

'Fried Bread': A recipe for Haida Narrative Structure

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It was something Andie Palmer said about Vi Hilbert's recipe for clam chowder that got us thinking about our recipe for fried bread. Andie said she was so frustrated translating the recipe, trying to say it as Vi did but also worried about economy of space. And the ingredients, sometimes there were exact measurements and for other things, like potatoes, you 'take as many as you have people'. Then Andie had realized that she didn't have a recipe for a particular food but a recipe for serving people. It was the people that counted, not the ingredients.

This, coupled with Hymes' work as it appears in "In vain I tried to tell you" made us look at our fried bread recipe in a new light. Maybe there is something poetic about the way Haida tell a recipe. For a fact, Lil had said, "First I'll give you the short version, fast the way you guys like it. Then I'll tell you the way Haidas tell each other how to make something." (Notice that when she's in a Haida mode of thought she is going to "tell" us a recipe and when she's talking like a neighbor she is going to "give" us one.) As it turned out, the "fast" version is only three lines shorter than the "real" version. We think that is because the teller had to use circumlocution when she left the contextualizing cues out.

Here, then is the fast way to tell the way the Haida make fried bread.

- (1) sablii dang tlaauihlaas dluu
when you make fried bread
- (2) sabliigaay waa'aan aa t1' kwiidaan
you measure your flour

- (3) gantl isgyaen taaung isgyaen suugaa
water and salt and sugar
- (4) gwuuts'wiit t1' skanjuulaang
stir together
- (5) aa t1' k'iinsdaan malk kyaasin
you warm the milk too
- (6) wei'ii aa dang isdaahlingaan
you can put into it
- (7) taa'o sdlaagwaal sdangs dluu wei'ii aa isdaan
you put about 2 spoons of oil into yours
- (8) kaahldaawaay sdlaagwaal guusdans dluu laagang
about 2 spoons of yeast (is good)
- (9) kihlaa tlii'ii xaagaas dluu
when the bowl is large enough
- (10) gandlaay isgyaen suugaay isgyaen tangaay
water and sugar and salt
- (11) kaahldaawaay ii gyaesdlaang
pour in the yeast
- (12) sabliigaay wei dang isdaasgaan
put in the flour
- (13) tlii'ii k'ats' gulsaan
it will get quite firm
- (14) daa lagas dluu uu
when yours is ready
- (15) kihlgaay isgyaen sabliigaay aa dang taodaasaan
grease your loaf pan and the bread
- (16) kinaas guu aa dang gaa'aosaan
leave the bowl where it is warm
- (17) ank kihlaa giisaa uu aa t1' Xaaogang
put a dish towel on top
- (18) tlii'ii daa kaahlaas dluu
when it raises quite a bit
- (19) hawunsan aangaa t1' skwakats'aan
pound it down once again
- (20) asgaayst kihlaa sdang ii aadang isdaas gyaen uu
and then you will put it in two loaf pans
- (21) hawans aa t1' kahldaas
let it raise again
- (22) kihlgaay staawaas dluu aa
when the pans fill up

- (23) aadang kuugaasaang wan aawer dluu
while you bake it one hour
- (24) daangaa galangs dlaa'asaan
make your fried bread
- (25) daa laa'aasaan
yours will be good

Now here's the "real" way to tell someone how to make fried bread:

- (1) sablii dang tlaautlaas dluu
When you are going to make bread
- (2) sabliigaay waa'aan aa tl' kwiidaang
you measure your flour for it
- (3) gantl isgyaen tang isgyaen suugaa
water and salt and sugar
- (4) guutsuuwiit t' skanguulaan
they stir together
- (5) aa tl' k'iinsdaan malk
you warm the milk
- (6) gantl skatlaangwei tlehl dluu aa tl' kwiidang
you measure about 5 cups of water
- (7) suugaagaay hans sdlaagwaa s'tansaan dluu wei aa tl' kwiidang
about two spoons of sugar, too
- (8) tang sdlaagwaa tsuujuu xuuhlwanhl wei aa tl' kwiidang
3 teaspoons of salt
- (9) taao sdlaagwaal iiwaan xwastan wei aa tl' kwiidang
2 big spoonsful of oil
- (10) aajii kaahlaawaay hans guuhlwanhl dluu
about 3 cakes of yeast
- (11) ganhl ii sk'asgwaansang ii uu 'laagan
into about a cup of water is fine
- (12) aajii sabliigaay ii suuga tang taaoaay
sugar, salt, oil into this bread
- (13) aajii waadluuan guutsuuwiit gaa dang skanjuulaan
stir this whole thing together
- (14) asgaayst dang skwokaatsaa'aasaang
and then you knead
- (15) asgaayst taao guut dang gaanaansaang
and then you rub oil on it

