This article analyzes a Coyote narrative told by John Watchman to Edward Sapir in Navajo. While it has been widely documented that Navajo curing ways are tightly organized by the use of repetition, there has been far less investigation of repetition in other genres of Navajo verbal art. This article shows that the use of pairing and the semeliterative aspect create a sense of completion in Watchman's narrative. It is argued that repetition may occur in a variety of Navajo genres of verbal art, but that it may serve differing rhetorical functions there. Ethnopoetic structuring is therefore an expression of linguaculture (the overlapping of language and culture). To return to these texts then allows one to place such narratives within the contexts of the linguaculture of which they are a part.

Introduction

Following in the tradition of Kenneth Burke (1968) and Roman Jakobson (1960), this article explores repetition and its rhetorical use in the creation and fulfillment of expectations in a short Navajo Coyote narrative told by John Watchman to Edward Sapir (Sapir and Hoijer 1942:16–9). One of the goals here is to show the rhetorical use of repetition and the role of the semeliterative prefix ndd- (again) in this narrative as examples of Navajo linguaculture. Associated with the above discussion, I will also present this narrative in an ethnopoetic format. The argument here, echoing Dell Hymes (1981), is that careful attention to linguistic details can reveal much about the poetics and aesthetics of the source-language versions (see also Blommaert 2006). Such poetics and aesthetics are a part of what Paul Friedrich (2006) has termed “linguaculture,” the collapsing of the distinction between language and culture.

This article also adds to the growing body of literature on Native American, Southern Athabaskan, and Navajo ethnopoetics (see Basso and Tessay 1994; Hymes 1995; Nevins and Nevins 2004; Toelken and Scott 1981; Webster 1999a, 1999b, 2004; Zolbrod 2004; see also Luthin 2002; Swann 1994, 2004). This article is one of the first attempts...
to apply Hymes's ethnopoetic methodology to a Navajo text collected from Navajo narrators by a prior generation of linguists and anthropologists. The use of ethnopoetics here is a part of a focus on linguaculture as well (Friedrich 2006). Hymes's (1981) ethnopoetic methodology aids in understanding Navajo linguaculture as a discursive achievement. To return to these texts, then, allows one to place such narratives within the contexts of the linguaculture of which they are a part.

I am also concerned with connecting parallelism and repetition in this narrative to its larger use within Navajo linguaculture. Building on the attempt to understand something of the lingering evidence for Navajo linguaculture, I briefly compare this narrative with two similar versions that were documented by Elsie Clews Parsons (1923) and W. W. Hill and Dorothy Hill (1945). In doing so, I hope to expand the literary analysis of Navajo Coyote narratives to include careful attention to linguistic features. I also hope to show the importance of recording the source-language original and paying careful attention to linguistic detail—that is, to the places where Navajo linguaculture remains. Such alternative versions are in the most general sense repetitions of the narrative content (the main characters are the same in the versions) and, as I argue below, repetitions of genre-indexing devices (such as the formulaic opening and closing). They are evidence of what Hymes (1981) calls the genealogies of narrative traditions and as such are made recognizable by linguacultural poetic practices.

The narrative under discussion (Sapir and Hoijer 1942:16–9) was recorded by Sapir from Watchman. Watchman told Sapir a number of narratives that can be found in Sapir and Harry Hoijer's *Navajo Texts* (1942), including another Coyote narrative commonly known as “Coyote and Skunk” (Sapir and Hoijer 1942:20; see also Haile 1984; Hill and Hill 1945). We know that Watchman helped translate the narratives as well. Thus, Watchman was a party to both the Navajo and the English version. This differs drastically, I might add, from the narrative recorded by Parsons from Laterro by way of the interpreter Manuelito Lewis, which is discussed at the end of this article. Parsons claimed that Laterro did not speak English, and the language abilities of Lewis are left ambiguous.

In the section that immediately follows I will discuss the use of repetition in several oral traditions. I will suggest that while an overt linguistic form such as repetition may exist in differing verbal traditions, we should not expect it to function the same everywhere. Repetition is one potential resource for the creation, perpetuation, renewal, and circulation of specific linguaculture practices. Understanding something of that variety of function can draw into relief the poetic and rhetorical functions of repetition in Navajo linguacultures. I then review some of the literature on Navajo ethnopoetics and the place of Coyote narratives in Navajo oral tradition. After that I provide an ethnopoetic presentation of the Navajo and English versions, followed by a discussion and analysis of the narrative that take up two specific poetic features: heightened affective expressivity and repetition. I then offer a comparison of this narrative to versions recorded by Hill and Hill (1945) and Parsons (1923). I conclude with a comparison of the uses of parallelism and repetition within Navajo curing ways and Watchman’s Coyote narrative and argue for the importance of focusing on linguaculture through poetics.
Repetition in Linguaculture

Repetition and repetition with variation have been of crucial interest to scholars of verbal art. Much of their research is based on the foundational work of Roman Jakobson (1960) and concerns the use of parallelism. Briefly, parallelism can be understood as the playing out of paradigmatic alternations (selection—that is, the choices of lexical, morphological, phonological, and other linguistic devices as against other potential forms) on the syntagmatic axis (sequence—that is, the ordering and combination of such choices). This alternation can be found on all levels of discourse, from phonological repetitions and variations (rhyme), to grammatical repetition, to lexical repetition, to larger discursive units being parallel (as when the closing of a narrative is parallel in structure to the opening of the narrative, but in reverse).

The study of repetition has been an important feature in the understanding of the structuring of verbal art around the world. This research suggests something of the variation one finds in the linguacultural expressions of parallelism. By understanding this variation across linguacultures we can begin to understand the specific local aesthetics of that parallelism. A brief sampling of such variation will allow us to see how Navajo repetition and parallelism may or may not compare.

James Fox (1988) provides numerous examples of parallelism in his work on the “speaking in pairs” found in Indonesian verbal practices. This speaking in pairs involves forms of parallelism. According to Fox (1989), the use of parallelism in Rotinese ritual language is a way to highlight dialect differences. Likewise, Alan Rumsey’s studies of the Ku Waru of highland New Guinea (2001, 2005, 2006) describe the use of parallelism in performances of chanted narratives known as *tom yaya kange*. Rumsey (2001) argues that such parallelism creates a form of meter that is aesthetically salient to Ku Waru. Parallelism here is a means to create a metrical system that “overwhelms” the listener (Rumsey 2001:218). Barbara Johnstone’s *Repetition in Discourse* (1994) includes a number of essays on repetition and parallelism, including an article on Kuna parallelism (Sherzer 1994) and Mayan conversational repetition (Brody 1994). Dennis Tedlock (1996) has described in detail the use of repetition and parallelism in Mayan discourse. C. Andrew Hofling (2003:408) argues that repetition and parallelism are forms of “discourse highlighting” in Itzaj Mayan narratives. In such cases, repetition and parallelism indicate both salient topics within a narrative, but they also focus attention on “major cultural symbols” (Hofling 2003:408). Among the Kuna as well as the Navajo, the use of the paradigmatic litany of objects in chants creates what we can term “lists of the known” (see Sherzer 1994:43). For example, in the “Way of the Hot Pepper” (a Kuna chant), the kinds of peppers known to the Kuna are listed through parallelism (Sherzer 1990). According to Joel Sherzer (2002), the “Way of the Hot Pepper” then is a statement of Kuna ecology via parallelism.

