

A pattern of verbal irony in Chinookan

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Humor is an essential aspect of American Indian narratives, yet many of the analyses and explanations of myths and tales forget that one reason the stories were told and preserved is that people enjoy them so much. Vi Hilbert, an elder of the Lushootseed-speaking people of Washington, has reminded others of the need to pay attention to such humor (1983). In this paper I will explore a Chinookan pattern, one whose discovery sheds light both on certain texts and on a theory of verbal irony.

Verbal detail and stock responses

One reason for attention to verbal pattern and detail is that it can help us guard against stock responses that mistake the nature of a situation. Pratfalls and comeuppances may of course be self-evidently humorous independently of the words used to translate them, but sometimes we need to discover emergent configurations of meaning through close attention to verbal detail.

This need has impressed itself upon me recently in connection with the figure of the trickster-transformer, Coyote. Many whites found Coyote a scandal. Today many of us find him a wrong-doer who can do no wrong. Each preconception can mislead. If we elevate Coyote to the status of mythological and imaginative figure par excellence, we do an injustice to the ways in which native traditions may put him in his place, subordinate to true heroes such as Eagle, Salmon, Panther. It seems no accident that a trickster, such as Coyote, Bluejay, or Mink, is never shown in command of a song, and often enough is shown forgetting or failing to master one, song being a serious manifestation of power. (Hymes ms).

Let me cite a widespread type of story, that of the Bungling Host. One host provides food spectacularly or magically. A guest, typically a trickster such as Coyote, tries to emulate and reciprocate but fails. The failure is commonly funny, as when Coyote tries to emulate Fish Hawk in diving through the winter ice for fish, but stuns himself. This is comic, whatever the language, but our very label for the type of story may lead us to overlook the other pole of the story, the Beneficent Host, whose conduct expresses both chiefly hospitality and the providential nature of the world. And the attempted emulation is not always funny. In Victoria Howard's remarkable telling of 'Seal took them to the ocean' (Jacobs 1958, text 26, pp. 207-26), Bluejay attempts to emulate Sturgeon's provision of food from his wife's flesh. Sturgeon's wife is restored unhurt, but Bluejay's wife dies. The two protagonists of the story are shown dismayed. And in his telling in Wishram Chinook of 'Coyote and Deer' Louis Simpson carefully selects verbal detail to contrast Deer, as a providential, bountiful host, and Coyote, as a person isolated from others. His social isolation is conveyed in a choice for him of intransitive or reflexive constructions of verbs, as against transitive constructions for Deer, when each speaks, and the agrammatical use of 'the woman' (instead of the relational 'his wife') at the moment at which he seizes her, only to be prevented from killing her by Deer. The point of the story as a lesson about the providential nature of the world is explicit in a statement, twice-repeated, by Deer; in the story's one long speech, that on which it ends, the wife's remonstrance to Coyote; and in the presentation of Deer in each of the three scenes as a source not only of meat but also blood. (A

certain initial particle is reserved in the story exclusively for the lines about provision of blood). Yet a reader of the manuscript in which the telling is analyzed (Hymes 1985b) found Coyote's taking of a knife to his wife funny. I can only guess that an established stereotype of the bumbling host as invariably funny overrode the details of the text itself.

Presentation of texts

The texts examined in this paper are organized in terms of lines and groups of lines, as are Chinookan narratives generally, and, as we are discovering, those of many peoples. (See Hymes 1981 for a discussion of the discovery and the principles involved). For the purpose of this paper the 'ethnopoetic' presentation has the value of showing the makeup of the texts clearly and of making precise reference easy. In longer narratives the organization is crucial to their interpretation. In three of the texts here (Kilipashda's joshing, Whistling, Milt) the rhetorical logic that informs such organization also contributes to how they are to be taken, as will be pointed out.

A theory of irony

Ironical remarks have usually been analyzed in terms of propositional meaning. One thing is said, but the opposite is figuratively meant. In a path-breaking paper Sperber and Wilson (1981) have transcended the traditional account and its dependence on propositional content. They show that a more adequate and comprehensive understanding of the range of utterances to which irony belongs can be obtained if one distinguishes between the use (assertion) of a proposition and its mention. Why should a person not use a literal statement (e.g., 'What awful weather'), if it has the same meaning as

the ironical statement ('What lovely weather')? Both are about the weather. Sperber and Wilson find a crucial distinction on the grounds that the literal statement expresses an attitude toward what it is about (here, the weather), while the ironical statement expresses an attitude toward the utterance itself. This distinction between use and mention enables Sperber and Wilson to illuminate a wide range of phenomena. They develop a conception of irony as echoic mention. Echoic mention can range from response to something just said to something more remote, including an imputed thought or implicit standard or norm.

Sperber and Wilson show that their account in terms of mention of a proposition, rather than use of it, makes sense of the existence of an 'ironical tone of voice', and of switch in style or register to mark one's utterance as ironical, since the utterance itself is in focus. Further, they claim as central and original to their approach that

"an ironical remark will have as natural target the originators, real or imagined, of the utterance or opinions being echoed..... (thus) When the utterance or opinion echoed has no specific originator, there will be no victim; when there is a specific, recognizable originator, he will be the victim. Thus, when the speaker echoes himself, the irony will be self-directed; when he echoes his hearer, the result will be sarcasm. In the traditional framework, the ad hominem character of irony is a function of the propositional content of the utterance; in our framework, it is a function of the ease with which some originator of the opinion echoed can be recognized." (p. 314).

On this approach, a hearer's understanding of an utterance crucially involves both recognizing it as a case of mention (rather than use), and also recognizing the speaker's attitude toward the proposition mentioned. They conclude that where no echoing is discernible, an utterance will never be ironical (pp. 308, 316).

Sperber and Wilson conclude that the necessary inclusion of attitude in the analysis of irony shows the interpretation of utterances cannot be analyzed adequately in terms of propositions alone. A logical-pragmatic theory dealing with interpretation must be supplemented by a 'rhetorical-pragmatic' or 'rhetorical' theory dealing with evocation. This suggestion seems to me entirely correct, and indeed it converges with the work of several linguistic anthropologists on the place of ethnopoetic organization in grammar (e.g., Woodbury, McLendon), and my own conception of the nature of grammar itself.

Linguists from Bloomfield to Postal have recognized that linguistic analysis depends ultimately upon assumptions as to some utterances counting as repetitions in a community, and some as in contrast. William Labov's New York City department store study provides a clear instance of the existence of two kinds of repetition and contrast. From a 'referential' or 'propositional' standpoint, two utterances of 'On the fourth floor' are repetitions; 'on the fifth floor' might be a contrast. Labov's study demonstrated the respect in which two successive utterances of 'on the fourth floor' can be in contrast, whereas 'on the fourth floor' and 'on the fifth floor' might be repetitions.

This respect is 'expressive' or 'presentational', involving an attitude toward some aspect of the speech event--the utterance itself (clarification, emphasis), or the questioner or oneself (because of greater self-consciousness or shift in definition of the situation).

Just so, I have proposed, aspiration and vowel length may be true phonological universals, relevant in all languages. Languages may differ simply in which dimension of contrast is involved in the relevance, propositional or presentational (e.g., as between English and French with regard to word-initial aspiration).

Sperber and Wilson in effect are saying that two utterances which would count as repetitions propositionally may count as in contrast presentationally. The traditional theory, which relies on propositions alone, cannot account for a choice between 'lovely' and 'awful' in regard to weather, if both mean the same thing. For them the two can contrast because one can be taken as expressing a belief about the utterance rather than by means of it. Just so, two utterances of 'What lovely weather' can contrast (one meant literally, one ironically in virtue of echoic mention). Contrariwise, utterances of 'lovely' and 'awful' could count as repetitions presentationally (both instances of literal use, or both instances of mention). In general, what count as the same and different, propositionally, within conversational paradigms depends on both referential and expressive features. Let us take the terms 'lovely' and 'awful' in the phrase 'What....weather', recognizing that 'awful' used on a lovely day can be ironical too.