- (16) asgaayst k'uusk'iit sgwaansaang dang kaahl daa'aasaan
and then let it rise once
- (17) aajii kaahl daasgaayst hin gii dang k'inanning saa'ang
after it rises you cut it in pieces
- (18) sablii kiihlgaay stansang ii uu dang istaa'saang
put it into 4 bread pans
- (19) asgaayst k'uuskiit sgwaansang hawuns dang kaahldaa'aasaang
and then let it raise once again
- (20) oo 45 minuts dang kuugaasaan
bake it about 45 minutes
- (21) aajii sabliigaay skasgwaansang waast dang kagundaasaang
save one loaf of dough
- (22) taao gyaa galangaa dang hol k'iinstaas
let some oil get hot in a fry pan
- (23) gyaen sabliigaay gii dang kinaanangsaan gyaen dang gaalungsaan
and the bread you will cut in pieces and fry in it
- (24) gaalang sdlaas gyaen uu aa aa dang k'ii xuujuu laa'aasaan
when it is brown you turn it over in the skillet
- (25) aajii sabliigaay gaalangs dlaas silup suuwiit dang kitaansaan
when it is fried you will dip it in sweet syrup
- (26) asgaayst dluu k'ihlaa xuujuu silupgaay dlang gyaes dlaas
which you have poured into a small dish
- (27) asgaayst waa dlaa gankan dang niihls
and after that you drink coffee
- (28) gyaen dang skis dlaa'aasaang
and you will be full

Looking at the "real" version to start with, a musical analogy comes to mind; usually a piece goes on for a while, then there's an interruption called a coda (a passage formally ending a composition or section), then the main part may or may not be taken up again. What we have here is an "inside-out" or "backwards" piece of music with the first 12 lines serving as the coda, which in music is a rather formal bit devoid of meaning, and the next 16 being the theme. The "coda" is all that background information about how to make bread dough and the "theme" begins when the teller gets to the subject of making fried bread, which is what the topic of this recipe is.

Interestingly, the verbs in the first 12 lines are in the past tense for the most part (-aang, -laan, -ang, -an) and in the next 16 are in the future (-aan, -aasaang, -aansaang, -aasaan, -saa'ang, -aa'saang, -aa'aasaang, and so forth). There is definitely some kind of division here and we think it corresponds to the end of the "shared knowledge", background information and the beginning of the new, "what you asked me for" information.

Each part of the recipe narrative consists of four line stanzas. In the second part each stanza starts with aajii, loosely glossed as 'and then', and ends with a fully inflected, "future narrative tense" verb. Lines that do not end a stanza may end with something else: line 22, 'let some oil get hot in a fry pan', line 26, 'which you have poured into a small dish' and line 27, 'and after that you drink coffee' all end in -aas or -s indicating subordinate clauses and none of these are the last line of any verse. It appears that the rhythm of full inflection is expected at the ends of stanzas. In addition, one might wonder why lines 12 and 28 are so redundant except they are needed as space fillers if one is to preserve the four lines per verse structure.

Another indication of the separation of the "coda" from the "theme" is the use of impersonal pronouns in the first 12 lines which are replaced by the familiar personal counterparts in the second half. Except for danq, 'you', in the first line, lines 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9 all use tl 'they' for the pronoun, though all pronouns are glossed 'you' in the translation. In the last 16 lines, the pronoun danq, 'you', occurs exclusively. In the first 12 lines where shared information is being recounted the impersonal 'they' suffices while the new information requested, the actual recipe being narrated, is made personal for the audience by the use of the familiar second person pronoun.

At the beginning of stanzas, at least in the narrative's theme, we always have aajii 'and then'. Subsequent lines of a stanza may begin with aasqaayst, also 'and then'. Though the consultant uses the same English gloss for the connectives, we suggest there is a subtle difference as we explained in our 1983 Salish conference paper on contextualizing cues. aajii is used when

a new sequence of linked actions is started and asqaayst connects sequence internal material. In line 13 (this would be the first line of the second part or "theme"), aajii collects all that went before (both ingredients and directions) and focuses our attention on the part of the recipe we are interested in. This is the only place we see waadluuan, a contextualizing term that is prevalent in other types of narrative. For example, in the story of qaao qaao that we discussed in 1984, waadluuan was shown to be used to mark the beginning of action sequences.