Differing dynamics have been observed by Bruce Mannheim (1987, 1998). He describes the semantic couplets and parallelism of Quechua verbal art as ways of semantic calibration, where markedness relations are brought into contrast. Thus, Quechua semantic couplets create generic versus specific semantic relations (unmarked versus marked forms). Similarly in Nahuatl, couplets with specific meanings can be created. In other words, there are formulaic couplets that achieve meaning on
top of the meanings found in their individual constituent lines. William Bright (1990), for example, shows how Nahuatl couplets are based on semantic and morphosyntactic parallelism (both the morphology—the structure of words and their parts—and the syntax—word order—align in the parallelism). In Nahuatl studies, there has been recognized a form of “metaphorical coupling” (Bright 1990:440). For example, the couplet “the lord of the water/the lord of the mountain” is understood as “the lord of the city” (Bright 1990:440); that is, the combination of the lines, “the lord of the water/the lord of the mountain,” is then understood metaphorically to denote “the lord of the city.” The two forms combine to create a new reading (metaphorical) that is not posited by either line separately.

In Arawakan chants recorded by Jonathan Hill, there are two distinct kinds of parallelism; the first involves “the heaping up of names,” which is “an essentially taxonomic process invoking a number of specific spirit-names within a single category of mythic being.” The second type involves the “search[ing] of the names.” This form “explodes the relatively stable, verbal categories of mythic being into a historically dynamic, expanding musical universe of changing relations” (Hill 1993:23). One genre is taxonomic, while the other one creates new relations through parallelism.

Considering all of this work, we can see that while parallelism and repetition may or may not occur within a given verbal repertoire, the poetic functions of parallelism and repetition need to be understood within the linguaculture in which they occur and which they help constitute (see Friedrich 2006). Poetics is one crucial site for the emergence, renewal, circulation, and perpetuation of linguaculture. Poetic devices can “travel” through discursive use and are thus implicated in multiple genres (Briggs and Bauman 1992). But genres then become the realizations of linguaculture, of those places where “culture is a part of language just as language is a part of culture and the two partly overlapping realities can intersect in many ways” (Friedrich 2006:219). Hymes’s ethnopoetic work (1981, 2003) and the more recent work of Rumsey (2005, 2006) are excellent examples of the usefulness of a focus on linguaculture (see also O’Neil, Scoggin, and Tuite 2006). Ethnopoetic structuring is both constitutive of and expressive of linguaculture. Such work focuses on the creative individual and his or her relation to expressions of linguaculture through poetics. Likewise, the feelingful attachments that adhere to expressive forms are also examples of linguaculture (see Feld 1988; Friedrich 1979; Nuckolls 1992, 2006; and Samuels 2004).

In the present work, I understand linguaculture as an outgrowth of Sherzer’s (1987) and Urban’s (1991) call for a discourse-centered approach to language and culture. Their approach sees culture and language intertwined and made recognizable and understandable through discourse. The discourse-centered approach is also, explicitly at times, ethnopoetic (see Sherzer 1990). A linguacultural approach challenges the discreteness of either “language” or “culture” as categories. Discourse, then, is a primary mode of expression of linguaculture.

Questions of genre framing involve linguaculture as well. Genres are recognized and renewed through the poetics that constitute and aid in their circulation (Briggs and Bauman 1992; Silverstein 2005). Thus, the “discourse highlighting” of Itzaj Mayan narratives, the meter of Ku Waru chants, the “heaping of names” of Arawakan chants, and the “litanies of the known” in Kuna chants are all examples of repetition
and parallelism put to use in the service of linguaculture. As I will show below, one form of this circulating and renewing of genres in Navajo linguaculture is through and by repetition. My goal here is to understand the specific forms that repetition takes within Watchman’s narrative and within Navajo chantways. It is important to note that framing devices—such as ‘alk’ido4’ (long ago)—are used by differing narrators (Watchman and Laterro). This is another kind of repetition (repetition over time and across speakers), and it helps create recognizable genres (Bakhtin 1986; Bauman 2004). These examples are linguacultural as well, because culture and language are intimately and discursively overlapped to create saliently felt and recognizable forms.

Throughout, I will follow Sherzer (1994) and distinguish between “exact repetition” (exact lexical and syntactic repetition) and “near repetition.” It seems to me that the exact repetition of a line (based here on the data at hand) is the maximal form of parallelism: it is repetition without variation. Other forms of repetition that nearly match, but vary in some ways, are examples of poetic parallelism that is often associated with the above examples. As Sherzer writes:

Repetition, in its most general sense, is the basis of structural pattern, in that elements which are in some sense the “same” are established and defined and thus distinguished from elements which are “different”…. According to this way of looking at things, parallelism, the poetic process which has been defined and exemplified by Roman Jakobson and others, is a type of repetition, in that “sames” of some kind or at some level or to some degree are repeated in order to create a parallel pattern. At the same time, since one kind of parallelism is exact or total repetition, repetition is a type of parallelism. (Sherzer 1994:41)

It seems useful, then, to explore the specific articulations of repetition and parallelism within the contexts of unique linguacultural settings. This includes investigating the aesthetics of different genres of verbal art within and among groups.

Navajo Ethnopoetics

Much has been written about parallelism in Navajo chant ways (see Field and Blackhorse 2002; Frisbie 1980; Matthews [1887] 1997, [1902] 1995; McAllester 1980b; Reichard 1944; Walton 1930; Witherspoon 1977), and it is a truism that the chants are based on a set of well-coordinated uses of parallelism. Arguments for the medical efficaciousness of this parallelism have been suggested (Field and Blackhorse 2002; Reichard 1944), but the parallelism is also understood to have an aesthetic function. Washington Matthews ([1897] 1994) long ago noted that Navajos had “poetry” and “poems,” and his work was specifically referring to the curing ways.

Following Matthews ([1897] 1994), many scholars have examined the poetic uses and aesthetic forms of repetition and parallelism in Navajo chantways and songs. David McAllester (1954, 1980a), for example, pointed to repetition as a key feature of the aesthetics of certain Navajo songs and chants. As McAllester writes, “the constant iteration of double syllable units, the six repetitions of basic structure of the song, the heavy use of only two note values (repetition implies reduction of means)
all create the same impression” (1980a:7). Repetition, he notes, is pervasive in song, from the vocables through the song structure through the “text” of the song. Indeed, McAllester argues that “repetitiveness is a motif all through Navajo life,” and, as he argues, repetitiveness is used “nowhere more consistently than in ceremonial music, poetry, and ritual” (8).

Eda Lou Walton (1930) made the use of repetition and parallelism the focus of her paper on “song patterning” in Navajo chantways. As Walton argues for Navajo chantways and songs, “their foremost demand is for parallelistic balance, and the whole body of Navajo poetry is conditioned by this patterning” (1930:105). Gladys Reichard (1944) argued that one of the “compulsive” forces of Navajo chantways was the use of repetition and parallelism. Gary Witherspoon (1977) has discussed the transformative quality of Navajo chantways, and one of the key features of this transformative quality is the use of repetition and parallelism. Margaret Field and Taft Blackhorse (2002) argue that parallelism is directed or upward moving—within a chant, figures begin near the ground and then are iteratively shifted upward. Here is an example from Reichard (1944; the orthography has been updated in Field and Blackhorse 2002:224) that highlights the upward-moving form of parallelism.

Shikee biyá nich'i doo,
Shijáád biyá nich'i doo,
Sits'iis biyá nich'i doo,
Shí'í biyá nich'i doo,
Shinéé biyá nich'i doo

[Wind will be beneath my feet,
Wind will be beneath my legs,
Wind will be beneath my body,
Wind will be beneath my mind,
Wind will be beneath my voice.] (Field and Blackhorse 2002:224)

Field and Blackhorse (2002) note that “mere” repetition is not enough for the chantways to be efficacious. Rather, the repetition and parallelism must also be aesthetically pleasing.

Repetition and parallelism in Navajo chantways can also function to indicate resolution, completion, or restoration (see Witherspoon 1977), as illustrated by this passage from the end of a chantway.

Before me it will be hózhó as I live on,
Behind me it will be hózhó as I live on,
Below me it will be hózhó as I live on,
Above me it will be hózhó as I live on.

