

# Conversational Story Exchanges in X̱aad Kíl (Northern Haida)

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**Abstract:** This paper examines the conversational practices demonstrated in one dyadic X̱aad Kíl (Northern Haida) story exchange.<sup>1</sup> The exchange takes place between two male Elder X̱aad Kíl speakers, Chief ‘Láanaas Sdang (Adam Bell) and Henry Geddes. This recording was analyzed as part of a larger doctoral thesis project completed by the first author, working closely with Elder male fluent speaker Lawrence Bell (Adam Bell’s son). This analysis expands on previous work with X̱aad Kíl by documenting previously unstudied conversation practices, such as the use of response tokens, which are exemplified in the story exchange.

**Keywords:** X̱aad Kíl, Northern Haida, storying, conversation, conversation analysis

## 1 Introduction

The story exchange examined here is from an approximately half-hour audio recording between Chief ‘Láanaas Sdang (Adam Bell) and Henry Geddes. I (Kelli) analyzed this recording as part of a larger doctoral thesis project exploring conversation practices in X̱aad Kíl. In addition to the dyadic story exchange explored here, I transcribed and translated two conversations and a series of speeches.<sup>2</sup> Throughout this process, I worked closely with the last Elder male fluent speaker of X̱aad Kíl, HIGawangdlii Skilaa, Lawrence Bell (Adam Bell’s son, who has worked closely with Marianne since the 1980s). Most of the approximately 1.5 hours of audio, and in some cases audio-video, recordings were transcribed using Conversation Analysis (CA) conventions (Jefferson, 2004), which allows for showing not only what was said, but how it was said.<sup>3</sup> What results is a *thick transcription* that indicates both linguistic and sociolinguistic conversation elements.<sup>4</sup> Such a transcription provides both an important documentary record and a tool for aiding learners seeking to build conversational proficiency in the language.

The recording, made between the late 1970s and mid-1980s by an anonymous interviewer, begins with a short discussion about the Haida land question that emphasizes the need for unity between the Haida communities of Skidegate and Massett and the importance of knowing the Haida language. Following this ‘Láanaas Sdang tells two *gyáahlangee* (historical narratives or stories), both of which skillfully relate back to the opening discussion of the land question. While ‘Láanaas Sdang relates these stories, Henry Geddes demonstrates his engagement through participatory strategies, such as using laughter to express appreciation and with use of the response token *ee*.

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<sup>2</sup> At present, among X̱aad Kíl learners in Massett, the preferred orthography is the Alaskan orthography initially developed in the 1970s by Jeff Leer, Michael Krause, and fluent speakers of the language. This is the orthography we have used for the transcriptions in this paper.

<sup>3</sup> A glossary of Conversation Analysis conventions is found in the Appendix.

<sup>4</sup> The idea of “thick transcription” draws from the ethnographic practice of “thick description”, where as many details as possible are indicated (see Geertz 1973)

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Both participants also use this token during the exchange to respond affirmatively and to indicate that the current speaker should continue with their talk. Examples of each of these strategies are explored here, as are other key storying practices such as situating stories in both relational and physical context.

## 2 Background

Teaching through story is a practice common in Indigenous cultures (Wilson 2008) and in the larger human experience. Communications scholar Walter Fisher, for example, in proposing narrative theory, posits that narration, which roughly equates with storying, is “a theory of symbolic actions, words and/or deeds, that have sequence and meaning for those who live, create, and interpret them” (1984:2). Similarly, Phillips and Bunda (2018, Ch. 3) identify storying as “embodied relational meaning-making” that “...intersects the past and present as living oral archives.<sup>5</sup> Speaking from an Opaskwayak Cree perspective, Wilson (2008:17) notes that the practice of storying “allow[s] listeners to draw their own conclusions and to gain life lessons from a more personal perspective”. Storying is an important teaching tool, and, as Archibald (2008:83) explains, “each Aboriginal nation has particular traditions, protocols, and rules concerning stories and the way that stories are to be told for teaching and learning purposes”. As well, stories are interactive meaning-making exchanges. This means that exploring the strategies used in Xaad Kíl stories can provide key information about such meaning-making that can be extended to conversations.

While it has already been demonstrated that Haida narrative, or story, is an interactive exchange wherein speakers employ strategies to guide their audience (e.g., Eastman & Edwards 1984) little has been said about the conversational practices used. Rather, Eastman and Edwards (1984) explore structural elements of narrative, such as time expressions (e.g., *awáahl Gagwú* ‘long ago’) and connectives (e.g., *wáadluu* ‘then’) that help to guide listeners during a telling. Looking at interactive practices that are also found in conversation thus help to expand this prior work.