Lines 14, 15 and 16 with asqaayst detail serial actions subsequent to getting all the ingredients together. Line 17 begins the next verse and in fact, does so beginning with aajii. Not only is there a physical division marking the next verse, there is a semantic division as well. Assuming time expired while 'let it rise once' took place, then the beginning of this verse calls attention to the next sequence of actions. This verse, lines 17-20, begins with aajii and has one sequencing connective, asqaayst, at the beginning of line 19.

The next aajii occurs at the beginning of line 21, both the right place for it structurally and also the beginning of a new action set. Line 20 ends with directions for three loaves to be baked as bread per se; line 21 is the onset of directions for the one loaf you held back to make fried bread. This verse, lines 21-24, narrates the actual fried bread process, up to and including putting it into the pan and frying it. Line 24 is out of place, redundant, and perhaps inserted for structural reasons - to create the fourth and final line of the verse.

Haida narratives we have examined (long and short stories, prayers, historical narratives, animal tales, etc.) commonly repeat lines, phrases and so forth for narrative effect, for example, repeating an action or piece of dialogue so that it seems the narrative has a pulse or wave structure. The verse structure here - where four lines are required - suggests a 'pattern' of both context reduplication and structural quadruples. Bill Seaburg has

suggested (personal communication) on the basis of reading Haida tales translated by Swanton, that Haida may easily be seen to make use of four as a pattern number.

The last verse again begins with the section connective aajii (line 25), indicating both a new verse and the start of a new action set concerning what is done with the fried bread. There are two asgaaysts, sequencing 1), an aside about what the narrator does to get the syrup ready, and 2), what one is supposed to drink with fried bread.

The first 12 lines don't provide as sharp a structural division into four-line verses as we would like to see. It can be done, of course, and some faint evidence exists in the end of the fourth line (a fully inflected verb) and the beginning of the fifth (aa, a deictic pronoun or a very shortened version of aajii, which is already a reduced form of aahljiihluu). We really can't see a division between lines 8 and 9. All the lines from 5 to 9 seem to be listing ingredients and end in tl' kwiidang 'you measure'. Lines 10 and 11 tell about the disposition of the yeast and line 12 lists the last of the ingredients. This line, though we are calling it the last line of a major division, doesn't end with a fully inflected verb, in fact, it doesn't even have a verb in it unless one can be implied from the preposition ii 'into'. Nevertheless, line 13 clearly and strongly begins the second part of this narrative, the part we have compared to the theme of a musical work.

Here is what the whole recipe would look like with the coda divided 4,5,2,1 and the theme 4,4,4,4.

sablii dang tlaautlaas dluu
 sabliigaay waa'aan aa tl' kwiidaang
 gantl isgyaen tang isgyaen suugaa
 guutsuuwiit t' skanjuulaan

aa tl' k'iinsdaan malk
 gantl skatlaangwei tlehl dluu aa tl' kwiidang
 suugaagaay hans sdlaagwaa s'tansaan dluu wei aa tl' kwiidang
 tang sdlaagwaa tsuujuu xuuhlwanhl wei aa tl' kwiidang
 taao sdlaagwaal iimaan xwastan wei aa tl' kwiidang

aajii kaahlaawaay hans guuhlwanhl dluu
 ganhl ii sk'asgwaansang ii uu 'laagan

aajii sabliigaay ii suuga tang taooaay

aajii waadluaan guutsuuwiit gaa dang skanjuulaan
 asgaayst dang skwokaatsaa'aasaang
 asgaayst taao guut dang gaanaansaang
 asgaayst k'uusk'iit sgwaansaang dang kaahl daa'aasaan

aajii kaahl daasgaayst hin gii dang k'inanning saa'ang
 sablii kiihlgaay stansang ii uu dang istaa'saang
 asgaayst k'uuskiit sgwaansang hawuns dang kaahldaa'aasaang
 oo 45 minuts dang kuugaasaan

aajii sabliigaay skasgwaansang waast dang kagundaasaang
 taagyaal galangaa dang hol k'iinstaas
 gyaen sabliigaay gii dang kinaanangsaan gyaen dang gaalungsaan
 gaalang sdlaas gyaen uu aa aa dang k'ii xuujuu laa'aasaan

aajii sabliigaay gaalangs dlaas silup suuwiit dang kitaansaan
 asgaayst dluu k'ihlaa xuujuu silupgaay dlang gyaes dlaas
 asgaayst waa dlaa gankan dang niihls
 gyaen dang skis dlaa'aasaang