Hózhó has been restored.
Hózhó has been restored.
Hózhó has been restored.
Hózhó has been restored. (Witherspoon 1977:26–7)

Note that there is also an upward moving parallelism in this example and that it is the repetition four times that completes, resolves, and restores. When Matthews,
Witherspoon, Reichard, or Walton talk of “poetry,” they are talking about songs and chants. They are not, in the main, talking about what were considered “prose narratives.” Hymes (1981, 2003) began to reassess the received view of oral narratives as prose in the 1970s and began to argue that oral narratives collected by prior generations of scholars and published as prose hid underlying poetic structures. Furthering this approach, Tedlock (1983) argued that verbal art was organized by way of breath pause and other paralinguistic features. Barre Toelken and Tacheeni Scott (1981) usefully applied both Hymes’s and Tedlock’s methodology to a Coyote narrative that Toelken recorded from Yellowman. In a related view, Charlotte Frisbie (1980) and James Faris (1994) have both discussed some of the poetic devices found in Navajo narratives including the use of the word jini (the quotative evidential: ji-, the fourth-person subject prefix, plus -nì, “to say” or “they say”; see also Zolbrod 2004 on Navajo poetic devices).

In other work (Webster 2004, 2006a), I have outlined a number of poetic features found in oral narratives and compared them to written poetry. One of the features mentioned is the rhetorical use of the repetition of things four times within Coyote narratives (Webster 2006a). When Coyote requests something four times, that event occurs. In the following example, from Navajo linguist William Morgan (1949), we find quoted speech being used to create changes in the world. Here and in a number of other narratives, Coyote requests something four times (i.e., clouds, rain, the movement of water) and the world changes (clouds form, it rains, the water moves Coyote to the Prairie Dog village). Repetition four times satisfies expectations, and desirable changes result. This is similar to a general ethic among Navajos that, upon the fourth request from someone who is related, one should not turn that request down (Lamphere 1977). Repetition four times satisfies expectations and makes the utterance compelling or efficacious. The following example comes from the beginning of a familiar Coyote narrative, variously known as “Coyote and Skunk” or “Coyote Makes Rain” (see Hill and Hill 1945; Toelken and Scott 1981).

"Ááóó Mą'ii 'ání,
Tō shikee' bik'i doolkóóh.
Tō shikee' bik'i doolkóóh.
Tō shikee' bik'i doolkóóh.
Tō shikee' bik'i doolkóóh.
Tō biki' diilkóó jini.

[Then Coyote said,
"Rain cover my feet!
Rain cover my feet!
Rain cover my feet!
Rain cover my feet!"

The rain covered his feet, it is said.] (Morgan 1949:22)

In earlier work (Webster 2004), I have dealt with Coyote narratives that were recorded by a prior generation of researchers and with current Coyote poems and performance, but I have not given a complete ethnopoetic analysis of a single narrative; rather, I only provided a summary of features. The following analysis is the first
full-length, published ethnopoetic analysis of a Navajo narrative for which a transcript by a prior generation of scholars is the only written record.3

Hymes’s ethnopoetic methodology is best suited for work with narratives that were collected before the widespread use of audio tape and video recordings. (He appears to acknowledge this in Hymes 2003). When these other media have been used, they too may augment the analysis, of course (Bright 1979; McClendon 1982; Sherzer 1990; Woodbury 1987). Despite the fact that recordings can be helpful, the important point is that the transcriptions (here by Sapir and Hoijer) still may reveal something of the ethnopoetic structuring of Navajo narrators. We pay tribute to both the narrator and the recorder when we return to these narratives. We also pay tribute to the linguaculture in which such ethnopoetic structurings emerged and circulated.

One crucial feature of Navajo ethnopoetics is the notion of the “line” (Toelken and Scott 1981; see also Hymes 1981; Sherzer 1990; and Tedlock 1983 on the discerning of the line in verbal art). Toelken and Scott first organize the Coyote narratives told by Yellowman into lines by pauses, but this is a heuristic device; as they point out, they “use pauses here only as convenient ways to group utterances” (1981:91). Instead, Toelken and Scott (1981) focus on the repeated use of the word “jini” (they say) in Navajo narratives and argue that it, along with pause, is one of the primary organizing devices found within Yellowman’s Coyote narrative. The form can be glossed as ji- (the fourth-person subject pronoun) plus -ni (to say). The fourth person is used to refer to people who are understood to be socially distant (i.e., the dead, certain relatives through marriage, and so forth). It occurs thirty-four times in one of Yellowman’s Coyote narratives, and it occurs over one hundred times in a Coyote narrative told to Father Berard Haile by Curly Tó Aheedliinii (Webster 2004:72). It occurs thirteen times as a line-marking device in the Watchman narrative discussed here.

The two primary functions of jini, when used clause-final, are to act as an epistemic modal (indicating that what is being reported is not firsthand information but rather the “voice of tradition”) and to create larger discourse units that, following Hymes (1981), we will term lines. Toelken and Scott (1981) suggest that in performance, the form helps in constituting larger discourse units beyond the line. As Toelken and Scott explain, jini “occurs most heavily in sections of the story where description is central, least heavily where dramatic dialogue between two characters is taking place” (1981:92–9). This seems to be the case in the following narrative, where jini occurs eight times in part 1 and only five times in part 2. Part 1 is based on actions and has only one example of quoted speech, whereas part 2 is focused on the dramatic dialogue between Coyote and Horned Toad. Blackhorse Mitchell has suggested to me that jini should only be used at the beginnings of Coyote narratives. In such cases, the quotative jini would frame the narrative as “the voice of tradition” in conjunction with other framing devices like ‘alk’id4’ (long ago). These forms are garden-variety examples of “traditionalization” (Bauman 2004). From a survey of Navajo Coyote stories, it appears there was some variation in the poetic use of jini by individual performers (Webster 2006a).

Many traditional Navajo narratives (Coyote stories, emergence stories) begin with a number of framing devices. For example, jó ’akódáa jiniéí (that’s what they would say), ’alk’id4j jini (a long time ago they said), or simply ‘alk’id4 (long ago) are used
at the beginning of many traditional Navajo narratives (see Frisbie 1980; McCreedy 1989; Parsons 1923; Webster 2006a). The use of these devices places the narrative in the past, connects it to the tradition, and serves an epistemic distancing function. It allows Navajos to recognize that what follows will be set in a world that differs from the current world. Another Coyote narrative told by Watchman to Sapir illustrates the use of ‘alk’idåą’ at the beginning of a tale.

‘ALK’IDÅĄ’ MA’II JOOLDLOSH, JINI
[Long ago coyote trotting along it is said] (Sapir and Hoijer 1942:20)

Other framing devices are used in Navajo narratives about Mq’ii (Coyote). One device is the use of the narrative initial conjunction ‘äddöó (and then), sometimes in combination with a verb of motion -dlosh (to trot); this is often set in the progressive aspect and sometimes is used in conjunction with the dubitative enclitic -shff (maybe). Further, the use of a temporal conjunction as a discourse marker can frame a narrative as a part of a larger series of narratives. Here, the use of ‘äddöó at the beginning of a narrative indicates that we are entering a series of narratives already in progress (Webster 2004:81). Thus, Coyote has been always traveling, and we now enter into one episode of such travels. This sense of an ongoing and perpetual movement can also be indicated by the use of the progressive aspect at the beginning of Coyote narratives (Midgette 1995:96–8; Webster 2004; see also Smith 1996 on the aspectual system in Navajo). In Navajo, this series of narratives is often known as Mq’ii jooldloshi hane’ (stories about the trotting Coyote; see Benally 1994; Toelken 1971). The verb -dlosh, on the other hand, can sometimes act alone to mark a Coyote narrative and, indeed, the meaning of this framing is so clear that Coyote can remain nameless in the opening frame. Such devices are both framing devices and genre signatures (Shaul 2002). We should note that the example discussed below does not begin with an explicit mention of Coyote, but rather with the explicit mention of Horned Toad. Coyote arrives in the third line, and in that line he does not take the -dlosh (to trot) form but the -ghod (or, as it is written in the contemporary orthography, -wod; to run) form. While Coyote then does not take the -dlosh form here, Coyote is introduced by way of a verb of movement. In that way, it connects with the received view of Coyote as perpetually in motion. This can also be indicated by the use of the progressive aspect as well. Clearly, individual narrators are able to variously tap into and actualize differing poetic devices for differing reasons.