### 2.1 Storying and Story Types

Kovach (2009:95) identifies two main genres in Indigenous storying: mythical stories and personal narratives. These two main genres are demonstrated in Haida narrative as *gyáahlang*, historical narratives involving events that occurred to protagonists at particular ancestral villages, and “mythical” narratives, *k’iigaang*, which speak of the interactions of supernatural beings in the ancient past but also during the time of humans (Enrico 1995:4). Enrico (1995, 2005) mentions a third genre, *k’iyáagaang*, “clan history stories”, although he acknowledges that the boundaries between the genres are often blurred, in that encounters with supernatural beings and powers can occur in all of them, and all genres speak to Haida laws, and the attainment and maintenance of personal and collective prestige and social standing. Boelscher [Ignace] (1989:169), in speaking of stories connected to specific Haida ancestral towns, comments that these “... have the acknowledged function of legitimizing rights to particular places which are mapped out in them, and to names and crests whose origins are narrated in them.” In the present exchange between ‘Láanaas Sdang and Henry Geddes, personal narratives, such as Henry Geddes relating his memories of who spoke at public gatherings, are interspersed with historical stories, *gyáahlang*, as they were called by ‘Láanaas Sdang, and which he tells to Henry Geddes.

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<sup>5</sup> Tracey Bunda is a Ngugi/Wakka Wakka professor at the University of Queensland and Louise Phillips is a white Australian Honorary Senior Lecturer at the University of Queensland.

## 2.2 Introducing the Storytellers and Stories

‘Láanaas Sdang, Adam Bell (1902–1987), was the hereditary chief of the G̱aw Yahgu ‘Láanaas, a Northern Haida Raven matri-clan that owns the village of Iits’aaw on a hill that forms part of the present town of Massett on Haida Gwaii. He was trained as an orator and storyteller in his younger years. The recording we analysed involves ‘Láanaas Sdang conversing with Henry Geddes (1913–1994), also of Massett, who was of the Git’ans Eagle matri-clan. Like Adam, he was a fluent L1 speaker of the language, although he was several years younger than Adam. Being of opposite sides (moieties) and not connected closely by kinship through sharing a father’s clan (Boelscher 1989) put them into a relationship as overtly distant kin, which in turn becomes precisely the scenario where ‘Láanaas Sdang reminds Henry that they are indeed kin, as explained below (Lawrence Bell, personal communication to Marianne Ignace, June 19, 2022). In the recording, following ‘Láanaas Sdang’s comments about the Haida land question, he moves to the telling of two stories, each of which he classifies as *gyáahlang* (both in this recording and other recordings of narratives he produced with Marianne). Each of these *gyáahlang* narratives have been passed down through generations and retain the same content and structure over time, although sometimes with slight variations. These two stories, *Xaal Tsíina Gyáahlangee* (The Copper Salmon story) and *Port Simpson Gyáahlangee* (The Port Simpson story) each include strategies used to negotiate meaning that are also found in other forms of interactive talk, such as conversations and speeches (see Finney 2022).

### 2.2.1 Xaal Tsíina: The Copper Salmon

This story tells of the events that occurred when the younger brother of a family went off on his own into the woods after believing that his brother was being given preferential treatment (per ‘Láanaas Sdang’s account). Swanton (1908) presents two different versions of this story. The first, more detailed, account (p. 689–701) is attributed to “Walter, who belonged to the Rear-Town-People of Yan” (Swanton, 1908:273). Marianne notes that this was Walter Kingáagwaaw, a member of the Stl’ang ‘Láanaas clan who lived at Yáan, a village across the Masset inlet from the village of Massett. The second, shorter, version presented in Swanton (1908:701–702), is attributed to an older man who was a member of the Cod-People (Kyaanu Salii) (Swanton, 1908:273), another resident clan in the area, according to Swanton (1905). The plot of both versions, and that related by ‘Láanaas Sdang, is similar. In each instance, a young man goes off on a quest to a wooded mountain near Nasduu (Hippa Island) and builds himself a shelter by a stream. He is there for a substantial time, during which he consumes devil’s club, *ts’ihlanjaaw*, gaining extraordinary powers of vision and smell, which leads to him encountering a piece of copper in the form of a living salmon near the stream by which he built his shelter. He manages to catch the copper salmon and proceeds to hammer coppers from the fins and fillet sides. Later, when he returns to his family, he distributes the coppers.

