Hazel Suppah uses an SV sentence at the point at which Coyote, who has been helplessly and fearfully watching the Kw'alalí's approach, decides to take action. This use of SV comes at the beginning of a stanza marked by particle and by aspect and directional shift. The stanza begins the section in which Coyote turns to his turd sisters for advice, takes that advice and overcomes the T'at'aliya. The sentence is, "Aaktu 'laak man' winš ipxwinxaika." 'And then the man thinks, what to do?'. Surely the focus on winš, 'man', as a name for Coyote symbolizes his taking manly action.

Another clear example of this type of focus also occurs in the same story by Susan Moses cited above. As Coyote goes along upriver he tries to catch some of the salmon he has released. Standing on the rocks, he calls to them, "Come to me, my creations!" They jump up out of the river, he grabs, they're slippery and the rocks are slick and he loses them. In the first verse of the next stanza the opening line is "Au kwla yalwa'i h&i iwlf'xpa aukti." 'Then that poor thing couldn't grab them then.' This is not a refocus on Coyote, who has been playing the major part in what precedes, but a focus on him as a poor being who can't catch fish and must turn to his turd sisters and plead for help. Whereas Hazel Suppah in the example above focuses on him at a similar point as a man who decides to take action by asking his sisters for advice, the stress here is on his pitifulness.

Before concluding, I will present selected examples of some of the categories into which the thirty-three occurrences of SV which do not fit the hypothesized function seem to fall. They are: metanarrative comments; pronouncements and predictions; intrusions of mention of a character into the ongoing focus on the activity of another character; contrasts and comparisons and formulaic lines used by particular narrators. The number in each of these categories (with only thirty-three examples to be accounted for) are too small to be significant. Explanation by example, however, seems worthwhile in case they should turn out to be real categories in Sahaptin or other languages.

Hazel Suppah uses SV in some metanarrative comments. In the story of her trip to Crow Celebration there is one, "That must be how those people do a give-away." In the myth about the wrestling match between the North and East wind, as Taaksyai, a young woman of the North Wind people is heard (in VS) approaching the house where she lives miserably the sentence "l;axni the young avenger's grandparents ~ni Taaksy~i iw;taxasta" occurs. With meaning 'That Taaksyai must have been a cripple.' it is clearly a metanarrative comment, and it is an SV sentence. In the myth "Raven and Her Children," Hazel Suppah uses SV for a metanarrative comment after the sister asks her brother "Quick, where is your flint?". "Xaśtwai miimi áswan sxáuxas âkwiya sxapspa." 'Already the boy had put flint under his nails.' follows immediately.

The category of comparisons and contrasts is interesting. In contrasts the first action is given in regular word order and the second in SV. Again, examples from Hazel Suppah's "Wrestling Match",...
They told her, "Pour!"

The old woman didn't.

And then North Wind’s wife poured out water.

The old woman poured out right after with soup.

This is actually a two-stage contrast. The old woman does not pour when told to. In contrast the North wind woman does pour water. Then in contrast to her the old woman pours right after with soup.

This contrast of not pouring with pouring and of pouring soup rather than water is highlighted I think by use of SV. Another example of a kind of contrast occurs in Coyote and T’at’aliya after Coyote has transformed his legs to make a lovely noise. Twice a sequence occurs as follows:

In VS order, T’at’aliya listens to and comments on his legs and asks how she can get some. Coyote in an SV sentence just walks around:

Kwaan'itya au Spilyai itkwani'tkwani'ixa. This seems a kind of contrast of her begging, admiring, and his wordless walking around with his legs sounding ‘ai’ ‘ai’ ‘ai’.

Perhaps worth noting are the occurrences of what seem like formulas used by a narrator that use SV. In Linton Winishut’s myth cited above there are three dependent clauses of manner which are in SV. This may be a category in itself but perhaps it is significant rather that all three have ci aswan as subject and all are in predictions about how people will train themselves, take revenge,"as this boy does" or will do. These clauses may be formulaic for this narrator. Similarly, Hazel Suppah uses SV in a way that may be formulaic for her. In the three myths she told that have T’at’aliya as a character, another character approaches someone and asks for help in an SV sentence on the model of "Kw’alinam-as atas itwapin." In one case the verb is iwams. All announce that 'A dangerous being is after me.' Whether this formula is idiosyncratic to Mrs. Suppah or is more generally used remains to be investigated.

An example of SV occurring in a pronouncement is from the Linton Winishut revenge myth. It is a pronouncement by the leader to the wood-cutter-carrier fire-maker. "Kw’alinam au ikus qw’aait au, im Waxainactwaxainactla pinawiyaaxwata." ‘This is how you woodcutter will plainly announce yourself as you go along.’ Note that this is also an occurrence of pronoun (im ‘you’) plus name. Another SV pronouncement in the same story occurs near the end when the "know-it-alls" are discussing together after the burial of the dead leader. The subject of this SV sentence is the relative clause meaning ‘He who beheaded him’. The sentence continues "that one shall sit in his place, Waxupkaiyai."