We should also note that Coyote’s Navajo name (Mq’ii) is phonologically distinctive (see Greenfeld 1973 on the related Southern Athabaskan language, Western Apache; see also Landar 1961). Nouns that begin with the phoneme /m/ are relatively rare in Navajo. This phonological distinctiveness calls attention to Coyote when he is explicitly named, and illustrates how phonotactics (the distribution of phonemes) is implicated in Navajo linguaculture. Many narrators also use a nasalized voice when quoting Coyote (Toelken and Scott 1981:83); thus Coyote is recognizable through the sounds of his words. Here we see the interweaving of sound and meaning.

Initial adverbial particles are also used for differing rhetorical and poetic reasons within Coyote narratives. In the following example, ‘äddöóshff (and then it seems),
'áadóó (and then), and ní't'é' (then) are all used to varying degrees and for different functions (see below and Webster 2004 on these particles). These discourse particles often work in conjunction with jini to form lines, as seen below. When jini and 'áadóóshįį are used in conjunction, there is a doubling or stacking of epistemic distancing. The initial particles can also stand alone as line markers and as markers of larger discursive units. Following Hymes (1981), I will call these stanzas.

Some devices, such as the use of formulaic openings, the use of jini, and the use of adverbial particles, allow Watchman to place this narrative within the received structuring of Navajo linguaculture. That is, they reference a recognizable genre and are aids in the traditionalizing of this narrative. These poetic devices implicate this narrative within a Navajo linguaculture, and through their use they also reconstitute and renew it (see Bakhtin 1986). Other devices—which I discuss more fully below, such as the use of the semeliterative ndd- or the alternation between a section of running and a section on speaking—are creative ways to set up an internal architecture to this narrative. Thus repetition pervades this narrative. Once this pattern is created, Watchman uses that repetition to highlight and satisfy rhetorical expectations—that is, expectations about the interaction of form and content (Hymes 1981).

A Brief Comment on Coyote (Mq’ii) Stories

Coyote is a trickster figure among the Navajo (on tricksters, see Babcock 1975; Basso 1987; Hill 2002; Radin 1956). While these narratives are often humorous to various degrees, they are also important in a number of curing ways and have deeper meanings than non-Navajos often assume (see Toelken 1987, 2002; Webster 2004). More than any other researcher, Toelken (1987, 2002) has stressed the “sacred” qualities of these narratives and has noted how Coyote narratives interpenetrate with curing ways (Toelken 1971, 1987; see also Luckert 1979). Traditionally, Coyote narratives were to be told only at night and in the winter. These regulations still persist in the Navajo Nation. In other work (Webster 2004), I discuss some of the current talk about Coyote that was circulating there in 2000–2001. Connected to the oral tradition, there is a burgeoning subgenre of Coyote written poetry (Jim 2004; Webster 2004). Rex Lee Jim provides a Navajo perspective on Coyote: “Coyote is out there . . . killing your . . . sheep and goats. You can hear them howling in canyons during the morning, the evening, the middle of the day, way late at night. You’re surrounded by it . . . Coyote is every part of your life” (Webster 2004:75; see also Jim 2000, 2004).

Before we turn to an analysis of the narrative and its ethnopoetic features, I wish to draw attention to another useful set of comments I heard during my fieldwork on the Navajo Nation and elsewhere when discussing Coyote with Navajos. When I would talk about Coyote and Coyote stories with Navajos, the conversation would sometimes turn to speculations concerning Coyote and his motivations. The following is from a conversation I had with Jim concerning Coyote: “I think he represents . . . curiosity, of being adventurous, taking risks, going beyond your limits, going into the unknown, in order to explore and discover, sometimes he is hurt and sometime he don’t [hurt] and sometime he succeed and he is at the core of that human being, of wanting to do things” (Webster 2004:75). In another discussion I had with a Navajo friend,
our talk turned to Coyote, and he asked me why I thought Coyote did what he did. After thinking about the question for a few minutes, I replied with a number of vague and noncommittal answers. My friend finally explained to me that Coyote does what Coyote does because he is Coyote; further psychological speculation on the motivations of Coyote’s actions is irrelevant. Another Navajo consultant used the same expression when the question of Coyote’s motivation came up: he acts as he does “because he’s Coyote.” This tendency to not discuss what Coyote is thinking conforms to a general tendency for Navajos not to speculate about the thinking of others (see Witherspoon 1977). It should also be noted that while verbs of speaking are quite common in Coyote narratives, verbs of thought are not. This, I believe, has to do with a general tendency among some Navajos to resist imposing an interpretation on another (i.e., by asserting what someone else is thinking; see Lamphere 1977). With that in mind, I will now present the narrative.7

**Text: Coyote and Horned Toad**

1. ’Alk’idąą’ na’ashó’ii dich’izhii k’i’i diiła, jini.

   ’Áadóóshįį, ná’neest’ąągo,  
   Ma’ii baayilghod, jini.  
   Naadąį’ bádzist’ę, jini.  
   Ňt’éé’, ’likanlą, nį, jini.  
   ’Anaalghod, jini.

2. Nt’éé’, bighi’dęę’ hadzoodzii’.

   “Diish? Xa’at’ii ’at’ę?” jiniio bijéí bizhdiilnih.

   Nt’éé’,

   “Nógh’ę! doobaaňįįň’ii’do,” bijini, jini.

   ’Áadóó,  

   “Diish? Xa’at’ii ’at’ę?” jiniigo bizóló bináázdilnih, jini.  

   “Nógh’ę’! ęl beendishdzih,” nį, jini.

   Nt’éé’ bích’ąą’k’izhníizh, jini.  
   Ma’iiyéę’ daaztsąągo,  
   Bighi’ háádzooná’, jini.

1. Long ago Horned Toad planted [corn], they say.

And then it seems, as it had become ripe,  
Coyote came running to him, they say.  
Corn was roasted for him, they say.
Then, "It is indeed sweet!" he says, they say.
He ran away, they say.

And then he came running again, they say.
He again roasted it, they say.
Then, unexpectedly, he [Coyote] swallowed him [Horned Toad], they say.
And then it seems, he [Coyote] began to run off.

2.
Then from his inside he [Horned Toad] spoke.
"This? What is it?" as he said, he felt about his heart.

Then,
"Keep away! Do not mess with it," he said to him, they say.

And then,
"This? What is it?" As he said, he again felt about his windpipe, they say.
"Keep away! That is what I breathe with."

Then he cut it off of him, they say
As that Coyote was dead,
He crawled out of his insides, they say.

Analysis of Text and Textual Presentation

I have organized this narrative into twenty lines, eight stanzas, and two overarching parts or halves (cf. McCreedy 1989:484–6). The organization is based on internal linguistic features, a general sense of the constituent parts as inferred from form and content, the use of proper nouns, the use of quoted speech, and the use of repetition. I will discuss each feature in turn. I believe that this division into lines, stanzas, and parts represents something of the underlying structure of this narrative.