In general, one has a repetition in terms of proposition in those cases in which the relationship between the terms and between the statuses of the utterances are the same: 'lovely' repeated in the same status (mention or use), 'awful' so repeated, both term and status being the same; and 'lovely' replaced by 'awful', and mention by use, or conversely, both term and status being different. (Thus, a literal use of 'lovely', an ironical use of 'awful, or conversely).

One has a contrast in terms of proposition in those cases in which the relationship between the terms and that between the statuses is not the same: 'lovely' repeated, but once as use, once as mention; or 'lovely' replaced by 'awful', both instances being mention or both being use. The following chart summarizes the pattern:

| Term | Status | |
|-------|--------|------------|
| same | same | repetition |
| diff. | diff. | repetition |
| same | diff. | contrast |
| diff. | same | contrast |

All this points to descriptive identification of the features and contexts in a group or community which serve to identify metalinguistic status. Communities may differ in the number and frequency of features that enable a speaker to convey, and a hearer to perceive, an attitude toward an utterance, such as mention rather than use. Communities may differ in the expectations associated with situations, persons, topics, and other components of speech events, such that some support or even call for a particular status, or key. And of course some configurations of factors support a particular status or key more easily

than others (cf. Hymes 1974, ch. 9).

Sperber and Wilson's brilliant contribution requires amplification in other ways as well. The attitudes they take into account in their article are almost entirely negative:

"the speaker's choice of words, his tone (doubtful, questioning, scornful, contemptuous, approving, and so on), and the immediate context. all play a part in indicating his own attitude to the proposition mentioned. In particular, the speaker may echo a remark in such a way as to suggest that the finds it untrue, inappropriate, or irrelevant..." (307);

"The utterances in question are patently ironical: The speaker mentions a proposition in such a way as to make clear that he rejects it as ludicrously false, in appropriate, or irrelevant."

Attitudes can range more broadly, both in mention and in irony, including irony that conveys amused surprise, detachment, recognition, sorrow, pleasure at a notion entertained. And someone can mention what someone else has said, and signal an attitude, intending both to be recognized, and be negative, without ironic effect. Suppose the mention to be put as a question. The implicit request for clarification or confirmation, may address the form of what was said, or the mentioned proposition, or both, saying in effect, 'Did you say this?' or "Look at what so-and-so said;" but can be negative without being ironic. It may be simply censorious.

For such a remark to be ironic, I suspect that it must convey an attitude toward what is mentioned that calls attention to its relation to the situation in such a way as to reframe that relation. If a distinction

can be maintained between repetition and quotation, then a clear case of irony would be one in which the mention was clearly quotation, not repetition, and not merely negative in force, but reframing.

Something of the following may apply: I call attention to what you said, by quoting it, and question its appropriateness as a way of naming this situation; by doing so I intend to convey that it is ironic that you should have said what you did.

In short, the double conveying of mention and attitude seem essential, but not sufficient. Nor does it seem sufficient to take for granted a negative attitude. Irony appears to involve in addition a calling attention to something as contrary to expectation, or otherwise inappropriate, through a reframing.

All this seems required at least by the Chinookan examples to be discussed, and if the analysis of irony is to encompass complex scenes and literature. There it can indeed be found to be a matter fundamentally of perspective rather than of a particular attitude. A playwright may intend, a human scene may evoke, a sense of irony through a perspective not available to those observed. And the playwright or storyteller may select and dispose linguistic features so as to make the implication evident, even though the strategies are those of an author, not of a speaker. But of course interpretation of utterances as ironic can not be restricted to those so intended by speakers. Just as a community may have some who put things ironically more often than others, so it may have some who take things ironically more often than others. Once the

function is invoked, we can not segregate what it subtends, except arbitrarily. The life of irony and of competence in irony in a community is a dialectic among speakers and hearers, writers and readers, doers and observers. Ultimately, in the intellectual community to which we belong, the notion of irony may become a notion of corrective, comprehensive perspective, or dialectic, and true irony be thought of as humble irony (Burke 1945: 512, 514).

Sperber and Wilson certainly are right to call for empirical examination of a range of types of utterance and effects (298), and to urge that one not take for granted the existence of a unified category of irony. But just as a wider range of possible attitudes needs to be allowed for, so does a wider range of possibilities in the way in which an utterance may have a target for its irony. The originators, real or imagined, of the utterance are not always the victim, or target, of the remark. The Chinookan examples now to be discussed show as much.

In short, Sperber and Wilson seem to me to have provided a breakthrough, but the opening they make possible must be conceived more widely than they do themselves. The resources of a community in terms of features and contexts associated with irony need to be identified; the range of attitudes that may be present is broader than their examples and discussion suggest; and the target of irony is not uniquely singled out as the source of what is taken as echoic mention. Irony indeed may be an unintended effect. When intended, it may not echoic in any sense of the term that implies a previous or standard use. An ironic remark may be novel, the first such naming of a situation; the ingredient answering to the notion of 'echoic mention' may be an implicit

comparison of perspectives, that present to another possibility in which what is said might be said, perhaps a possibility in the future.

The essential contribution of Sperber and Wilson, then, is to direct analysis of mention and attitude. Something will be intentionally ironic through intending to be recognized as mentioning, and as conveying an attitude toward what is mentioned. Something will be taken as ironic by being perceived as if it were to be mentioned with an attitude toward what is mentioned.

I have suggested that calling attention to something as contrary to expectation, or otherwise inappropriate, through reframing, is requisite as well. Although irony may be thought of as first of all verbal, such criteria can apply to actions as well.

A Chinookan pattern

The examples to be considered now all share a pattern of the following kind. Two turns at talk succeed each other, the one being response to the other. Each involves entertaining in the mind, as naming a situation, something contrary to expectation. There is an alteration of perspective together with an attitude toward it. There is echoic mention, either in the sense of what someone has said or in the sense of what the community might be taken to say. The irony need not single out the originator of what is mentioned. Throughout, the second turn tops the first, commonly scornfully.

I should mention what Jacobs says in his book on Clackamas literature. In a chapter on 'Humor' (1959b, ch. XII, 178-86) elements taken to be stimuli for humor are classified and counted. Irony is Type 10,

which includes 'irony, satire, sarcasm; understatement, exaggeration' (180). 41 instances are registered in Table 4, constituting about 4 per cent of the total number of stimuli to humor noticed. Later Jacobs says of the type that it

"which connects especially with the factor of incongruity in type 6 ('eccentricity; incorrect behavior, the forbidden; incongruity; narcissisms, greed, penuriousness'), is very likely universal too. These devices were not often employed in Clackamas literature except on a linguistic level. For example, Chinook possessed consonantal shifts which expressed diminutive or augmentative nuances. Occasional employment of such devices for the purpose of incongruous connotations provoked amusement" (183). Nothing is said in the chapter of the examples discussed in this paper or their pattern.

The pattern noticed here may not be frequent in the data available to us, overall, but it is frequent in the accounts Mrs. Howard gave of remembered conversation, and it informs at least two significant myths (discussed below). The pattern reinforces David French's discovery that formal occasions were constituted verbally by one speaker repeating the words of another (see last part of Hymes 1966). That two-part pattern connects otherwise separate practices. The present pattern is even more strongly dialogic. Perhaps it will be found more widely in dialogic data, both from Chinookans and from others in the region.

The four accounts to be presented first are all from Mrs. Victoria Howard, as told to Melville Jacobs in 1929 and 1930. The first myth is in Clackamas as told by her as well. A second myth was told by Charles Cultee to Franz Boas in 1891. (Because of their length, I do not give the myths in full).

Kilipashda's joshing during a spirit-power dance:
heads, fences.