The impetus for the man going off into the woods, however, differs in each of the accounts. In the first version related in Swanton (1908: 689–701), the man loses his father’s property gambling, and then goes to the woods in search of medicine (the *ts’ihlanjaaw*) at his father’s direction, to redeem himself and repay his debt to his father. In the second version presented in Swanton (1908:701–702), the man goes out in search of *ts’ihlanjaaw* to gain wealth. And, as mentioned previously, ‘Láanaas Sdang’s version emphasizes a dispute between brothers that prompted the younger brother to leave (*kiidad* ‘walk away in disgust’) his family and go on his quest to obtain wealth and shame his mother and older brother.

## 2.2.2 Port Simpson Gyáahlangee

The second story that ‘Láanaas Sdang relates follows a summary statement after the Xáal Tsíina story and a statement of appreciation from Henry Geddes. Per ‘Láanaas Sdang, the Port Simpson story takes place in Tsimshian country, near the village of *Lax Kw’alaams*, which is north of the present-day city of Prince Rupert, BC. This story tells of a siege of mice on the village resulting from a woman’s cruel treatment of a mouse who had eaten her winter food reserves. Due to her actions, poking out the mouse’s eyes, thousands of mice overrun the village, killing many people, until an old man from the village sings a song expressing remorse and humility on behalf of the villagers.

## 3 Methods

A near identical version of the Port Simpson story was recorded from ‘Láanaas Sdang by Marianne in 1984 and transcribed and translated with the help of Lawrence, and subsequently checked with the late Massett speaker Claude Jones in 2012–2014. This prior work thus helped Kelli’s transcription of the telling to Henry Geddes. In 2020–2021, Marianne and Lawrence translated and transcribed the Copper Salmon story which unexpectedly turned up during a listening of the Adam Bell-Henry Geddes recording. Lawrence and Kelli subsequently transcribed and translated the embedded dialogues of the recording through repeated listening to individual clauses. The recording was analyzed using Praat (Boersma & Weenink 2021) and glossed. Lawrence also provided key information about the ethnographic and relational context of the stories and conversational exchanges surrounding them. The recording was first transcribed by hand and later typed. Marianne reviewed these typed transcripts for accuracy and checked over passages with Lawrence to fine-tune the translations and transcriptions. Following this, Kelli examined the transcripts applying the Conversation Analysis (CA) tenet of “unmotivated looking” (Sacks 1995:27) to identify excerpts demonstrating meaning-negotiating strategies for further examination. These excerpts and their context (the clause immediately preceding and following the passage of interest) were transcribed using CA transcription conventions.

## 4 Storying Practices

During this conversational story exchange, several strategies for negotiating meaning are demonstrated. These strategies are not exclusive to storying, but are used productively in conversations and speeches, as demonstrated in Finney’s (2022) doctoral thesis. Those examined here are (i) tying the stories to participants via reference to physical and relational context, (ii) use of the response token *ee* to indicate an affirmative response or indicate that a speaker should continue, and (iii) use of laughter to express appreciation for a story’s telling.

### 4.1 Tying Stories to Participants

In his telling of the stories, ‘Láanaas Sdang skillfully ties the content to Henry Geddes. This is notable in the Copper Salmon story. Prior to beginning the story, ‘Láanaas Sdang provides both

physical and relational context. This context is shown in example (1):<sup>6</sup>

(1) Híppa Island gu (0.67) áasgee Xaadée uu (0.52) Híppa Island inggu, (1.17)  
 Híppa Island there these people FOC Híppa Island on  
 Gat'an'áas 'Llŋée >hin uu kya'áang.< (1.40)  
 Bilge-water town thus FOC to.call  
 'At Híppa Island, these people at Híppa Island, their village was called Gat'an'áas.'

Dúu Xaadée hin is (0.85)  
 West.coast (of.Graham.Island) people thus to.be  
 'They were West Coast people.'

Andrew Brown uu, (0.33) hin kya'aa-s gyaan TLAAN  
 Andrew Brown FOC thus to.be.named-PTCP and that's.all  
 'll Gíil-gan 'll híllu-gan  
 3.PL to.become.depleted-DPST 3.PL to.vanish-DPST  
 'Andrew Brown was his name, that was the end of them, they had got wiped out.'

Gám s- (0.34) saliiyaa nang tl'aa uu (0.75)  
 NEG after one 3.PL.USPC FOC  
 'After that there was no one left.'<sup>7</sup>

'Wáagyaan Ed Russ hánsan >isdagang-ee-gaang-aan.< (0.85)  
 and.then Ed Russ also to.take-DEF-HAB-IPST  
 'Afterwards Ed Russ took the position.'