Jini as the "Voice of Tradition"

Lines have been discerned based on the sentence-final use of jini (they say), the occurrence of initial particles, the use of proper nouns (character names), or quoted speech. Jini occurs thirteen times alone, once as a straightforward verb of speaking, and twice with the subordinating enclitic -go (as). In each case where jini occurs sentence-final without the subordinating enclitic, I have taken that as an indication of a line marker. I have not separated the two occurrences of jini with the subordinating enclitic, because they are not being used in the epistemic “voice of tradition” mode. Rather, they are being used as verbs of speaking. Specifically, they are verbs of speaking associated with Horned Toad, who is simultaneously speaking and touching Coyote’s vital organs. As James Collins notes, the quotative jini never undergoes “syntactic subordination” (1987:74). The subordinating enclitic (-go) only attaches to jini when it is functioning as a verb of speaking and not when it functions as the epistemic quotative. Likewise, the use of bijini (he said to him) in line 14 is also an example of the form being used as a verb of speaking and not as an epistemic distancing device. The use of bijini, jintio, and jiniigo (all verbs of speaking) highlights the dialogic component of the second part
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of the narrative. The variation between jiniio and jiniigo is a phonological reduction that also occurs in natural conversation and not just elicitation language. It is important to note that the use of jini accounts for over 60 percent of the narrative line breaks here, but this was not a mechanical solution. Not all forms of jini are being used as epistem-ic distancing devices and line markers. Three of the forms are clearly being used as verbs of speaking and are a part of the internal coherence of the narrative, not part of the architecture of the narrative.

Coordination of Adverbial Particles

There are ten initial adverbial particles found in this narrative. Each example of these adverbial particles occurs clause-initial and thus aids in forming lines. They also indicate stanzas and verses. ‘Alk’idâq’ (long ago) is a traditional narrative framing device, and it occurs at the beginning of a number of narrative genres. For example, the next two narratives in Sapir and Hoijer begin with the following lines:

‘Alk’idâq’ ye’iitso, jini.
[Long ago a giant, they say.] (Sapir and Hoijer 1942:18–9)

‘Alk’idâq’ ma’ii jooldlosh, jini.
[Long ago Coyote was trotting along, they say.] (Sapir and Hoijer 1942:20–1)

Note also the use of jini in both examples. ‘Alk’idâq’ marks the opening of the narrative within a meaningful frame of expectations. The other nine initial particles are ‘áádoó (and then), which is used twice; ‘áádoóshįį (and then it seems), used twice; and nítica (then), used five times. A form of ‘áádoó, either alone or with the dubitative enclitic -shįį, occurs four times and indicates the beginning of a line. ‘Áádoó introduces quoted speech in line 15. In line 7 it reintroduces Coyote, who is not explicitly named upon his return. Contrary to McCreedy (1989:451), ‘áádoó does indeed introduce quoted speech in this narrative. ‘Áádoóshįį, on the other hand, introduces the ripening (corn) in line 2 and in line 10 concludes part 1 with Coyote’s behavior after he eats Horned Toad. Note that ‘áádoóshįį only occurs in the first half of the narrative. Its use and the use of ‘áádoó, however, seem to mark narrative units that I am calling a line, and these are almost always used in conjunction with the line-final use of jini. The only exception here is in line 15, where ‘áádoó introduces the quoted speech of Horned Toad. In this example, ‘áádoó works in conjunction with the alternation of nítica (then) in the previous line and the repetition of the quoted speech of the characters; these devices allow one to differentiate who is speaking to whom (Horned Toad versus Coyote). Thus ‘áádoó and nítica are used to keep the speakers’ lines separated. In the telling, it is likely that Coyote’s trademark nasal voice would have also helped differentiate the voices of characters (see Toelken and Scott 1981).

Nítica occurs five times clause-initial. Three times, the form is used in conjunction with the introduction of quoted speech.

Nítica, “likanlą,” ni, jini.
[Then, “It is indeed sweet!” he says, they say.] (line 5)
There are only eight uses of nouns in this narrative (lines 1, 3, 4, 11, 12, 16, 19, and 20). The overt nominal ma’ii (Coyote) or ma’iyéé (that Coyote) occurs twice in this narrative. The enclitic -yéé indicates that the noun is the “aforementioned” one. The first time the overt lexical item is used is when Coyote is introduced in line 3; the second time is in line 19, when Coyote dies. I take both of these overt uses of Coyote’s name as indicators of lines. This is true even when the line does not end with jini but instead with the subordinating enclitic -go. However, because of the nature of the genre—a named genre in Navajo based on Coyote—such explicit uses of the proper noun for Coyote and their position clause-initial as the (phonological distinctive) subject argues for a rather overt level of saliency and therefore suggests that the men-
tion of ma'ii marks a line. It should also be noted that within this narrative there is a relative paucity of explicit uses of the two protagonists' names. Horned Toad's name occurs only in the formulaic opening (allowing a listener to orient to the narrative), and Coyote's name occurs only in the third line and the second-to-last line of this narrative. The distribution of ma'ii suggests a kind of parallelism of narrative architecture. Coyote brackets the narrative. This is another example of the use of repetition and parallelism to create and satisfy expectations of rhetorical form.

Use of Quoted Speech

Following Hymes (1981), I take each instance of quoted speech as a line marker. This is over and above the use of an introductory particle, discussed above. In the above examples where there is an initial particle and then quoted speech (lines 13 and 15), I have separated these into two separate lines, where the initial particle acts as its own line. I do this because in lines 13 and 15, the initial particles seem to act as a way to differentiate who is speaking to whom without explicitly naming the character. The exact repetition of the quoted speech by Horned Toad and the repetition of the opening interjection by Coyote, coupled with the different initial particles, make clear who is and who is not speaking. Thus, the repetition of form disambiguates speakers. I should add that in the earlier published English translation, done by Sapir in consultation with John Watchman, there are fifteen parenthetical references to either Coyote or Horned Toad. That translation is thus more explicit in its mentioning of characters than the Navajo original. This lack of use of overt nominals in narratives, I might add, tends to be a Southern Athabaskan trait (see Webster 2006c).

Halving

The narrative is divided into two halves based on the use of quoted speech. Part 1 uses quoted speech once; mostly, however, it recounts the events leading up to the swallowing of Horned Toad. Part 2, on the other hand, is constructed with dialogue. Specifically, it is a dialogue between Coyote and the now-swallowed Horned Toad. There are four examples of quoted speech in the second half of the narrative. The use of quoted speech is associated with both repetition and heightened affective expressivity. I will return to both of these features below. Note that jini does not occur within quoted speech. This is an areal feature of the line-marking function of this narrative epistemic device in the Southwest (see also Kroskrity 1985; Shaul 2002; Webster 1999b).

Heightened Affective Expressivity

I want to now turn to four moments of heightened affective expressivity in this narrative. By heightened affective expressivity, I mean moments that have lingered in the written form in which the affective and expressive quality of the oral performance can be sensed. In this section, I look at four examples of this heightening, which I indicated in the English translation by italicizing them. These examples fall into three
categories: grammatical expressivity, vocal expressivity, and metanarrative exhortation (see Nuckolls 1992). It is, I think, important to note that three of the four examples of heightening come within quoted speech.

In the first example of quoted speech, Coyote says “likanla” (it is indeed sweet). The form likan can stand alone as “it is sweet, it is delicious.” However, Watchman, through the voice of Coyote, chooses to emphasize that the corn is not just sweet but very sweet or emphatically sweet. This is accomplished by the use of the emphatic enclitic -lā. Its use indicates the intensity of both Coyote’s hunger and the deliciousness of the corn. This is a form of grammaticalized expressivity.

