

"I WOULDN'T BE HERE":
ENGLISH WORDS, WISHRAM PATTERNS

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Morphemes and words from one language may be arranged in patterns from another. That is a familiar fact with regard to phrases and other syntactic sequences.¹ The same may occur with regard to discourse sequences, patterns of relations among lines known as ethnopoetic or rhetorical.

Two Salish conference contributions have pointed to this. My 1982 paper described a text uncertain and changing in its dialect identity, but almost perfect in its maintenance of rhetorical form. My contribution to the Victoria conference (1987) reported that narratives in Chinook Jargon differ in such patterning. Some narratives recorded by Melville Jacobs show relationships of two and four; others show relations of three and five. Some of the latter narratives are from speakers of Clackamas Chinook and Santiam Kalapuya. Since their narratives in those languages have relations of three and five, the Jargon texts appear to carry over the patterning of a native language. Two and four part patterning in Jargon narratives from speakers of Saanich and Snoqualmie Salish probably carries over patterning typical of those languages.

What follows is an account whose words are English but whose relations are of the kind found in traditional Wishram Chinook discourse. The source is Philip Kahclamat, who worked with Walter Dyk and Edward Sapir in the early 1930s, and David and Katherine French and myself in the 1950s.

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- 1 See now Sarah Grey Thomason and Terrence Kaufman, Language contact, creolization, and genetic linguistics (Berkeley & Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1988) for discussion of the phenomenon in terms of its implications for historical linguistics.
 - 2 The import appears to be that of something imagined counter-to-fact, even ironic, as in the Kathlamet Chinook Salmon's myth, and several Clackamas Chinook texts related by Victoria Howard (cf. Hymes 1985a, b). Hence the supplying of a question mark.

I cannot date the account precisely. It must have been spoken in one of the three summers in which we worked together (1954, 1956, 1957) before Mr. Kachlamat's death in 1958. Unlike the related text, 'The crier', first published in 1973, 1975 and discussed in Hymes 1981 (chs. 3, 6), it was evidently not spoken in a time intended for work. The text is not in my notebooks, but on both sides of a 5 by 8 piece of white paper in the handwriting of Virginia Hymes. Recognizing the significance of what Philip had begun to say, evidently she wrote down his words on whatever was available. I suspect that this occurred the last time we saw Philip, late in the summer of 1957, when he came to my mother's house in Portland, and sat for a while beside the bed to which I was confined with hepatitis. But I cannot be sure.

The piece of paper was forgotten for some years. It was later (27 December 1971) found in a school composition notebook that had been used by Dyk for some pages of Wishram text from Mr. Kachlamat. It was not noted in the paper with the related text, 'The crier', because that paper ('Breakthrough into performance') had already been sent for publication.

On the following page the alignment of words and lines on the original piece of paper is reproduced. For reference, the lines are enumerated in italics.

She told that this kid died he
died alright. He got as far as
where the Pauyapa:t -- two
roads "separate" happy hunting ground
earth

5

that's wher you get your judgment. I got
to the deity. I stood in front
of him. Oh. He looked at me.
You already coming here?

10

I don't know what I say,
Now he said, You, you
didn't even live on the
earth in the flesh. Your time is up you coming
here yet. Now he said I
think you go back I send
you back. You gonna have to
leave your life on
earth that's O.K. You go /overleaf/

15

back you go. That's
time I start moving
people see me start moving.

20

Reason my mother
told me why I come back-
after I got be 12-mother
told me is because I part
Sahaptin. Sahaptin chosen
people. If I full Chinook I
be dead now. Wouldn't be here.

25

So that's reason I believe in
Long House religion now if
it wasn't for it I wouldn't
be here. I'm gonna stay wi
it. That's the end of my
story now.

30

Elements that enter into traditional narrative form clearly are present in this English account.

There are turns at talk. It is striking that only the three turns at talk of the deity contain quoted speech (written lines 9, 11-14, 14-19). The two turns at talk of the mother do not quote, but report what she said (written lines 1, 23-24, 25-28).

There are sentence-initial time expressions: 'Now' (written lines 11, 14) and 'That's time' (written line 19-20). These three initial markers, like the three instances of quoted speech, are associated with the deity.

This concentration of markers (quoted speech, initial time-expressions) indicates an expressive center to the narrative. (Cf. the concentration of expressive markers in the central act of Louis Simpson's Wishram narrative, 'The deserted boy' (Hymes 1981 [1976], ch. 4)). This center seems to be the three verses marked by initial time expressions. They consist of the two successive instances of extended, declarative speech by the deity, and of its outcome. The two instances of declarative speech are the only two verses begun by 'Now', whose Wishram equivalent aga is a major formal marker, and it is only in these two verses that quoted speech is prefaced by a verb of saying. The Chinookan rhetorical logic of onset, ongoing, outcome is evident: Now you didn't even live, Now go back, That's time start moving.

There are less salient indications of organization in what precedes and follows these markers.