'Láanaas Sdang begins by identifying the village, *Gat'anáas 'llŋee*, Bilge-water town. He then mentions the descendants from the village owner who remained during his lifetime, Andrew Brown and Ed Russ. Marianne further explains that Andrew Brown was the son of Walter Kingáagwaaw, who related the version of the Copper Salmon story presented in Swanton (1908:689–701). Walter Kingaagwaaw's father St'aasda, in turn, was the last surviving member of the Dúu Git'ans from Gat'anáas (Murdock 1936).

While 'Láanaas Sdang begins with this more general situating information, he begins to tie the story more specifically to Henry Geddes as the telling continues. One example of this is when 'Láanaas Sdang draws on his and Henry Geddes' shared knowledge of the landscape, referencing a specific landmark:

<sup>6</sup> Glossing abbreviations used in this paper are: 1 = 'first person', 2 = 'second person', 3 = 'third person', BOR = borrowing, CAUS = causative, DEF = definite, DPST = direct (experienced) past tense, EMPH = emphatic, FOC = focus marker, FRAG = fragment, HAB = habitual, INS = instrumental, IPST = indirect (inexperienced) past tense, OBJ = object, PL = plural, PP = post position, POSS = possessive, PRES = present tense, PTCP = participle, Q = question particle, SG = singular, SUBJ = subject, USIT = usitative, USPC = unspecified.

<sup>7</sup> *Gám nang tl'aa* = no one, nobody

- (2) ‘Wáadluu ya’a tl’adaawee (1.44) Hippa Island (1.26) kyaa  
 then straight mountain Hippa Island outer  
 nang kúnjuu-s >dáng áandang unsiid-ang.< (0.38)  
 a.certain point.of.land-DEF 2.SG.SUBJ feel to.know-PRES  
 ‘And that mountain, straight [from] Hippa Island, you know where the outer point is.’

Following the 0.38 second pause at the end of ‘Láanaas Sdang’s statement, Henry Geddes responds affirmatively with an *mm-hm*. In working through this portion of the story (October 13, 2021), Lawrence explained to me (Kelli) that both his father and Henry Geddes were fishermen, which is what contributed to their familiarity with the surrounding landscape. As Marianne further explained (personal communication to K. Finney, October 14, 2021), areas off Dúu Guusd, Haida Gwaii’s West coast, where Hippa Island is, would have been a common fishing location.

In addition to tying the story to the landscape, and drawing on their shared familiarity with this landscape, ‘Láanaas Sdang directly relates the story to Henry Geddes by weaving in kinship relations that connect the teller and the listener. This practice, remarked on in relation to oratory (Boelscher 1989:86; Boelscher Ignace 1991:123), is a way of legitimizing the speaker and their words and validates their social status.

Understanding these kinship references also requires a high level of cultural competence, as the Haida kinship system is a classificatory one. This makes it possible for speakers to refer to more indirect kinship connections, as more than one individual can be referenced with the same kin term. As Boelscher (1989:92) notes, those relationships that are “of practical significance at a given moment” are the ones referenced. The more cultural knowledge an individual has, the better they can negotiate use of kinship references to achieve their goals.

The following excerpt from ‘Láanaas Sdang telling the Copper Salmon *gyaahlangee* to Henry Geddes illustrates such kinship referencing. Near the end of the story, ‘Láanaas Sdang describes how the protagonist’s father’s nephews were searching for him. At one point, the uncle’s nephews are sent out:

- (3) AB: Gung náadlang-ang, kil gyáaxahláal’waa  
 male’s.father sister’s.child.(PL)-POSS INS order.around.PL  
 Hin gin tl’ kya’adas uu  
 thus thing 3.PL.USPC be.named FOC  
 ‘The father bossed around his nephews.’<sup>8,9</sup>

Xáldaang-dá uu tl’ kya’ad(a)[gang],  
 to.ask.to.do-CAUS FOC 3.PL.USPC to.name.CAUS  
 ‘They call that ‘asking [ordering] someone to do something’.’

- HG: [o:h↑], áak’uus gu uu↓ >tl’ kya’áa[dang]!<  
 thus there FOC 3.PL.USPC to.be.called  
 ‘Oh, these, that’s what they call it!’

<sup>8</sup> Household members that the uncle can order around like servants.

<sup>9</sup> *Kil gii xahláalwaa* = ‘order to, boss around’.

AB: [Xál]daang-dá hin tl' °kya'áadang°. (1.97)  
 to.ask.to.do-CAUS thus 3.PL.USPC to.be.called  
 'They call that 'asking [ordering] someone to do something'.'

Áa uu díi káa sáa nang náag-an  
 this FOC 1.SG.POSS uncle above a.certain.one to.live-DPST  
 Áa uu dǎng tsan iij-ang-gwa  
 this FOC 2.SG.POSS grandfather to.be-PRES-EMPH  
 'This uncle of mine on the hill, he was your chinnii.'