The second example of heightened affective expressivity occurs in line 9 with the aforementioned jōhōdah. Again, I have reconstructed this form as “well, sure” and “up high.” Blackhorse Mitchell suggested “way up!” This seems to be a commentary on the narrative by Watchman. Indeed, Sapir and Hoijer translate the form as “unexpectedly.” The form comes at the crucial moment in the narrative, when Coyote—who is getting the corn he desires in this version of the narrative—suddenly eats his provider. Thus, jōhōdah seems to call attention to the narrative action. In this way, it acts as a metanarrative device, calling into attention an action in the narrative that occurs outside the normal internal logic of the narrative. It seems to encourage the listener to pay attention to what is about to happen. It functions, then, as a metanarrative exhortation. The conjunction of the form at this crucial moment in the narrative acts as a heightened affective form of expressivity.

The final two examples are the repeated use of nōghwe (keep away) in lines 14 and 17. Elsewhere, Sapir and Hoijer (1967:119) give the form as nówe (leave it alone). In the published version of this narrative, the form is followed by an exclamation point. If this indicated a rising in loudness or pitch by Watchman, it would appear to be another example of heightened affective expressivity. It would then clearly indicate the urgency in Coyote’s statements. It is also an interjection, and Coyote repeats this form in both of his utterances in the second half of the narrative. Thus, it calls attention to the importance Coyote attaches to Horned Toad staying away from his vital organs. After the second time that Coyote exclaims “nōghwe,” Horned Toad kills Coyote. These are examples of what I would term vocal expressivity, by which I mean that they rely on the phonic and prosodic shape of the expression to create a heightened sense of awareness. This expressivity is suggested by both the interjectional form and the use of the exclamation point in the published version. All of these forms of heightened affective expressivity are examples of Navajo linguaculture (see Nuckolls 2006).

Repetition in “Coyote and Horned Toad” (Again)

As I discussed above, repetition is found in a number of Navajo verbal art genres. In what follows I want to look at the use of repetition in this narrative and the use of the semeliterative prefix nā-. I will approach the question of repetition in two ways. First I will briefly describe the repetition of lexical items (particles, nouns, and verbs) outside of quoted speech. I will then turn to exact repetition and near repetition within quoted speech.
Epistemic Modal Jini (Again)

As noted above, the verb of speaking jini occurs sixteen times in this short narrative. It occurs thirteen times as the line-ending epistemic modal “voice of tradition.” It occurs three times as a verb of speaking following quoted speech (and referring back to that quoted speech), but what I want to stress is the abundance of its use as a line-marking epistemic modal. This repeated use frames the narrative as coming from tradition. Toelken and Scott (1981), Frisbie (1980), and Webster (2004) have all discussed in some measure this form’s ethnopoetic functions. Giving a complete narrative in Navajo that uses the jini form, I hope to have shown here more explicitly its ethnopoetic functions. I have also tried to show that the line-marking epistemic modal function needs to be distinguished from its function as a verb of speaking in the quoting of speech. Thus, jini can function as either a narrative device (quoting the speech of characters) or as a metanarrative device (framing the narrative as within the voice of tradition). It can also function as a poetic device, its repetition creating meaningful chunks of discourse (lines). Such uses of jini are examples of what Sherzer has termed the “poeticization of grammar” (1990:18). The repetition of jini thus frames this narrative as a Coyote narrative, indicates that it is outside the narrator’s firsthand experience, aids in the evaluation of the narrative as narrative, and creates meaningful discursive units.

Adverbial Particles (Again)

Clause-initial adverbial particles also occur regularly. A form of ‘áádóó (and then) is repeated four times, and nít’éé, indicating the past, occurs five times. While we might not be able to ascertain the semantic loads these particles carry, we can posit something about their discourse functions in this narrative (see McCready 1989 for a slightly different take on these forms). It seems clear that in this narrative, ‘áádóó introduces events that are of less import to the overall narrative. The forms introduce the ripening of the corn, the return of Coyote, the departure of Coyote with Horned Toad in his stomach, and the second example of quoted speech from Horned Toad. In that instance, it seems to act as a way to disambiguate speakers. This is also accomplished by the exact repetition of the quoted speech of Horned Toad. Nít’éé, on the other hand, occurs at crucial moments in the narrative. Therefore, its repetition tends to call attention to the utterance. Nít’éé occurs before Coyote’s emphatic sweetness comment (which suggests something about Coyote’s hunger), right before the heightened affective expressivity of the form jóhó dah and the swallowing of Horned Toad, before the first example of quoted speech from Horned Toad (who is now inside Coyote), before Coyote’s affective use of nóghe (keep away!), and right before Horned Toad cuts Coyote’s windpipe and kills him. Here we see the use of repetition creating expectations about the narrative events, and nít’éé signals that momentous events within the narrative are to follow.

Overt Nominal Displays of Ma’ii (Again)

Coyote’s name is repeated twice in this narrative by Watchman. The second time, the Coyote form takes the aforementioned enclitic -yéę. The naming of Coyote seems to
bracket the narrative, occurring in the second and the second-to-last lines. The form bighi' (his inside) occurs twice in this narrative. The first time this occurs, it is coupled with the locative enclitic -déf' (from). Both occurrences of this form are found in the second half of the narrative. Just as the use of the overt mentioning of Coyote (Ma’ii) brackets the entire narrative, bighi’ brackets the second half of the narrative, occurring in both the initial line of the second half (line 11) and the final line of the narrative (line 20). These repeated uses of lexical items create a certain amount of coherence within the narrative. Moreover, the second mention of Coyote seems to overtly signal that this narrative episode is concluding.

Speaking, Running, and Halving (Again)

The second half of the narrative is a dialogue or conversation between Coyote and Horned Toad. Horned Toad is physically inside Coyote during the exchange. There are four uses of the verb of speaking -ni (to say), lines 12, 14, 16 and 17, and one use of the verb of speaking -dzii (to speak). My understanding of the distinction here between -ni and -dzii is between an “informal” sense for the first form and a more “formal” sense for the latter (Neundorf 2006; Young and Morgan 1987). Speaking and verbs of speaking are crucial features in Navajo and Southern Athabaskan verbal art more generally (Collins 1987; Webster 1999a, 1999b, 2006c). Note again that verbs of thinking are relatively uncommon.

The first half of the narrative, in contrast, is built on the repetition of the verb stem -ghod (or, -wod; to run). This form occurs four times in the first half of the narrative and does not occur at all in the second half. The verb is always associated with Coyote in this narrative: -ghod occurs in lines 3 (with the overt mention of Coyote by name), 6, 7, and 10 (once Coyote has swallowed Horned Toad and the first part draws to a close). I will return to this verb form below. Here I wish to note that part 1 is held together internally by a set of four repetitions of the verb form -ghod, and this contrasts with part 2, which is held together internally with the repetition four times of the verb stem -ni. The repetition of these forms sets up a contrast between the first half of the narrative based on movement and the second half of the narrative based on conversation.

Quoted Speech (Again)

There is also exact repetition within quoted speech and near repetition within quoted speech. Following Sherzer (1994), I suggest that the near repetition in quoted speech is a kind of “poetic parallelism” that highlights Coyote’s growing concern over the actions of Horned Toad. The exact repetition, on the other hand, increases the tension within the narrative. Horned Toad is clearly not listening to what Coyote is affectively insisting. Here is the relevant section:

Nt’ée’, bighi’déf’ hadzoodzi’.
“Díish? Xa’a’t’il ‘ât’é?” jını́j bijéj bižhdílnih.
ντ'έ',
  "Νόγικ'ε! doobaaŋjit'jïda," bijini, jini.

'άδόκο,
  "Diiš? Xa'át'ii 'át'è?" jinígo bizóól bínážhdiñih, jini.