Jacobs (1959a: n. 544) says that "This short text was dictated in order to illustrate some Clackamas attitudes and components of humor during the nineteenth century." I suppose that this means that he asked Mrs. Howard to dictate something of such a character. He does not name anyone from whom Mrs. Howard heard it; but her repertoire of myths and legends and traditional knowledge generally came from her mother-in-law and her mother's mother. Both can be connected to this account. Kilipashda, the woman who initiates the retorts in each scene, figures in Mrs. Howard's account of her mother-in-law's reminiscences of nineteenth century life, coming in at the very end as a partner in conversations with her grandmother (553-6). The Wasusgani of the second scene is in fact Mrs. Howard's mother-in-law. Kilipashda's prominence leads me to guess that her partner, the grandmother, is the source of this account; but the second part is the sort of a thing a person, such as the mother-in-law, might have told about herself. A final conjecture: the person who tells the old folks to stop laughing (and interfering with the serious business of the spirit-power dance) is marked by subject pronoun as 'she'. Perhaps that 'she' was the grandmother, in which case she is indeed the likely source.

Because of Kilipashda's central role in both parts (Text 138, 'Joshing during a spirit-power dance') I have modified the title assigned by Jacobs by putting her name at the beginning. I have also added at the end the topics of joshing (heads, fences).

The first scene consists of an introduction without a narrative tense (lines 1-6), and four stanzas that each contain a turn at talk (708, 9, 10-14; 15, 16-19; 20-2; 23-4). The second scene also has five stanzas; the third and fourth contain quoted turns at talk, and the fifth a reported one (25-7; 28-31; 32-4, 35, 36-7, 38-9, 40-1; 42-5; 46-8).

In scene i the first exchange involves figurative speech and a certain logic: if a, then b. Kilipashda says that the new arrivals are workers, because they bring mauls. That derives from the fact that the first whites in the lower Columbia River valley used foot-long blocks of oak as mauls. The point is to allude to the shapes of the heads of the children the newcomers carry in. Traditional Clackamas, especially those of status, had the heads of their infants flattened. Non-Chinookans, including captured slaves, could usually be recognized by the lack of such flattening. Thus the newcomers to the dance are disparaged as outsiders, perhaps as whites, possibly even as slaves.

The remark entertains the surprising possibility that workers (perhaps whites) are entering with their tools. The attitude to the proposition is that it is to be thought of for the moment as true, that what one could say accurately if one saw workers packing mauls can be said now. The attitude toward the target picked out by the remark of course is depreciatory. The target is not picked out as an originator of the remark, quite the contrary. It is assumed that only Clackamas will understand (and enjoy) what is said.

The James who responds is a half-breed, James Wilson, who understands Clackamas. The very fact of response is part of topping the first remark. In addition he turns the topic of heads around with another use of the if-then

logic, and a comparison that is verbally explicit: if yours, then just like cattle.

(The phrasing is a bit awkward. One would expect diwi 'like' to follow the word preceded by ti'a; and -gimx at the end of 'cattle' seems a truncated form of 'they would say' (cf. '(she) would say' in 42)). All this could be a slip or without intention, but perhaps it is meant to convey less than native competence.)

The laugh, then, is on the Clackamas old people. An outsider understands them and makes an unflattering comparison about their heads. (That outsiders might understand their language has often been a source of interest and amusement to Chinookans).

The second exchange has to do with verbal interaction. Those who spoke first speak again and laugh still more. The laughter is directed at themselves, and perhaps they can be taken as echoing what others might say about them. Soon a woman asks, "I wonder (wiska has a connotation of contrary to expectation) what-time you-will-make-yourself quiet?" The first speakers are topped again.

The first part of scene ii has Wasusgani quoting her own thought at the time of her predicament with an attitude, how silly. The irony is self-reported and self-directed. Jacobs explains from information from Mrs. Howard (1959a: 662, n. 546):

"So, she spent the night out in a field. The occupants of a nearby house had not heard her calls, and in the darkness she had not perceived the house".

Kilipashda retorts that the quoted thoughts are not ironic, but deceptive; the reported situation should be named 'Someone was made to sleep over' (was copulating)'. In challenging the other's attitude toward her own words, Kilipashda of course intends to have her attitude toward

her own words understood as joshing. The proposition mentioned is to be taken in jest. To give sexual implications to a remark or situation is a staple of Chinookan humor indeed. Once when my wife were taken to lunch at WamSprings with several women from a workshop, a reference of mine to something paired was taken up so that any mention of things paired or opposed was hilarious.

The scene ends like the first, except that what is said is reported rather than quoted: continuous laughing, chiding to stop, and compressed in a single final stanza.

There is perhaps a verbal echo, even pun, in Kilipashda's retort. The word for 'fence' has the stem -q'lax here. (In Wasco it has the form -q'alax and perhaps does here as well, since in the next sentence the first vowel of Kilipashda's name is also elided). Now the particle in the retort, laxlax 'deceive', has the same root at least in shape ('fence' is presumably -q'a-lax in origin). One can conjecture that a notion of 'barring, keeping from' provides a link. Peter McGuff, Sapir's associate in his Wishram Chinook field work, wrote down a gloss as 'fence, like precipice', and there is another stem -q'a-lal 'to keep secret by not mentioning or telling about' (with -lal 'continuative').

The two parts of each scene are woven together by the rhetorical logic in Chinookan through which the third unit in a sequence of five is a pivot. It culminates an initial triad and at the same time initiates another. Thus in the first scene James' retort culminates the first exchange (1-6; 7-14; 15-19) and at the same time triggers off the second (15-19; 20-22; 23-24). Likewise in scene ii Wasusgani's account of her misadventure culminates the first sequence, which is devoted to that, and at the same time initiates the second sequence (Kilipashda's response and the brief report of the final exchange

(25-7; 28-31; 32-41/32-41; 42-45; 46-48). In both scenes the situation and words of the first speaker are elaborated. Notice that 'in fact' marks the beginning of the pivotal stanza in i, of the pivotal line in the main speech in ii. In sum, both scenes have two exchanges, and while parallel in structure of content, are somewhat differently organized in terms of lines and groups of lines. In each the pivotal stanza is structurally elaborated, that of the first scene by the pairing of two initial particle markers ('i. truth', 'pretty soon now'), which intensifies; that of the second scene by the longest speech of the whole, itself having five components (35, 36-7, 38, 39, 40-1) and the only quoted speech within quoted speech (37, 41). But the pivot focusses on a different link in the overall sequence in each, bringing to the fore in scene i the whole of the exchange about status and identity, but just the first part of an exchange about personal conduct in the scene ii.

In both scenes, both parts of the initial exchange have to do, not with the saying of something not credited, but with a claim as to what naming of a situation is to apply. In both scenes the second claim tops the first, as attested by the report of laughter. The laughter itself is then topped in a second exchange by a call to order in the form of a scornful question (which may itself be taken as ironic mention (24)), as if stopping was not to be expected.) In each scene we seem to see a reframing, a redirection of irony, in to dimensions at once. The topic is redirected (your heads, not theirs; copulation, not getting lost); and so is status in the interactional situation: you said something humorous, only to be outdone. Such irony is itself cause for further laughter by those who are its targets.

Here is the translated text. Capital letters show the start of stanzas, lower case letters the start of verses.