In the last line of this example, 'Láanaas Sdang ties the story directly to Henry Geddes as well as to his own kin. He moves from a general mention of *Gung náadlang-ang* 'The uncle's nephews' in the beginning of the excerpt to specific mention of his own maternal (great-)uncle, *áa uu díi káa* 'this uncle of mine'. He indirectly references his predecessor Xiláa of the Gaw Yahgu'laanaas, the high ranking and wealthy Chief of iits'aaw, one of the ancestral villages at what is now called Massett, and at the time of the telling under 'Láanaas Sdang's ownership. The latter then connects his uncle Xiláa to Henry Geddes by noting that this uncle was Henry Geddes' chinnii, or grandfather in a classificatory sense, since Xiláa and Henry Geddes' grandfather were from branches of the same clan.

This tying to participants via direct mention of kinship relations illustrates what Kovach (2009:94) terms "recounted relationality". Thus, stories "tie us with our past and provide a basis for continuity with future generations" (Kovach 2009:94). As Marianne and Ron Ignace, speaking of Secwepemc stories and storying noted, in the act of telling to one another, "storytellers thus granted each other authority over reliable and accurately transmitted information" (2017:24), mutually validating what they told one another, and connecting their stories to lived experiences and social relationships.

#### 4.2 Use of Response Token *ee*

That storying is an interactive practice is further seen through use of response tokens during the tellings. Gardner (2001) describes response tokens as expressions that listeners use to acknowledge talk. Gardner further explains the functioning of such tokens in a conversation. For example, the listener can use a token such as *mm-hm* to indicate that a speaker can continue with their talk, or they can employ a token like *oh* to show that what the speaker has said is particularly newsworthy.

In the present story exchange, *mm-hm* and *oh* are used for these purposes. However, more salient for the present discussion is the use of the Xaad Kíl response token *ee*, which is characteristic of conversational Xaad Kíl. As Lawrence explains, *ee* is used to indicate agreement with what has been said. He notes that it, accompanied by nodding, can have a similar function to the English expression 'hear, hear!' (personal communication to K. Finney, September 2, 2021). A similar agreement function is also documented in Enrico (2005:1724).

Often, in the stories examined here, *ee* is used in response to a question. For example, during the telling of the Port Simpson story, Henry Geddes asks a question of 'Láanaas Sdang about one of the key events of the story: what occurs to the mice after the old man sings the song of humility and remorse. This is shown in example (4a):

- (4) a. 'Wáagyaan gw 'wájii kagan-ée 'laa 'wáagyaan daang'awaa (0.16)  
 and.then Q that mouse-DEF 3.PL.SUBJ and.then recede.PL  
 'And did the mice all recede back into the woods?'

At first, 'Láanaas Sdang appears not to hear the question, and, following a request for clarification, Henry Geddes restates what he has said. Then, 'Láanaas Sdang uses *ee* to respond affirmatively to Henry Geddes' question; this is shown in Example (4b):

- (4) b. AB: Gwaa (0.33)  
 'What?'
- HG: 'WÁAGYAAN GW kagan-ée DLAAS ijjaa (0.30)  
 and.then Q mouse-DEF after to.be  
 'And then after, the mice...'
- AB: Ee (.)
- HG: oh: (0.22)

While not shown here, it is also notable that Henry Geddes' question that opens this exchange follows a nearly two-second pause. Thus, it could be the case that the question is both an indication of attentive listening and a prompt for 'Láanaas Sdang to continue the story.

*Ee* is also used in the same manner in the Copper Salmon story. For example, near the middle of the story, the younger brother, while he is off alone in the woods, hears salmon in the stream by which he has built his shelter. He attempts to catch one but is unable to because of their size. After one such occasion, he notices that his hands smell like copper. As 'Láanaas Sdang relates this portion of the story, he asks Henry Geddes if he knows the smell of copper, to which Henry Geddes responds affirmatively with *ee*. This exchange is shown in example (5):

- (5) AB: 'Ll stláang aa xaal 'll sgunaa-sii. (2.56)  
 3.SG.SBJ one's.own.hand PP copper 3.SG.OBJ to.smell-DEF  
 'He smelled copper on his hands.'
- Dáng gw xaal sgunáa an unsad=  
 2.SG.OBJ Q copper to.smell for to.know  
 'Do you know the smell of copper?'
- HG: =EE::
- AB: Copper-gee áa [xaal] sgunaa-s, ahljii 'll sgun-an  
 copper-BOR this copper to.smell-PTCP that 3.SG.SBJ to.smell-DPST  
 'It smells like copper, that is what he smelled.'
- HG: [xaal-ée] ((throat clearing))  
 copper-DEF  
 'The copper.'