One final example of a minor category is of a sentence about one character interpolated into the text in the midst of narration of the activities of another character. In the Chipmunk story, as the T’at’aliya is looking around for him all in SV sentences in habitual aspect -xa, there is a sentence saying in continuative aspect -sa and in SV form that, "The grandmother is feeling afraid of that T’at’aliya!" The narrative then returns to SV sentences in habitual aspect concerning T’at’aliya’s finding Chipmunk. When the grandmother reenters the narrative to ask that Chipmunk’s bones be left when he is eaten it is in SV.

These examples suggest the nature of minor categories of the use of SV that emerged in examining each case. A very few remain unexplained. One for example seems to be a false start, a line
begun and then dropped. What the function of the SV would have been if that path had been pursued one can not tell. As more work is done on SV and on the functions of OV and on the function of use of independent pronouns there may be evidence for or against the reality of these categories which many of the thirty-three occurrences that did not fit the hypothesized function seemed to suggest.

There are three points I wish to make with this paper. The first is pointed to in the title. It is my firm belief that those of us who work primarily with American Indian languages, and especially with text analysis, can discover things about our own language by bringing to bear on it the results of our research. Conversely we can find out things in work on texts in our own language which can illuminate our work on Indian languages. This is not part of a search for universals but of the slow process of adding to what is known about human languages, which is what interests me as a linguist.

The second point is that research on the stylistic organization of Sahaptin narratives led me, by a circuitous route to understanding of the function in narrative of what had at first seemed a minor dialect feature of Appalachian English, the "Muttsmag, she" phenomenon. Finding that its use in English narrative to introduce and/or focus on a character went beyond Appalachian led to a search for a device in Sahaptin that might serve the same function. This search led to an understanding of the previously elusive meaning of SV word order. This journey seems to me to have implications for the usefulness of working in more than one language at more than one linguistic level. I feel certain that what I have learned from my research on SV clauses will lead me to further work on the role of independent pronouns and of OV in Sahaptin narratives and that this work will result in deeper understanding of particular narratives in the same way that work on SV has.

The third point I wish to make is that focusing on analogous functions in two languages and searching for the forms that serve them is more fruitful than looking at directly analogous forms. Noun-Pronoun subjects do occur in Sahaptin. They are a very small subset of the one hundred and ten cases of SV that I found. If I had looked first for the directly analogous form and found those few cases that do occur, it might not have been possible to make any judgement about their function. As it now stands, knowing definitely that SV clauses do serve a discourse function analogous to that of pleonastic pronouns in English, the need for a closer look at all uses of independent pronouns and of OV clauses is clear. So too is the need to look for any special function of SV clauses with subjects consisting of Noun-Pronoun or Pronoun-Noun.
FOOTNOTES

1. "Warm Springs Sahaptin Verse Analysis." The same paper was presented at a session on Native American Literature organized by Jerrold Ramsey at the Modern Language Association Annual meeting in New York City, December 28, 1981. An expanded version to include subsequent research was presented under the same title at the "Workshop on Native American Discourse" in Austin, Texas, April 9-11, 1982. This workshop was organized by Joel Sherzer and Anthony Woodbury.

2. I am indebted to the members of that class for their hard work, rich data, keen insights and continual intellectual stimulation as we worked together discovering the linguistic features used by the people whose stories and other verbal performances they had recorded. Special thanks go to Charlotte Ross, Doug DeNatale, Susan Vorscheimer and Pter Lowry whose data are either cited or specifically referred to in this paper. The contributions of Mario Montano and Charlene Poirier whose respective work on Mexican Spanish and French Canadian narratives added a dimension to our work, and of Bonnie Blair, Pat Amos and Maggie Craig are all gratefully acknowledged as is that of the unnamed friend from New Jersey whose story is quoted.

3. Charlotte Ross generously shared recordings of her own and Cratis Williams' tellings of Nuttsmag with our class. As was true for me in Sahaptin, working with a highly organized traditional narrative more easily gave understanding of the rhetorical patterns which one then finds used also in other oral genres. The arrangement of its lines cited here was arrived at jointly during an informal seminar during the spring term.


5. Susan Vorscheimer ms.

6. From a transcription made by a family member.


8. They say, "Il, pūl au iñáxtišn auku." 'Yes, snow is falling, now then.' The usual way to speak of falling snow is to use the verb to snow, twanána-. Pūl refers to snow on the ground. Of course, it is the fallen snow that threatens the people with starvation, keeping the hunters from catching deer. Perhaps pūl is well chosen here.

9. Though both Bullhead and Crayfish are introduced in this verse it is the second, Crayfish, who is subject of an SV sentence. In conjoined nouns it is the second that takes the suffix showing they are a pair, and all other suffixes.

REFERENCES