- | | |
|--------------------------------------------|----|
| (A) Kawai's wife (is) dancing. | 1 |
| People keep arriving. | 2 |
| As for those old folks, | 3 |
| they sit by the fire, | 4 |
| they tell each other things, | 5 |
| they laugh. | 6 |
| (B)(a) Pretty soon someone would come in, | 7 |
| packing their children. | 8 |
| (b) They turned and looked. | 9 |
| (c) Kilipashda would turn and look, | 10 |
| she would tell Ni'udiya, | 11 |
| "Well well well, | 12 |
| "the people coming are workers, | 13 |
| "they are packing their mauls." | 14 |
| (C)(a) In fact James overhears them. | 15 |
| (b) Pretty soon now he would tell them: | 16 |
| "Oh yes! go ahead and laugh! | 17 |
| "If they were <u>your</u> heads, | 18 |
| "just like cattle, one would say. | 19 |
| (D) They would laugh: | 20 |
| "Who is the one with that sort of head who | 21 |
| heard us?" | 22 |
| Now they would laugh still more. | 22 |
| (E) Pretty soon now she would say: | 23 |
| "When, I wonder, will you stop?" | 24 |

- (ii)
- (A) On another night, 25
 now Wasusgani went back home. 26
 She had a torch. 27
- (B) Now she got lost. 28
 In vain she kept calling out: 29
 Nothing; 30
 No one would hear her. 31
- (C) One (the next) night, 32
 she arrived, 33
 she is telling about it: 34
 "I was going along at this place; 35
 "Here I thought, 36
 "I will go straight through'. 37
 "In fact I went in another direction. 38
 "(I don't know) how many fences I kept 39
 getting to. 40
 "I was thinking, 40
 'Where is the place here with fences?' " 41
- (D) Pretty soon now Kilipashda said, 42
 "Just who are you fooling? 43
 "Some one was made to sleep over. 44
 "Now someone is making the (respective) 45
 things different." 45
- (E)(a) Now they would laugh. 46
 (b) Now again she would get after them. 47
 (c) Now they stopped. 48

- (i)
- (A) uwíla Káwał ayágikal. 1
 tgiyamnił idólxam. 2
 yaxa láyc łq'íwqdikš, 3
 łaxláytx wátuł, 4
 łaxaxik'łíla dánmax, 5
 łxk'ayáwəla. 6
- (B)(a) Kwálá qáwayčgi gadašgúpqał, 7
 dawišttxmítix idáquq. 8
 (b) Íwi gałxúxa. 9
 (c) Kílipašta'íwi naxúxax, 10
 gagulxámx Ni'údiya, 11
 "A...de...y, 12
 "ídólxam itgadímam g'ídáxmagapx 13
 "ławišttxmitix iłgámaul." 14
- (C)(a) Qušdyaxa čuxačémlił James. 15
 (b) Kwála aga gałłulxámx: 16
 "á! mšxk'ayáwəlaləmk! 17
 "ha'ay pu misayka dmsaq'aksdaquks, 18
 "díwi tł'a-imusmusgím!" 19
- (D) Gałxk'ayáwəlaləmx. 20
 "łáŋgi iłgalxčəmaq yáxkamax iłaq'akšdaq?" 21
 Aga wá'aw gałxk'ayáwəlaləmx. 22
- (E) Kwála aga gakiłulxámx: 23
 "Qánčix wíska gán amšxúxa?" 24

- (ii)
 (A) Agúnaxba wápul, 25
 aga Wásusgani naxk'wáx. 26
 iłgák'iwa. 27
 (B) Aga numádak'wítx. 28
 Kínwa naglúmníł: 29
 K'ú'ya; 30
 néšqi lán gałgaxčmáq'wax. 31
 (C) Áyxtba wápul, 32
 núyamx, 33
 axawik'łíla: 34
 "Dáyax nanúya; 35
 "Dába gnxitłux'wayt, 36
 'ašaytlq'wép anúya'. 37
 "Qúšdyaxa iwát nanúya. 38
 "Itq'láxmax qánčixbt nanugaq'amnił. 39
 "N(a)nxłux'áyda, 40
 'Qáxba dádax dabt itq'láxmax?'" 41
 (D) Kwálá aga K(i)lípášta nagímx, 42
 "lángi yaxa lálax mólux? 43
 "naqlawigúyamida. 44
 "Aga lálaxluymax łkíxax." 45
 (E)(a) Aga mixel'ayáwəlalmx. 46
 (b) Aga wít'ax gaxłumíłax. 47
 (c) Aga gán gałxuxax. 48

Persistent whistling

In his field notebook Jacobs wrote at the end of this text "the humor of the last sentence remains impenetrable to me." In a note to the published text (1959a: 661, n. 543) he remarked:

"I was not able to penetrate this sample of humor, which comes from notebook 16. Mrs. Howard thought that the whistler's final retort was humorous."

The pattern we are examining, and linguistic details, make the point clear.

One can judge that the point has to do with being like Coyote. An expressive marker underscores the fact. When Coyote is named in the phrase 'just like Coyote' (line 5), his name has the initial marker w- (in contrast to line 8). The marker indicates that being like Coyote is crucial to the outcome.

The text reaches its outcome by means of a frame and four turns at talk. The turns are related to each other not only sequentially in pairs, but also in pairs in terms of an outer and an inner layer. The outer layer (verses b, d) has the opening remark and the reply that topis it, but the replay is prepared for by an inner layer of question and answer (verses c, e). The whistler uses the inner exchange to set up those who have commented on him.

The two layers are verbally distinguished in that the outer layer has 'whistle' (as does the initial frame), while the inner layer has 'that is how, that is the way'. At the same time, the first two turns are alike in having each a verb of saying (tell, say), as against the second two, which have no such verb. The overall sequence thus shows an interweaving.

The third verse is a pivot in that it has the whistler's response to the first remark, thus formally completing the initial exchange, but does so by asking a question that leads to the second, final exchange. The third verse does not so much complete the first sequence of three verses (although that triad has the only mention of Coyote by name, as well as the only verbs of speaking), as extend it. This formal property seems appropriate to the way in which the joke works: not thrust and counter-thrust, as in Kilipashda's joshing, but veiled preparation.

The text as a whole is in effect a sociolinguistic report. Mrs. Howard frames it in the present and future tenses (lines 1, 3, 7): this is how it goes, in effect. Thus the entire text is a cultural quotation. It turns on alternative namings of the situation suggested by the whistling, each invoking a contrary to expectation association with the trickster-transformer of the myth age, Coyote. The text as a whole indeed fits the Sperber and Wilson claim that the originator of something quoted, or mentioned, is thereby singled out as its target. Those who first invoke a standard naming of the situation make explicit in their second remark, their answer to the inner question, that that indeed is what 'they say'. (The subject prefix of the verb in line 3 is q-, an indefinite and impersonal subject often translated as a passive). But the text serves also as a critique of the Sperber and Wilson claim. Those who say what one might say of a whistler are not targets just because of that, nor is the community which might be taken as the ultimate source. Their initial target, the whistler, has to engage in work to make them the real target. Without the whole of

the routine, they would not be. Here the conventional pattern by which a second turn tops a first seems indeed essential to the Chinookan scheme of things ironic.

The whistler prepares for the outcome partly by what the verb of saying attributes to him. The first speakers used the transitive -laxam of direct address ('told'). The whistler uses the intransitive -gim, which can indicate speech that is broadcast. The presence of an audience which will appreciate the twist he is about to accomplish seems to be implied.

Those who spoke first describe themselves as having heard about Coyote in the same way, with -gim; they heard what many might have heard. Lurking in the grammar of that construction, perhaps fortuitously, is the very communicative relation which the whistler turns against them. Whistling too is grammatically not directed; transitive (in fact it is grammatically reflexive). And the whistler's retort is that the others must have been around to hear, not only about Coyote, but Coyote himself.

That such a reversal is intended is shown by a parenthetical explanation in Jacob's notebook under the final verb clause: (and not merely me). The 'you' preceding it has been underlined. The way in which the thrust works is bound up with the fact that the remote tense prefix ga- is used only in this last line. The remote tense, normal in myth narrations, suggests that those who were hearing Coyote were themselves co-eval with him. The implication appears to be: you have been identifying me with that scoundrel, Coyote, because I do something that he did; but it must be you who are to be identified with him and his times, else how could you really know what he did?