In this exchange, one possibility is that ‘Láanaas Sdang is indeed confirming that Henry Geddes is familiar with a key detail of the story, namely the smell of copper. However, it could also be the case that he is using this in a more rhetorical way to engage Henry Geddes in the telling of the story. That is, ‘Láanaas Sdang is stressing their shared knowledge, thereby increasing Henry Geddes’ involvement with the story.

*Ee* is also used as a continuer in this story exchange, whereby a listener prompts the speaker to continue with their talk. This is demonstrated in an interlude between ‘Láanaas Sdang and Henry Geddes after ‘Láanaas Sdang has related the Port Simpson story. The two have been discussing the meaning of a particular term, *kíl stl’agáng*, translated as ‘apologize’. They have been remarking on how, in *Xaad Kíl*, the word carries more weight than what is conveyed by ‘apologize’ and have moved on to mention the care people use when speaking the language, in part because of these shades of meaning. Following this, Henry Geddes begins telling of his own recollections of how discussions in groups of people would unfold; ‘Láanaas Sdang’s response demonstrates the use of *ee*, shown in example (6):

- (6) HG: Tlí awáahl, (1.99) nang gúusuu, “isán Hl daláng hin ...  
 long.ago the.one to.talk also 1.SG.SBJ 2.SG.OBJ thus  
 “Adam, k’waa d’áng díi súudaa!”  
 Adam please 2.SG.SBJ 1.SG.SBJ to.tell.IMP  
 Awáahl Gagwíi díi ts’újuu-s dluu  
 long.ago very 1.SG.SBJ to.be small-PTCP when  
 gin Hl gudáng-giinii aa (0.30)  
 thing(s) 1.SG.SBJ to.hear-USIT FRAG  
 ‘Long ago, someone spoke, “also I to you... Adam, please tell me.” Long time ago  
 when I was small, I used to hear those things.’

AB: EE↑

In working through this portion of the recording, Lawrence mentioned that in this instance, *ee* is used to indicate ‘go on’ (personal communication to K. Finney, September 29, 2021). In this way, ‘Láanaas Sdang prompts Henry Geddes to continue with his talk.

### 4.3 Laughter to Convey Appreciation

One final collaborative meaning-making practice to explore here is that of laughter. Lawrence mentioned that laughter, as found in this story exchange, is used to indicate appreciation for the telling of the story (personal communication to K. Finney, September 8, 2021; October 13, 2021). Jefferson et al. (1977), in examining the use of laughter in English, demonstrate that it is an orderly process and a type of turn in the conversation. It is also not limited to indicating humour, which is evident in the laughter in the present story exchange.

There are many types of laughter in *Xaad Kíl* and accompanying terms to describe each of these. Marianne notes that many of these terms are formed from the root *k’ah* used as an instrumental, followed by a classifier and *s(d)la* (personal communication to K. Finney, October 21, 2021). For example, *k’ah káas(d)la* refers to a short and stubby laugh. Just as there are distinguishing terms for types of laughter, so too are there various functions of laughter. Here, one relevant function is indicating engagement with a story’s telling and expressing appreciation.

One notable instance of this occurs following ‘Láanaas Sdang’s telling of the Port Simpson story. One vital part of this story is the song that the village man sings; this song of humility and

remorse stops the siege of mice on the village. ‘Láanaas Sdang not only recounts the words of this song but performs the song in his telling of the story. This emphasizes the importance of the song to the story; Lawrence explained that it was not common for his dad to sing (personal communication to K. Finney, August 5, 2021; September 8, 2021). The excerpt in example (7) provides the final portion of the song and the following exchange of laughter between Henry Geddes and ‘Láanaas Sdang:

(7) AB ((singing)) Dáng áa Hlaa uu kil-tl’atijang kilsdlaay (0.62)  
 2.SG.OBJ PP (to) 1.SG.SBJ FOC voice-surrender chief  
 ‘Here I am, I surrender myself to you (humble myself).’

Dáng áa uu k’ajuu’-saang kihlgangaa (2.63)  
 2.SG.OBJ PP (to) FOC to.sing-FUT apologize  
 ‘Here I apologize to you by singing.’