"Νόγικ'ε! 'éi beedishdžih, ni, jini. (lines 11–7)
Then from his inside he spoke.
  "This? What is it?" as he said, he felt about his heart.
Then,
  "Keep away! Do not mess with it," he said to him, they say.
And then,
  "This? What is it?" As he said, he again felt about his windpipe, they say.
  "Keep away! That is what I breathe with." (lines 11–7)

Horned Toad is quoted identically in this exchange. In fact, the exact repetition helps to disambiguate speakers here. Note that overt markings of speakers are not achieved by overt lexical items for Coyote or Horned Toad. Coyote's quotes take the zero form of ni (he says) in line 17 and the bijini (him-he-says) form that separates third-person object (bi-) and fourth-person subject (ji-) in line 14. Pronominal distinctions do a minimal amount of work disambiguating speakers. The primary way that speakers are disambiguated is through the exact or near repetition of their utterances. The characters are in a very real sense known (and knowable) by their words here.

Coyote's use of the parallel form "Νόγικ'ε! ________" (where the underline indicates a slot to be paradigmatically filled) seems to suggest his growing concern with Horned Toad's actions. At first, he admonishes Horned Toad "not to mess" with his heart. Leon Wall and William Morgan (1994:137) give a similar form with a subordinating enclitic -go. From that form can be inferred the following: baa njít'įį (to bother it). Doō- and -da act as a circumfix that negates the phrase. (A circumfix is a noncontiguous morpheme that often "straddles" the form it is modifying.) I mention here that "to bother" in colloquial Navajo and in Navajo English is a euphemism for sexual relations. The second occurrence of the parallel form specifies what the organ under consideration is used for. It makes clear the importance of his (Coyote's) vital organ. This use of parallelism calls into relief the increasing directness by which Coyote is admonishing Horned Toad and also begins to specify why he is admonishing Horned Toad to "keep away." It is, of course, after this line that Horned Toad kills Coyote.

Use of the Semeliterative Náá- (Again)

Finally, this narrative seems to be set up by meaningful pairs. These pairs pervade almost all of the architecture of this narrative and can be found within grammatical features such as the semeliterative aspect as well. Coyote and Horned Toad's conversation takes two exchanges. It is after the second exchange that Coyote is killed. The
narrative presents two halves, one based on running and one based on speaking. Another way this pairing is accomplished is through the use of the semeliterative prefix three times within this narrative. In the use of this prefix náá- (again), Watchman pairs one verb with a previous unmarked verb form, and it is after the semeliterative form that important events happen. The semeliterative form seems to complete the pair, and a result then emerges. Here are the paired verb forms:

Line 3: baayilghod ("he runs toward him," where baa- indicates "toward")
Line 7: náánáilghod ("he again runs," where náá- is the semeliterative prefix "again")
Line 4: bádzisté (it was roasted for him)
Line 8: bánnáádzisté ("it was again roasted for him," where náá- "again" is inserted after bá- "for him")
Line 12: bizhdilnih (he felt about it)
Line 16: bináázhdilnih (he again felt about it)

The second example of each, the semeliterative example, directly precedes a major turning point in the narrative. It is after Coyote runs again to Horned Toad and after Horned Toad roasts corn again for Coyote that Coyote swallows Horned Toad. It is only after the meaningful pair has been completed by way of the semeliterative prefix that the narrative advances to a new stage. Likewise, it is only after Horned Toad has "felt about" again that he then kills Coyote. The pairing of these verb forms this way is another example of the overall repetition and pairing that is found throughout this narrative. Watchman seems to have constructed this narrative on the basis of paired units (lexical and grammatical). The two other forms of -ghod found in the first part of the narrative have the general senses of to run "away" and to run "off." It is the repetition of the act of running to Horned Toad that seems important for the pairing.

Witherspoon (1977:21–3) suggests that the use of náá- has a semantic sense of repetition, revolution, and restoration. He goes on to argue that the repetition of phrases, lines, or utterances four times can induce those things to occur (22). This is the evocative and efficacious power of language (see Reichard 1944). McAllester (1980b) and Field and Blackhorse (2002) have complemented this perspective by noting that "mere" repetition is not enough; rather, it must be aesthetically pleasing as well. Witherspoon (1977:23) also argues that in "Navajo thought," if something had happened once, it is likely to continually or iteratively repeat. Witherspoon finds evidence for this in the use of náá- in a variety of verbal genres (including chantways and proverbs). The use of náá- then illustrates the circulation and perduring of Navajo linguaculture through and by these verbal genres. Note that these verbal genres are constitutive of linguaculture; they are its actual expressions.

The use of náá- can also be found at the beginning of Coyote narratives (Webster 2006a). Here the use of náá- (again) frames the narrative as being a part of a series of movements by Coyote. As a listener, one can recognize this as another adventure in the stories of "trotting Coyote." Here are the openings of two Coyote narratives told to Haile by Curly Tó Aheedliinii:
Thus, the use of náá- not only connects the narrative to prior narratives but also indicates that a new narrative (also connected to other narratives) is beginning. Again, the semeliterative is implicated in and constitutive of Navajo linguaculture, in that it is a part of an aesthetic expectation.

My larger point here is that the use of náá- signals completion or resolution as well as change. One series of events has ended and a new series begins. The pairings in Watchman’s narrative seem to work to signal resolution and completion. Thus, Watchman seems to structure this narrative by use of lexical pairings (Coyote opens and closes the narrative), syntactic pairing (exact lines are repeated), parallelism pairing (the parallel forms of Coyote’s utterance in part 2), and grammatical pairings (through the use of the semeliterative prefix on paired verbs). All of these poetic devices are both expressive of and constitutive of Navajo linguaculture.

Comparison with Hill and Hill, and also with Parsons
(or Chaparral Cock?)

Before concluding, I will compare two other published versions of “Coyote and Horned Toad.” The purpose here is to draw attention to the fact that narratives like the Watchman one presented above were not told in isolation. They are implicated and connected to other tellings, other refashionings. Linguaculture is a discursive world. Each telling has a compounding effect, because it reverberates off multiple other tellings and retellings. We understand the creative individual as we understand the potentials and options that are available to him or her. This section will suggest a few such options.

Hill and Hill (1945:331–3) give an extended example of this narrative in English. The narrator is given as The Late Little Smith’s Son. According to Hill and Hill (1945:319), this man was from Crown Point, New Mexico. The version is longer than the Watchman version above, but the essential features of Coyote swallowing Horned Toad are there. In The Late Little Smith’s Son’s narrative, Coyote eats Horned Toad because Horned Toad eventually refuses to feed Coyote any more corn. Once Coyote has swallowed him, Horned Toad makes a sound that Hill and Hill (332) represent as “pssss.” Hill and Hill suggest that this is the sound of “ghosts.” They also note that Horned Toad makes this sound four times. It is obviously a sound symbolic or onomatopoetic form. Such sound symbolic and ideophonic forms are fully implicated in Navajo linguaculture (Nuckolls 2006; Webster 2006a). After the pssss, Horned Toad and Coyote engage in a similar though extended conversation focusing on the heart and the windpipe. Horned Toad eventually kills Coyote and then crawls out of Coyote’s anus. In the Hill and Hill version, and in contrast to the Watchman and Parsons versions, Coyote tricks Wildcat into getting killed stealing corn from Horned Toad. In the Watchman version, there is no trickery by Coyote, only the unexpected and sudden swallowing of Horned Toad.
Both Hill and Hill's correspondence notes and Sapir and Hoijer's notes reference an earlier article by Parsons (1923:368-9). The narrative given by Parsons was recorded during a mail truck trip from Nati to Holbrook, Arizona. The narrator was named either Astitines or Laterro (Parsons 1923:368), and the narrative was translated by Manuelito Lewis. Parsons had this to say about him: "This was Manuelito's first experience in interpreting, and I incline to think that he abbreviated in interpretation. In the mail truck, moreover, he was at times actively nauseated, as he said, by the smell of the gas" (Parsons 1923:368). That this was Lewis's first experience at translation is suggested in some of the Navajo forms Parsons retains in the published version and the translations she gives for them. First, Parsons's version gives the title of this narrative as "Coyote Swallows Turtle" (368). Indeed, Sapir and Hoijer even point out in the notes to the Watchman version that Parsons's narrator (Laterro?) uses Turtle instead of Horned Toad (Sapir and Hoijer 1942:474). Hill and Hill (1945:332) simply gloss the narrative as the motif type "swallowing Horned Toad."