The underlining in lines 5, 8 and 12 reflects underlining in Jacobs' interlinear translation in his notebook of the corresponding words, and something therefore (one can guess) of emphasis in Mrs. Howard's voice in providing translation. (I have replaced 'he' by 'someone' in line 5).

The notebook shows vowel length that is omitted in the published version. I have restored it here for its possible indication of expressivity, and have also restored the transcribed schwa to the final syllable of 'whistle' in lines 2, 13 (omitted in print). The interlinear translation of the notebook shows that the target of the initial remark is not just someone whistling at the moment, but someone who is 'constantly going around', 'always' whistling.

Notice that 'whistle' (which is sak in Wasco-Wishram) occurs in a different grammatical form each time: deverbal noun (2), 'there is whistling in relation to him' in effect; repeated particle (6); particle plus auxiliary verb construction (10). The first word in (12) seems related to Wasco-Wishram ganuitša 'too much, worse than expected, I declare, well (surprise), and to ganuit 'sure, true'. The second term expresses supposed necessity. In the notebook the interlinear translation has "it's just as if I thought it was you who were hearing him really whistling (and not merely me)."

Perhaps there is a further implication: you must have been one of those myth people (who, Mrs. Howard once remarked, were not always bright), and indeed one of those whom he fooled. How come you didn't change into something useful, like the others?

Both parties are entertaining an unflattering:contrary to expectation notion about the other, but enjoying it as well. In both there is a sort of implicational logic: if just like Coyote in one respect, then in others; if know what Coyote was like, then like Coyote's people.

To repeat, the presentation of the whole by Mrs. Howard suggests a routine that might be engaged in knowingly by both sides, just for the fun of it.

Here is a revised translation, followed by the text.

- | | |
|----------------------------------------------------------|----|
| (a) Someone is going around, | 1 |
| whistling. | 2 |
| (b) They will tell him, | 3 |
| "Yes. | 4 |
| " <u>Someone's</u> going around just like Coyote, | 5 |
| whistle whistle whistle." | 6 |
| (c) He will say, | 7 |
| " <u>Is that</u> how Coyote used to do?" | 8 |
| (d) "Yes. | 9 |
| "That is how they used to say." | 10 |
| (e) "Ahh. | 11 |
| "Why it must really be <u>you</u> (who) used to hear him | 12 |
| (as) he used to whistle." | 13 |

- (a) ɪgúːʃgiwal, 1
aːɪxəlsək'sək'. 2
- (b) aqɪulxáma, 3
"ɜ. 4
"ɪgúːʃgiwal tɪ'á-wit'álap'as-diwi, 5
"sək'sək'sək'. 6
- (c) aɪgiːma, 7
"k'wátɪqíči nixúːxax it'álap'as?" 8
- (d) "ɜ. 9
"k'wátɪqí nugwagimx. 10
- (e) "i. 11
"gánc'a. ɪga máika gamilčəmlidəmx, 12
sək'sək' nixúxax." 13

"Laughing at missionaries"

Jacobs (1959a: 662) says of the end of this anecdote: "This sally would be followed by explosions of laughter. Mrs. Howard commented on how the oldtime Indians roared with amusement at the things they heard priests say."

Mrs. Howard herself might almost have been an original source of the anecdote (text 140, "Laughing at missionaries" (1959a: 563), found in notebook 12, p. 102, not in notebook 11 as 1959a: 662 has it). She was born in 1860, and the fierst priest, Father Adrian Croquet, arrived in June 1860 (Beckham 1977: 164), four years after the first Indians were moved to what became the site of Grande Ronde Reservation officially in 1857. But Jacobs' report of her words about 'the oldtime Indians', and the opening reference to the first preacher suggest someone older recalling such a time to someone younger, like herself. Moreover, the concluding sally of the mother-in-law assumes the presence in the minds of hearers of the preacher's words. This indicates that one person had told the whole. Presumably the mother-in-law quoted the preacher's words in order to set the stage for comment on them.

In quoting the entire anecdote, Mrs. Howard of course intends to be understood as doing so, and as conveying an attitude toward the words in so doing. The attitude is obviously one of approval. The structure is that of one contrary-to-fact supposition (if you do not pray, you will get tails) followed by another (when we play shinny, our tails will whip us). The second imagined 'if a, then b' tops the first. Both are ludicrous, but the second is superior both in its imagination of the ludicrous

(not just tails, but tails while playing shinny), and in showing the first to be such. The first supposition is reframed, and in a language and from a point of view that the first source could presumably not have shared. A threat of Divine punishment is turned into a silly spectacle.

Notice that the condition (not accept) and the consequence (get tails) of the first quoted speech continue to be assumed as a premise by the second. The sally and the anecdote as a whole define the Indians as not having accepted Christianity, nor yet acquired tails, but as accepting, entertaining as true for the moment, the eventuality of tails. Neither assimilated nor animal-like, they expect to continue to play a favorite game.

The target of the quoted speech is of course not the mother-in-law or oldtime Indian from whom the anecdote came. Within the anecdote the target is the first person quoted. He claims to have new, superior knowledge, and the teller and audience share a negative attitude toward the propositions attributed to him. But the point is not to quote him in a disparaging tone of voice. The point is to top him on his own terms. Here the conventional two-part pattern is at work, and the attitude that informs it as a whole here is complex. The attitude involves the whole naming of the situation, through quoted speech. The amusement, indeed 'explosions of laughter', provoked by the whole has as ingredients a putting down of the preacher, a putting up of the Indians (as persisting, as superior in wit), and at the same an imagining of the Indians in a ridiculous situation. The target is partly the victor, as in the accounts of Kilipashda's joshing (where all are joined in general laughter, and all are then told to stop).

Recall also that in 'Persistent whistling' the victor does not refute his own placement in relation to Coyote so much as put the first source in the same (enlarged) boat.

The translation (revised) and text follow. The number of observations to be provided make it preferable to supply notes after both.

It must have been the very first time a preacher got
to this country, 1
he told them: 2
"You must always pray, 3
"The Chief Above will see you. 4
"In case you do not accept it for yourselves, 5
"Well now, you will get yourselves tails, 6
"Like things chased about, 7
creatures in the forests." 8
Now my mother-in-law would say: 9
"Oh dear oh dear! 10
"(It) may be something strange (when) we 11
keep playing shinny. 11
"Our tails will keep whipping us!" 12

Ya'niwadix lga ilaxigiwuludamit gaiu'yam
dayaxba wilx, 1
gaigdulxam: 2
"Gwa'nisim amxgi'wuludamit, 3
"sa'xlix istamx ačmšgalglaya. 4
"Yaxa nēsqi amšgixgišgaida, 5
"aga idmšayčxukš amšxuxa, 6
"ti'a-da'nmax iqtawayú'gwax, 7
dēmquba.maxix itqšxišaukš." 8
Aga nagimx wā.kšdi: 9
"Á..dí...! 10
"iuxwan dāngi klāyx alxadmútsumniša
wa'ti'áqtī'aq. 11
"i.dolxayčxukš adilxitšī'mniša!" 12

Changes in the translation and printed text, and some additional information, are given below.

1: Notice the parallel placement of major rhetorical lengthening: first word, first quoted word, first quoted word of second turn at talk. The major instances of lengthening are shown with more than one raised dot; they were transcribed and printed as such. In his field notebook Jacobs showed length after some other vowels by a single dot. I have restored those instances here.

The second word (lga) is a particle of supposed necessity, 'must have been'.

The word rendered as 'preacher' is published with the explanation and translation 'person-who continually-prayed (a Catholic priest)'. I use preacher because the Indian word is applied to ministers of all persuasions, and indeed Jacobs' interlinear gloss in the notebook has 'he was lecturing, the preacher, he who prays all the time'. (A priest could be distinguished by a borrowing from French and Chinook Jargon, heard from Wasco speakers in the forms lapli-t, laprit).