HG huh HUH (0.23)

AB uh huh hih hih [huh HUH]

HG [\$huh heh YE::AH,] >that [was good!<\$]

AB [°huhHUH heh°] (1.25)

Here, after ‘Láanaas Sdang finishes the song, Henry Geddes responds with laughter. This laughter, importantly, is not a marker of humour. The topic of the song is serious, with the village man using the song to express contrition for the villagers’ disrespect of the mouse. Thus, the song serves to humble the villagers to the mice so that they will cease their attack on the village. Given this, the laughter, rather than expressing humour, Lawrence notes, is a way for Henry Geddes to demonstrate his appreciation for ‘Láanaas Sdang’s telling of the story and to demonstrate his engagement with the story (personal communication to K. Finney, September 8, 2021). The excerpt also shows ‘Láanaas Sdang responding to this laughter with laughter of his own. Henry Geddes then orients to this laughter by overlapping his laughter with that of ‘Láanaas Sdang.

A similar use of laughter for collaborative meaning-making is also seen at the end of the Copper Salmon story. In the version of the story that ‘Láanaas Sdang recounts, after the younger brother is reunited with his family, he distributes the coppers that he has acquired from his finding the copper salmon in the stream. He has organized the coppers, indicating his wealth, from smallest to largest. When it comes time to distribute coppers to his mother and brother, he gives them the smaller of the coppers because his brother has already been given preferential treatment. After ‘Láanaas Sdang relates this episode, Henry Geddes responds with laughter. This is shown in example (8):

(8) AB ‘ll k’wáayang uu nang ii’waan-s uu  
 3.SG.OBJ older.brother.POSS FOC certain.one big-DEF FOC  
 dlúu nang is uu gwaayanggee áa k’iihlshlaa=  
 even.with certain.one to.be FOC next to at CLS.set.heavy.object  
 ‘He [tells] the older brother, “Put the big one next to the other one!”’<sup>10</sup>

<sup>10</sup> The one he is giving to older brother is next to the biggest copper.

HG HUH! (1.66)

AB ‘Wáagyaan awang ga nang ts’úujuu ‘ll isdaa-yaan (0.34)  
and.then mother to certain.one small.one 3.SG.SBJ give-IPST  
‘And he gave his mother the smallest one.’

Díi dáa táada’a-ng ahluu nang ts’uujuu-s  
1.SG.POSS 2.SG.SBJ to.feed-PRS that’s.why certain.one to.be.small-DEF  
dáng \$HI isdaa-ng\$  
2.SG.OBJ 1.SG.SBJ to.give-PRS  
‘Because you only gave food to older brother, I give you the little one.’

HG huh huh huh huh (0.74)

In this excerpt, Henry Geddes’ laughter is prompted by ‘Láanaas Sdang’s use of “smile voice”, indicated with \$, directly preceding the laughter in response. Here, both ‘Láanaas Sdang and Henry Geddes recognize the younger brother’s intent in distributing the smaller coppers to his mother and older brother: since the older brother has received so much already (the choice food at the beginning of the story), he, and his mother who provided him with this preference, is now given a smaller copper.

## 5 Discussion

This brief examination of one interactive story exchange in *Xaad Kíl* has demonstrated the interactive nature of storying. Both the speaker and listener are co-participants in meaning-making and use a variety of strategies to show their engagement with the telling of the story. In addition to the use of response tokens such as *ee* to express agreement and the use of laughter to indicate appreciation, this story exchange also shows how stories are used to highlight and strengthen both kinship and land connections.

## 6 In Memoriam Lawrence Bell

HiGawangdlíi Skilaa, Lawrence Bell passed away on July 22, 2022. He was a member of the Sdast’aas Eagle clan of Old Massett, the son of Gaw Gud Nang Káas, Ruth Bell, and ‘Láanaas Sdang, Adam Bell, who was hereditary chief of the Gaw Yahgu ‘Laanaas Raven Clan of Iits’aaw in the Massett area. As a hereditary chief since his teens, ‘Laanaas Sdang was among the last trained storytellers and orators among the Gaw Xaadee in Northern Haida Gwaii. Lawrence was the last person in Massett to be raised into Xaad Kíl (Haida) in an entirely Haida-speaking household, and was a very articulate and knowledgeable speaker not only of his birth language, but also of English. He was the last male speaker of Northern Haida, with only one other speaker remaining. After Gulkiihlgad, Marianne Ignace, recorded a treasure box full of elaborate Haida narratives with ‘Laanaas Sdang and her adoptive mother Sandlaneé (Emma Matthews) between 1980 and 1987, Lawrence and Marianne set out translating and transcribing them, a collaboration that, with some breaks, lasted right up until his sudden illness and passing, with an amazing body of stories completed. In recent years, he worked tirelessly with Marianne’s PhD student Kelli Finney on transcriptions and analysis of Xaad Kíl conversation, and was able to support her work through to the completion of her PhD in Spring 2022. His family, including his nieces and grandchildren, are

devastated by his loss, but we are all grateful for the deep and thoughtful knowledge of and in Xaad kil he shared with us, including as a teacher of the language among learners in Old Massett.