In the "fast" version we mentioned at the beginning of our presentation it appears that all the aajii, asgaayst and waadluaan, all the contextualizing cues, have been left out, supposedly to hurry along the telling of the recipe. Without these structural markers the information sounds rather listlike, rather like a 1980's suburban recipe. No change in style is observed when the teller comes to the frying of the bread, in fact, only one line is devoted to it, although the closing line, 'yours will be good' might apply to either the fried or baked bread. The recipe can be rather arbitrarily divided into four- and five-line verses:

sablii dang tlaauihlaas dluu
 sabliigaay waa'aan aa tl' kwiidaan
 gantl isgyaen taaung isgyaen suugaa
 gwuuts'wiit tl' skanjuulaang

aa tl' k'iinsdaan malk kyaasin
 wei'ii aa dang isdaahlingaan
 taa'o sdlaagwaal sdangs dluu wei'ii aa isdaan
 kaahldaawaay sdlaagwaal guusdans dluu laagang

kihlaa tlii'ii xaagaas dluu
 qandlaay isgyaen suugaay isgyaen tangaay
 kahldaawaay ii gyaesdlaang
 sabliigaay wei dang isdaasang
 tlii'ii k'ats' gulsaan

 daa lagas dluu uu
 kihlgaay isgyaen sabliigaay aa dang taaodaasaan
 kinaas guu aa dang gaa'aaosaan
 ank kihlaa giisaa uu aa tl' Xaaogang
 tlii'ii daa kaahlaas dluu
 hawunsan aangaa tl' skwakats'aan

 asgaayst kihlaa sdang ii aadang isdaas gyaen uu
 hawans aa tl' kahldaan
 kihlgaay staaawaas dluu aa
 aa dang kuugaasaang wan aawer dluu
 daangaa galangs dlaa'asaan
 daa laa'aasaan

There appear to be some subtle contextualizing cues that are noticeable once the initial breaking into lines and stanzas has been done. The first, third and fourth verses begin with lines that end in dluu uu 'when', that is, 'after all that stuff you just did in the last verse the next step is...'. Line 18 also ends in dluu but we arbitrarily left it in the fourth verse because it seemed part of that step in breadmaking devoted to letting the dough rise. The fifth verse is the only one that begins with a contextualizing cue as determined later from the poetic version of the recipe. (Remember, we elicited the "fast" version first). We may be reading too much into it but asgaayst 'and then' seems to be saying 'and now that you've done all that, you are finally to the step where you bake the loaves and make the fried bread, which is what you asked me to tell you'. The recipe ends with the rather formulaic 'yours will be good'. This compares structurally with the end of the poetic version of the recipe, 'and you will be full' and shows how difficult it is for native speakers to get away from the unconscious structure of oral narrative even when doing something "fast, the way you non-Haidas like it".

What follows is 'fried bread' American English recipe style (from the Pacific Magazine section of the Seattle Times, spring '87): i.e., ingredients

list; directions; serving suggestion. When we were given the short 'quick' version in Haida it was told in a way approximating the list/direction/suggestion mode yet the Haida way of speaking nonetheless managed to come through. In the 'authentic' Haida language form it becomes clear that 'fried bread' in Haida is 'best' told as a story not given as a recipe. It may well be that there is something social being communicated in Haida as well as in Lushootseed.

FRIED BREAD

About 20 pieces

4 cups flour
 3 tablespoons baking powder
 2 tablespoons powdered milk
 2 cups warm water
 Vegetable oil

1. Mix the flour, baking powder and powdered milk in a large bowl. Add one cup warm water, then slowly add the second cup of water. Knead until it makes a dough that won't stick to your hands. You might have to add a little more flour to keep it from sticking.
2. Roll the dough into about 20 balls and flatten each ball in your hand, stretch it thin, then poke a hole in the middle.
3. Preheat at least 2 inches of oil in a frying pan, wok or deep fryer to 375 degrees. Drop each piece of dough into hot oil and fry until golden brown. Cook only two pieces at a time. Drain on paper towels.
4. Some sprinkle fried bread lightly with salt, some spread it with butter and/or jam, and some like it plain. It is best when served warm.