1-2: What the preacher said is framed in the remote past, ga-. What the mother-in-law said is framed in the recent past, na-. In parallel fashion, the words of the preacher use the usual, remote future (a...(u)...-a), while the future in the mother-in-law's words is the near future (a...t...a).

3: The verb has the same stem as 'preacher'. The absence of a final -a of the future is surprising. One would expect (with allophonic change) -ida, not just -it. Perhaps the noun of line 1 is echoed here. Jacobs gives 'You should pray all the time', but there is no

conditional element, and the Clackamas future is perfective in force. Indeed here (with the second person) it is a polite imperative; in Army idiom, 'you will!'

4: 'Chief above' is the common expression for 'God' in Chinookan and Chinook Jargon. The word order is literally 'above chief', as it is in Jargon (Sahali Tyee). A taking over of English word order (adjective before noun) has resulted in an expression that is unidiomatic literally in English (where 'above' is an adverb of place).
5: The verb rendered 'believe' by Jacobs (and glossed in the notebook as 'believe, ind') is based on the root -sg- 'get, take, obtain, help, find'. The reflexive -x after direct object i- indicates that the object is possessed by the subject ('you'); the suffix -aid has a sense of 'situation'. The whole thus has the force 'obtain or have it for yourselves (be in that situation)'. Hence, 'accept'.

5-6: The reflexive element in both lines has been made explicit.

6: The particle for 'now' has sometimes a summative force, connected with outcome, and I take it to have that here. 'Well' is used in an attempt to convey that.

7-8: Jacobs prints 'like the various animals that run about in the forests'. I take the four words to be two parallel phrases in apposition. The second word of (7) has impersonal ('passive') q-; plural object t-; reflexive -xa; root -wa 'to chase, drive'; distributive supplement -yu; and probably -gwa 'about' (instead of recorded -gwa), plus 'customary' -x. Hence, 'chased about'.

8: The last term, translated 'creatures', is used both for 'wild animals' and 'dangerous beings' (such as Grizzly Woman of the myths).

9: The stem -gim is 'to speak broadcast', without addressed object, in contrast to -lxam (2). Thus it implies the presence of an audience. The relation of -lxam and -gim in 'Perennial whistling' is analogous, suggesting the presence of a pattern. A first speaker says x; a second speaker says y, partly for the benefit of an audience. In 'Kilipashda's joshing', the first scene has Kilipashda, James and the woman shoe tells them to stop all using -lxam (the old people also speak prefaced by a verb of laughing); but in scene ii, after the mother-in-law has reported, informed them (-kwii), Kilipashda reframes what she had said with -gim. Both of the mother-in-law's comments in 'Maybe it's Milt' (see below) are given with -gim, implying that both are part of a response to the initial target, the presence of a white.

11: Literally, 'perhaps something different (strange, funny, odd) we-will-keep-playing shinny. (This term for 'shinny' is specifically for a woman's game in both Clackamas and Wasco-Wishram. Men's form of shinny is wakalkal. (Cf. Curtis 1911: 173-4).

11-12: Both future verbs have the near future (see 1-2), and the repetitive suffix -ni1.

12: The preacher's threat has a long tradition behind it. In a note to John Skelton's poem 'Against Dundas', Scattergood (1983: 430) writes:

'The story of the 'tailed Englishmen' was well known in the Middle Ages. One of the most influential versions appeared in the life of St. Augustin (the founder of Anglican tradition, not the author of The City of God) in The Golden Legend:

"After this Saynt Austun entryed in to Dorsetshyre, and came in to towne where as were wycked peple & refused his doctryne and prechyng utterly & droof hym out of the towne castyng on hym the tayles of thornback or like fisshes, wherfore he besought almyghty God to shewe his jugement on them, and God sente to them a shameful token, for the chyl dren that were borne after in that place had tayles as it is sayd, tyl they had repented them. It is sayd comynly that thys fyl at Strode in Kente, but blessyd be Goad at this day is no suche deformyte' (Caxton's translation, 1483).

"Indeed, Scots earlier than Dundas appear to have used this jibe. According to the historian Walter Bower, the Scots sang songs about 'tailed Englishmen' before the battle of Dupplin in 1332....".

"Maybe it's Milt!"

Jacobs (1959a: 661, n. 542) says of this text (text 136, 'The whites and Milt' (1959a: 560) that it "exemplifies one kind of humor which Clackamas resorted to in order to ventilate their anger toward Caucasians".

Both instances of quoted (echoed speech) that the mother-in-law mentions in the text are from a myth (text 39, 'She deceived herself with milt' (1959a: 348-50). In the myth a widow wishes that milt she has saved from a fine salmon might be a person, and wakes to find a man beside her. He tells her that she has wished him to be so, and she says in the morning "Dear oh dear. A fine-looking man, light of skin" (since the sacks of sperm in a male salmon are white). Another woman steals the man away later on, and also makes fun of the widow, despite her stolen husband's commands to leave the widow alone. Finally, the widow dances in front of the couple, singing 'The Honorable Milt', I counterfeited him for myself'. (See notes to lines 11, 12). The other woman continues to mock, but on singing her song a fifth time the first woman extends her spirit-power regalia: only milt (the substance) lies beside the second woman. She goes away, while the widow pursues her, throwing milt at her, and saying "This is your husband".

The mention of milt in itself has connotations of shame in relation to a person. In the mutually intelligible Wasco dialect, a barren woman could be referred to as 'her-milt'. When Mrs. Howard said 'light of skin' in telling the myth, she 'bubbled with mirth and added... 'He must have been a half-breed' (1959a: 632, n. 297). Both implications (barrenness, half-breed) are derogatory.

In the anecdote the first mention of a quotation from the myth, 'Dear oh dear....a light one', uses the term for the substance, milt (with dual prefix iſ-, since there are two such sacks in a salmon). The implication is that the white person may not really be human in nature. The quotation echoes the point in the myth at which the widow has accepted what she has wished into being.

The second mention of a quotation from the myth echoes the point at which the widow exercises her power to transform the created person back into its original substance. The name itself is ironic in the context of the action, for it has the honorific masculine singular prefix wi-, and a noun-extension, -iya, which may also be honorific. (Hence my translation of the term as 'The Honorable Milt'). The concluding line asserts the power of creating, the fact of counterfeiting, and by implication, the power to dissolve.

(Jacobs gives the concluding line as 'She changed him into a man' here, and as 'She deceived herself with milt' in the myth. Both explain the story rather than translate the word. The first explains what the widow did, and the second appears to explain what the second woman did. The Clackamas construction actually is based upon a verb theme -lul-amid, glossed in Wasco-Wishram as 'to counterfeit, forge, fake, deceive'. It contains a causative suffix -amit. The underlying meaning appears to be 'to cause to deceive'. The word in the song is in effect "I caused him (i-) to deceive for myself (n-xi-)". (The word in the title of the myth is "she caused it (milt, ſ-) to deceive for herself (a-xi-)".)

The second quotation can be taken as topping the first. The assertion of power is stronger than the satisfaction of appellation. The first echoic mention demeans the white. The second entertains the possibility that the white is but a figment of Indian power. The first mention might allude indeed to an initial welcoming admiration for the strange beings. The second seems to allude to the possibility that the strange beings can caused to disappear.

Probably there is a sense of satisfaction in being able to name the situation as one encompassed by Indian tradition before whites had come. Certainly there is satisfaction in being able to entertain the propositions, through allusion to myth, that whites are something shameful, and that they can be dismissed (particularly by an old woman). And with impunity, for the white in question is presumably an uncomprehending stimulus to literary allusions in a language not understood.