## 7 In Memoriam Mona Jules, Melmenétkwe

Mona Jules, née Ignace, Melmenétkwe, was a Secwepemctsin (Shuswap language) speaker and documentarian. She passed away August 1, 2022. She was raised in Skeetchestn by her grandparents Sulyén and Chief Edward Eneas in a large household where her grandmother defiantly, and despite the pressures of priests, Indian agents, and educators, courageously kept the language alive. After raising eight children at Simpcw First Nation where she married August Jules, Mona began working on the documentation of Secwepemctsin with Marianne Ignace, transcribing and translating narratives from Simpcw elders. Subsequently she worked with other linguists including Dwight Gardiner, Susan Russell, and John Lyons. She taught courses in Secwepemctsin in Kamloops for some 25 years through Simon Fraser University, and more recently also through Thompson Rivers University, which awarded her an honorary doctorate in 2021. In recent years, together with other elders, Mona completed work on a practical grammar of Secwepemctsin with Marianne and John, and in 2021-22 worked on various topics of Secwepemc grammar and phonology with several PhD students from UBC, supervised by Henry Davis. We sent Melmenetkwe her off into the spirit world on August 4, 2022, knowing that the Secwepemc Nation has lost an incredibly kind and knowledgeable speaker, documentarian, tireless teacher and champion of Secwepemctsin. She was kye7e (grandmother), tum'e and tikwe7 (auntie), and ki7ce (mother) to her own children and countless others in the nation.

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## Appendix: Conversation Analysis Transcription Conventions<sup>11</sup>

<b>Temporal and sequential relationships</b>	
<b>Overlapping or simultaneous talk</b>	
[	Left brackets on two successive lines of utterances of different speakers indicate the beginning of a speaker overlap.
]	Right brackets indicate the end of speaker overlap.
(0.5)	Numbers in parentheses indicate silence, represented in tenths of a second. Depending on the context, sometimes these are noted within an utterance (pauses) and sometimes between utterances (gaps).
(.)	A dot in parentheses indicates a pause lasting less than one-tenth of a second.
=	An equals sign indicates latching of one speaker's utterance to another speaker's utterance (i.e., there is no gap between the utterances). If the two lines connected by the equals sign are by the same speaker, this indicates that the speaker had no break between lines, but room has been made for overlapping talk that occurs between the two lines.
<b>Speech delivery</b>	
<b>Intonation</b>	
<b>Punctuation marks are used to indicate intonation. They are not used grammatically.</b>	
.	A period indicates falling or final intonation contour.
?	A question mark indicates rising intonation.
!	An exclamation point indicates an animated tone of voice.
,	A comma indicates continuing intonation.
:	A colon indicates the stretching of the sound just preceding. The more colons, the longer the stretching.
<b>Intonational contours</b>	
<b>Combinations of underlining and colons are used to mark intonational contours.</b>	
<u>m</u> :	If the letter(s) preceding a colon is/are underlined, there is a falling intonational contour (high to low).
⋮	If the colon itself is underlined, then there is a rising intonational contour (low to high).
↑↓	Up and down arrows mark sharper rises and falls in intonation than colons and underlining.
<b>Emphasis and loudness</b>	
<u>word</u>	Underlining indicates stress or emphasis, either increased loudness or higher pitch.
WORD	Uppercase indicates a word is louder than the surrounding talk.
°word°	Talk between degree signs indicates that the talk between them is noticeably softer than the talk preceding or following it.
-	A hyphen after a word or part of word indicates an abrupt cut-off of speech or a self-interruption.

<sup>11</sup> Adapted from Jefferson (2004).

<b>Rhythm</b>	
>word<	Inward arrows indicate the talk between them is rushed or compressed.
<word>	Outward arrows indicate talk that is slowed down.
.h	A dot followed by an 'h' indicates a noticeable in-breath. The more hs, the longer the in-breath.
h	An 'h' without a preceding dot indicates a noticeable out-breath. The more hs, the longer the out-breath.
Hah/heh/hih/huh	All of these indicate laughter.
\$word\$	Dollar signs enclosing an utterance indicate that the utterance was produced with a smile voice.
<b>Other</b>	
((word))	Words in double parentheses mark the transcriber's descriptions of events ((cough)) ((sniff)) or transcriber's comments on events ((sounds like speaker is stifling a laugh)).
(word)	An entire utterance enclosed in parentheses or a speaker name in parentheses indicates uncertainty of the part of the transcriber.