In what precedes, 'this kid' is introduced in the third person (written lines 1-6), but then becomes an 'I' (written lines 6//). That suggests a new, second group of lines.

Within the first group of lines, there appear to be three segments. The second is a three element excursus of explanation, somewhat isolated by space in the writing (written lines 4-5). The terms "roads 'separate'" provide a gloss of the Sahaptin word that precedes. Pauyapat [=pa-wiyapa:-t] is the nominalization (-t) of an intransitive verb stem (-wiyapa:-) that means 'to separate, split' (-pa:) 'while going along' (-wiyapa:-). The initial pa- is a third person marker. (I am indebted to Virginia Hymes for this information). The further terms 'happy hunting ground', and 'earth', indicate the two realms that are separated. One road leads on to the happy hunting ground, one back to earth. (Cf. the latter part of ch. 6 in Hymes 1981 for an example from the 1950s of a narrative in which Philip Kahclamat intersperses explanation).

This suggests that the words remaining, before the shift to "I", are a third segment in the first group. Note the parallel 'where'. To be sure, the written record may not contain the very beginning of the account. Probably Mr. Kachlamet began speaking of the subject before pen reached paper. Probably, however, not very long before. The dramatization that comes with self-identification ("I"), quoted speech, and time markers, the breakthrough into performance, as it were, begins some lines into what is recorded, and the narrated event is complete. The event is framed as what a woman (his mother) told, and there might well have been something more of that frame. The first group of lines, in other words, may well have been larger. The organization of the account overall does not seem to be affected. The end of the account is explicitly announced. In reaching the end there are four further major groups, as will be seen, hence five such groups in all, and a larger first group leaves the total a suitably Chinookan five.

The second group appears to consist of a sequence of three turns at action, taken by "I", "He", and "I".

All this suggests three groups of lines, each of three verses, the third marked by three initial time-expressions. Groups of three are a common form of pattern in Chinookan discourse. And these three groups culminate in a climax, the return to life of the dead child (written lines 19-21).

Loss of soul, followed by its return, was a source of knowledge of the other realm (cf. Cultee's account of what was learned for the first time when his grandfather returned (Boas 1901: 247-51). It was also sometimes a basis for new religious practice, as with the Prophet Dance, Smohalla movement, and Feather religion (Spier 1935, DuBois 1938, Pope 1953, French 1961: 393-4), the last still remembered by some on the Warm Springs Indian Reservation. Mr. Kachlamet's return is neither a source of new knowledge or new practice, but of loyalty. Loyalty to the Long House religion (also known as wašat) informs as well his spontaneous performance of what a traditional crier, going about the village, would have said, as to cleaving to the Indian religion, avoiding religions brought by Whites (see the opening of ch. 6 of Hymes 1981).

It is this loyalty which is stated in what follows the narrative reenactment.

These lines appear to be grouped in two parts, both introduced with 'reason' (22-29, 30-34). The first has the reason the mother gave for the return. It is akin to free indirect discourse, recounting without quoting. The second takes the first as reason for continued adherence to the Long House religion.

Within the first part the repetition of 'mother told me' appears significant, indicating two parallel groups of lines. The part as a whole appears to have three groups, each of three lines.

The second part appears to have six lines, grouped in three pairs. Pairwise grouping is marked in traditional Chinookan discourse, a form of intensification, and it may be fair to see it as intended here.

The account is presented on the next page in terms of this analysis. Here is a profile of its form.

Stanza	Verses	Lines	Features
A	abc	1-2, 3-6, 7	where : where
B	abc	8-9, 10-11, 12	I : he : I; turns at talk
C	a	13-16	Now, turn at talk
	b	17-23	Now, turn at talk, "I..you back "you go (back)"
	c	24-25	That's time, start moving
D	a	26-28	Reason, mother told me
	b	29-31	mother told me, Sahaptin
	c	32-34	wouldn't be here
E	a	35-36	reason, ...now
	b	37-38	wouldn't be here
	c	39-40	end,now

She told that this kid died
 he died allright
 He got as far as where the pauyapat -
 two roads 'separate' -
 happy hunting ground, 5
 earth
 That's where you get your judgment

I got to the deity
 I stood in front of him
 He looked at me 10
 "You already coming here?"
 I don't know what I say

Now he said
 "You, you didn't even live in the earth in the flesh
 >Your time is up 15
 >Your coming here yet?²"

Now he said
 "I think you go back
 "I send you back
 >You gonna have to leave³ your life on earth 20
 "that's OK.
 >You go back
 >You go"

That's time I start moving
 people see me start moving 25

Reason my mother told me
 why I come back -
 after I got to be 12 -
 mother told me
 is because I part Sahaptin 30
 Sahaptin chosen people

3 Presumably for 'live'. The vowels of 'leave' and 'live' do not
 contrast in Wishram.

If I full Chinook
 I be dead now
 wouldn't be here

So that's reason 35
 I believe in Long House religion now
 If it wasn't for it
 I wouldn't be here
 I'm gonna stay with it
 That's the end of my story now 40

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