In this account the 'broadcast' verb of saying, -gim, is used for both quotations. It implies the presence of an audience who will share and enjoy what is said, to the exclusion of the target. The irony is thus like that in a which an audience of a play is made aware of a perspective denied to the characters portrayed before them. The character here has no lines, and does not know he has been cast in a part. There is a double recognition on the part of those who share what is said, both of echoic mention and of an attitude toward what is mentioned. But just as the explanation of the irony is not in an inversion of propositional meaning, but in an attitude

taken toward what is proposed, as Sperber and Wilson maintain, so also, contrary to the examples they develop, the attitude is not negative, but positive. The speaker does not reject the mentioned proposition as ludicrously false or irrelevant, but entertains it for a moment as true or appropriate. The speaker does not intend that what is said be taken as a category or standard that has not been attained, but that it be taken as one that might apply. And the irony does not lie in a negative attitude toward a proposition that a source, as target, might be taken to have said. The irony lies in a positive attitude toward a proposition that a target could not have said, of which it could not be the source. (The target indeed would likely regard the quoted propositions as ludicrously false or irrelevant.. Awareness of this is perhaps part of the satisfaction of the speaker and her implicit audience).

A few further notes follow the translation and text.

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A few further notes follow the translation and text.

| | |
|-----------------------------------|----|
| Our house (was) near the road. | 1 |
| Someone will pass by us, | 2 |
| she will look at them, | 3 |
| now she will laugh. | 4 |
| She will say: | 5 |
| "Dear oh dear...." | 6 |
| "A light one!" | 7 |
| "Maybe it's milt!" | 8 |
| Now she will sing. | 9 |
| This is what she will say: | 10 |
| "The Honorable Milt!" | 11 |
| "I counterfeited him for myself." | 12 |

| | |
|------------------------------------|----|
| Idónč'aq ^w q'wáp wíxat. | 1 |
| Atónčxtiá ^g wa, | 2 |
| akisk'lútga, | 3 |
| aga alaxk'ayáwəlalma. | 4 |
| Alagíma, | 5 |
| "Adi'...." | 6 |
| "iátk'abumit!" | 7 |
| "lúx ^w an iśqčxst!" | 8 |
| Aga alaglálama. | 9 |
| K' ^w átłqí alagíma: | 10 |
| "Wi'qčxšdi'ya!" | 11 |
| "Galínxidlulámidaya!" | 12 |

Variations from the published translation are explained below.

- 1: 'our' (not 'one') house (at Grand Ronde Reservation, Oregon.
- 2: 'us' (omitted in Jacobs).
- 2, 3; 4, 5, 9, 10: Jacobs naturally enough uses 'would' here to render the Clackamas future tense, which has force of what she will certainly do (but is not marked, as it could be, for habitual or repetitive action). Given the absence of a conditional marker, I have thought it better to retain the immediacy of the plain future.
- 3: 'them' (omitted in Jacobs)
- 4: 'now' (not 'and')
- 7: In this text Jacobs has 'it is a light one'. In the myth the same term is rendered 'he is light of skin'.
- 8: 'milt' the substance, not, here, 'Milt'.
- 9: 'now' (not 'and then')
- 11: Jacobs has just "Milt!", but, as discussed above, this is a highly marked form.

"Bluejay and his older sister"

The pattern of successive instances of something contrary to expectation, the second topping the first, informs a myth told by Mrs. Howard (text 41, 'Bluejay and his older sister' (1959a: 366-9); but here the first instance only is part of a speech event, and the second is an action. The result of the action is humorous to hearers of the myth, but apparently not to the partner in the speech event. The myth makes use of the two-step pattern, not to show superior mastery in ironic mention, but to show the consequences of complete ironic incompetence.

The event of the telling itself may have a certain irony. This is the first myth Mrs. Howard told Jacobs, and it is about an older woman saying extraordinary things to a younger man, who does not reply with anything of his own, but takes what has been said at face value and acts upon it. I cannot resist the speculation that Mrs. Howard thought it fun to begin with this myth, as a way of alluding to and naming the situation with the earnest young linguist with notebook in hand. Only she would recognize the element of echoic mention in citing her grandmother's words, and also the attitude in choosing it to tell. The target of that irony of ~~tcouse~~ was not the originator of the words, her grandmother, nor her herself as current performer, but the unsuspecting audience and recorder. The circumstance is analogous to that of the first scene of Kilipashda's joshing, and the mother-in-law's use of the myth of Milt, where the target and others are assumed to be ignorant of what is said and meant, not knowing how the situation

is being named.

The myth has three parts, and is too long to present here verbatim. The third part is obscure at the end, but its thrust is clear enough. All parts follow the same pattern. Each begins with Bluejay's elder sister giving him instructions that are not literally meant. In the first two scenes the key is marked by wiska pu 'wonder if'. What is said, contrary to any reasonable expectation, seems to imply reproach: that the younger brother has no woman; that the family has no canoe and he has not provided one; that he has not joined those who are going to trade for food (and perhaps to obtain dentalia (money-beads)). In keeping with Sperber and Wilson's point that standards and norms can be appealed to as standing expectations that have not been met, these initial statements by the elder sister seem ironic namings of a situation, as one in which the failure of the younger brother is so evident or persistent that one might as well tell him to do something correspondingly outrageous. From the point of view of the audience, especially the children required to listen, the myth is an instruction in the necessity of metalinguistic competence. On the one hand, Bluejay is depicted as so bereft of such competence that one can say such things to him and find him to have continued to entertain them as true and proper directives outside the speech event. On the other hand, his failure to interpret properly goes together with a failure to respond properly within the speech event in contrast to the rejoinders in Kilipashda's joshing, persistent whistling, and laughing at missionaries.

Bluejay has indeed almost nothing to say in the myth, and nothing at all to say in response to his sister's initiating words. They live at the end of the village with his sister's daughter (and thus are to be understood as poor because of that location). The sister tells him, "Wonder if somewhere now you would take a dead person out?" (The verb is to be analyzed as (a)-m-i-u-gi-lada-ba-(a) 'future-you-indef. person-them-outfrom enclosed space-take, drag-out-future'). (1959a: 366, line 3). Now he goes, soon he is gone, and the sister wonders aloud to her daughter as to where he is. Playing, the daughter hears him laughing at the sweathouse, and runs to tell her mother. Her mother shushes her, saying the brother has just brought something there. Playing again, the child notices a foot sticking out, pulls at it, and the toe of a rotting corpse comes off. This time the older sister runs, uncovers the sweathouse, tells the younger brother to put it away.

This association of Bluejay with what is rotting or crumbling recurs. She tells him, "Wonder if you dug out a hole in rotten wood? We have no canoe." He goes each day for some time, then tells her to tell a good many men to pull it from the woods. She says, "Goodness, my younger brother!" (with the formal, more respectful form of address). After eating the lunches she had made them, the men drag the canoe, which breaks into pieces. Bluejay blames them, and so does the sister on his word, until the truth is explained to her. Then she chides her brother. He says, "But it was you indeed who told me to dig out rotten wood." She says to him, "But I didn't really tell you to dig out rotten wood."

The third scene has three instructions. The other brothers are going to trade for smoke-dried fish, and perhaps to obtain dentalia. The sister tells them their younger brother will follow. She tells him that someone will hang from the canoe and be dragged along; that if there are piles of excrement from widows, to take them; and to throw the pulverized fish she gives him as they go. He does all three. The brothers find themselves covered with pulverized fish, and Bluejay dragging along. He says, "Your older sister told me to." They reply, "But you should never have supposed such a thing. Why really you were to sit here. Sit down. Now we have arrived."

As the people go to buy the food, Bluejay goes to look for widows. He lies waiting where two go outside (in the evening to defecate). New morning his companions call on him to hurry. The text is incomplete at this point, but evidently Bluejay has left beads, and taken excrements. At this point the text ends.

In each scene Bluejay's response is not in words but in action that tops the initiating words. At the end of the first two scenes, and the first part of the third, he is told explicitly that what he has done is wrong, and in the latter two cases that he has misconstrued what was said in utterances marked by the particle dnuci which has a force something of the sort 'but not then'.

Bluejay's actions complete the two-step pattern, but to an effect the opposite of the entirely verbal exchange. It is contrary to expectation indeed to copulate with a corpse, make a canoe out of rotten wood, etc.; and none of those also in the story entertain the possibility. They are appalled. It is the audience that is entertained.

So far as this instance shows, then, the two-step pattern can be completed by actions that top words, but in such a case the butt of the account is the doer. All this fits the myth, which bespeaks a situation of confidence in the culture and its uses of language, including its subtler uses. Bluejay, here as elsewhere a ne'er-do-well and butt, is always outside--in the sweathouse with a corpse, in the woods with rotten wood, in the water, outside the village where people defecate. The story pokes fun at what is outside and rotten or crumbling, thereby implying that what is inside is solid. (There is all the more poignancy thus to the myth of 'Seal and her younger brother lived there', wherein the same initial situation of older sister, younger brother, and sister's daughter is presented, but in a situation in which words fail and the daughter's experiences of wetness lead to an assumption of maturity alone. (See Hymes 1981, chs. 8, 9).

The part that the two-step pattern plays in this myth suggests that the pattern is very much a matter of conversational competence and exchange. Narrations of myth, to be sure, are themselves officially the quotation of words learned from others, and an attitude is intended to be recognized. The narrator can convey personal meaning and voice only through selection and grouping of detail in what is understood to be traditionally transmitted. But the seriousness of the event, as something children must attend to, as something even in winter of a world-renewal rite, shows the dominant function of the words to be one of use, not mention. The audience in the event can only acknowledge that it is attending, not seek to top a prior account (so far as we know

in the case of Chinookans). The short accounts that Jacobs recorded from Mrs. Howard reflect a different sociolinguistic setting, one of casual conversation. In such a setting the ironic pattern apparently could thrive. And it is worth mentioning that Jacobs must have had indeed a warm relationship with Mrs. Howard for such accounts to become part of the record of their work together. The work of retranslation and further recognition of pattern in this paper is merely a continuation of that collaboration.

In sum, the myth of 'Bluejay and his elder sister' seems to draw upon the two-step pattern to highlight Bluejay's incompetence, and at the same time to entertain and instruct in the consequences of lack of it. Cultural confidence and ironic competence are shown as intertwined.

Salmon's myth

Two versions of a major myth in Kathlamet Chinook show further how a two-step pattern of ironic reframing can be used in narrative, and also that something of such a pattern was shared by other Chinookan groups than the Clackamas. In 1891 Franz Boas recorded one version of the myth of Salmon from Charles Cultee, the last capable speaker of Kathlamet, and of Lower Chinook as well. In 1894 he recorded a second version. The differences are instructive.

In each version the first act follows a common pattern. The spring salmon comes up river, and encounters five roots in turn. Each root hails him with a formulaic insult, referring to maggots in his buttocks, and asserts that without it the people would have died (during the winter when no fresh food could be obtained). A companion names the root and its kinship relationship to Salmon, who then leads his party ashore, presenting gifts and placing the root where it will be found in later times. The act as a whole dramatizes the dependence of the people on plants and the domain of women's economic effort, not just the domain of men, symbolised in Salmon.

The second act has Salmon's party encounter a trio coming downriver in another canoe. They are queried, and a woman (Crow) speaks unintelligibly. Salmon asks what she has said, and a spokesman, Bluejay, says that they have gone upriver with the tide and come back in the same day. Salmon characterizes Crow's words as a woman's lies, and refers to the true time it takes to go upriver to the Cascades. His party seize the trio, twist their necks and transform them, and, in

the 1891 telling, end the myth with repeating as an ironic question, "How long should they (take to) return, those going to the Cascades?" In the 1894 telling the second act proceeds more deliberately. In 1891 Salmon had asked, 'Why does Crow lie? How long should they (take to) return, those going to the Cascades?', after Bluejay speaks. In 1894 he simply states that Crow lies and states how long it takes to the Cascades. The trio are physically changed, and then disposed of in space as well (parallel to both gifting and placing the roots in act I).

Many differences of detail cohere in the two tellings to show a contrast in Cultee's attitude, including a sharp contrast in the ethnopoetic structure of act II. In 1891 he seems in haste to compensate for the first half of the myth, wherein Salmon has had to endure insult while expressing dependence of men on women's domain. Act II begins with abrupt reassertion of Salmon's authority. He controls three turns at talk in a row. And it is in this telling that the narrative shows greater metalinguistic awareness. There are more verbs of speaking, both with what is said by the actors, and within what is said by the actors. And it is only in this telling that scornful questioning occurs. In 1894 such questions are absent, and verbs of speaking are absent from quoted speech. The act itself begins at a more deliberate, descriptive pace. Salmon does not speak at all until it has well begun. All this seems to be because Cultee has a further role to play in the plot. Not only can the offending trio be controlled, but the dependence of the first act can be offset. Salmon himself can provide a food of

his own kind, fish, for the people during the winter. The last action is to tell the third party of the trio, Flounder (who has nothing to say in either version) to go down river in Kathlamet territory and be there.²

It would seem that the scornful questioning comes into play in the telling that is most like a speech event, a conversational encounter, dominated at the outset by turns at talk.

Salmon's questions appear to be ironic, appealing to what everybody knows, community standards and the nature of the world, as to how long it takes to go to the Cascades. It is implied that the trio's statements pose an absurd question. They are in effect its originators, Salmon its echoer.

The ironic questions are a reframing of a reframing. The first words of the other party, those of Crow, are three plant names in the upriver dialect. In effect, they are quotations from a ritual sequence like that which Salmon has just repeated five times. They imply that Crow (a woman!) is returning from accomplishing the mission proper to Salmon. Bluejay's words are purportedly a quotation in the form of translation; he asserts that they are already coming back in one day from doing what Salmon's party have done laboriously stop by stop. These quotations and translations, said no doubt with an attitude of pride, are meant to be instances of use. As such, they reframe the significance of what Salmon has just done, topping it, putting it in an ironic light, as falling short. Salmon reframes their words in turn as something contrary to expectation and no longer to be entertained as true. His scornful question is said broadcast the first time (with -gim); at the end of the myth it is addressed to the trio with the narrative's one use of -lxam 'to tell'.

The Salmon myth's first telling seems to complement 'Bluejay and his older sister'. There an initial scornful question is followed by acts quite contrary to expectation, but literal-minded on the part of their doer. Only the audience of the myth, outside the story, shares amusement. In Salmon's first telling, a first act shows scornful remarks meekly accepted (for they are culturally true), but a second act shows contrary to expectation assertions, intended literally by their makers, scornfully rejected with ironic question.

The tracing of the two-step pattern in Clackamas helps illuminate the workings of both myths, while the myths help to specify the domain and ramifications of the pattern. Let us hope that further discoveries of patterns of humor and irony will help us to understand further the structures and satisfactions of both conversation and myth.

To restate the pattern which appears to inform these texts: in a two-step exchange, a second turn reframes a first, through saying something that invites an audience (usually implied by the intransitive of speaking broadcast) to entertain as true something contrary to expectation. The remark usually is presented as a naming of the situation, something one might or must say of it. The second turn tops the first, and the first is its target; but commonly those who do the opping can be associated with being an object of humor as well. This last is true at least in the four conversational examples (joshing, whistling, missionaries, Milt). And this seems appropriate for a metalinguistic key, irony, which in essence involves the taking of more than one perspective (Burke 1945: 512) and is in effect a form of dialectic.

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Footnotes

- 1 This study is dedicated to Charles Bigelow and Kris Holmes, whose delight in several of these texts from Victoria Howard, and whose graphic artistry, have brought them to life for others. I am grateful to the Archives of the University of Washington and its staff for the opportunity to consult Jacobs' field notebooks early in February 1984.
- 2 The two versions of the Kathlamet Salmon's myth are analyzed in detail in Hymes 1985a.