We are fortunate that Parsons included a rendering of the Navajo form. Parsons gives this form as nashonditi (368). This is not the form for "turtle" that I am familiar with; that form is tsisteel. In fact, the form that Parsons gives is most likely na'asho'ii dich'izii (rough snake), or, as it is normally glossed, "horned toad." Thus, this narrative has the same two main characters, Horned Toad and Mai'ii (in Parsons's writing system) or Ma'ii (in the standard orthography). There is no difference, then, between the main characters in the Watchman version, the Late Little Smith's Son version, and the Laterro version.

One can imagine how this miscommunication could have occurred. Lewis's glossing, perhaps, of a "hard" or "rough" "snake" certainly could have been understood by Parsons as "turtle." Likewise, if Lewis was not fluent in Navajo, he might have recognized the individual lexical items and not understood their meaning in combination, thus interpreting the form as "turtle." Indeed, Parsons suggests how this might have happened when she discusses the form mai'i. In a footnote (368 n. 2), she points out that Lewis "always translated" as "Fox" the form that she gives as Coyote. Parsons checked Lewis's translation by asking him the word for Coyote, to which Lewis apparently gave the same form as he had for "Fox."

Parsons also gives the opening of the narrative in Navajo as k'itah; this is most likely the formulaic opening that we find in the Watchman version and in many other Navajo versions. We have encountered it above as 'alk'id4' (long ago). Indeed, Parsons glosses the form as "long ago."

There are two other Navajo forms discussed in this narrative by Parsons, and a number of others are interspersed throughout the rest of her article—k'a (372), which is Parsons's transcription of gah (rabbit), and ping (371), which is her transcription of bjh (deer). The final form that Parsons gives in the narrative is t'aak'itî (that is all). This is most likely the formulaic closing found in a number of Navajo narratives, t'âá 'âkot'éhé (that is all). It is interesting to note that Laterro uses both the opening and closing formulaic devices in this narrative. The evidence for their use has been retained in Parsons's written version. We should also note that Watchman does not include the formulaic closing in his narrative recorded by Sapir. Thus, after Horned Toad kills Coyote by cutting his heart, the narrative is formulaically closed by Laterro.
The last form that I want to discuss is ch’a (Chaparral Cock?), which occurs in the middle of the narrative. The question mark within the gloss is important. Clearly, Parsons was not sure of the translation here. Ch’a arrives on the scene after Coyote has swallowed Horned Toad. Indeed, the introduction of a third character in this narrative would be surprising at this point. It also does not make much narrative sense. The relevant passage reads: “Then he heard a sound, ‘That’s me,’ he heard from inside his stomach. That was Turtle [sic] saying ‘That’s me.’ Along came ch’a (Chaparral Cock?). He heard a sound…” (Parsons 1923:368). In a later narrative, the form ich’a is also glossed as “Chaparral Cock” (370). At that point, Franz Boas provides a footnote pointing out that in Northern Athabaskan narratives, the character Coyote encounters is more likely to be “turtle” (see Boas 1897).

When I was working through the glosses of these forms and trying to update the orthography for them, I was thrown by this footnote. It was clear that ch’a was not the Navajo word for “Chaparral Cock,” which looks like a “little turkey” (Parsons 1923:368). My first choice was chaa’ (beaver). However, even beaver did not make sense in Parsons’s “Coyote Swallows Horned Toad” version. It was through rereading Hill and Hill that I began to realize that the form that Parsons gave was not ch’a or chaa’ (beaver) but chqq’ (excrement). The sound that Horned Toad is making in the Hill and Hill version is something akin to the sound of gas, though Coyote recognizes it as the sound of “ghosts.” Coyote, it should be pointed out, was already constipated after having eaten Horned Toad (Hill and Hill 1945:332). While pssss may be a sound-symbolic onomatopoetic form for the sound of ghosts, it may also be iconic of the sound of flatulence. The meaning of the sentence “along came ch4’” is thus quite different from “along came Chaparral Cock.”

In the later example (ich’a), the form is most likely bichqq’ (his excrement) and is probably Coyote’s sometime-companion, his talking “poop.” That Boas did not recognize this familiar motif is somewhat surprising (but see Berman 1992). This comparative excursion into the translations and representations of Navajo poetic forms has suggested just how important documentation in the source-language original can be and the value of close linguistic and ethnopoetic analysis (for more on this narrative, see Wyman 1965).

**Conclusion: Repetition, Parallelism, and Navajo Linguaculture**

This article has attempted to describe ethnopoetic structuring as linguaculture in a brief Coyote narrative and to show how repetition and parallelism are used there. To draw together the themes of this discussion, I will begin by comparing repetition in Watchman’s narrative with other uses of repetition in Navajo verbal art. Recall, for example, Field and Blackhorse (2002) when they argue that parallelism can be used in an upward-moving directional pattern (see also Haile 1942), and return to the example I presented earlier:

Shikke biya’ nich’i doo,
Shijjad biya’ nich’i doo,
Sits’is biya’ nich’i doo,
Note here both the pervasiveness of parallelism and the fact that such parallelism operates on a syntactic level, whereby the possessed noun is changed (shi- + -kee, "feet"; shi- + -jáad "legs"; etc.); this produces the parallel formula “Shi-biya nich'i doo,” which is then iteratively repeated throughout the chantway. This kind of strict parallelism is not found in the Watchman narrative, though it is found in Navajo written poetry (Webster 2004). The use of strict parallelism thus indexes genre distinctions.

Field and Blackhorse (2002) further argue that the patient of the curing ceremony can be metonymically identified with this “upward-moving” directionality and that this allows the patient to then identify with the deity being evoked. As Field and Blackhorse explain, “the metonymical sequence indexes, or points to, the presence of the deity, actually constructing him within the present context through the power of the spoken word” (2002:224). Metonymy, then, is an important feature of these curing ways, and it is achieved via the use of parallelism. A number of authors have further argued that the parallelism of phrases that iterate the four sacred mountains achieves a similar sense of “surrounding” (see Field and Blackhorse 2002 and the literature cited therein). Likewise, the exact repetition of hózhóogo (in beauty) also achieves a sense of completion and surrounding due to its repetition four times (Witherspoon 1977). Finally, four seems to be understood as indicating completion. These are all forms of parallelism and repetition found specifically within Navajo curing ways. As Field and Blackhorse conclude, “Metonymy does not solely serve a performative function, but serves an important aesthetic function as well, especially in that the deities must approve of the hataali's [chanter’s] composition in order to respond; simply listing or naming constituent units in a particular order is not compulsive in itself” (Field and Blackhorse 2002:227). In other words, the structuring of the poetic parallelism must be aesthetically effective. This suggests one way that poetics achieve aesthetic attachments that are constitutive of and implicated in Navajo linguaculture, specifically in a curing genre.

In contrast, this article has attempted to understand the use of parallelism and repetition within a non-curing way genre of Navajo verbal art. I have sought to show that repetition can take many forms in Navajo linguaculture. For example, repetition can be contiguous and upward moving and thus a litany of the known, or it can be architectural and discontiguous and signal shifts within a narrative. Further, I have suggested that scholars need to understand the specific uses of repetition within particular genres; aesthetically pleasing repetition can be used to compel the deities, or patterned repetition can be used to set up expectations about narrative action. Finally, such uses of repetition aid in and help circulate, renew, and perpetuate Na-
vajo linguaculture, as understood through the satisfaction of expectations (náá- signaling an important shift within the narrative), aesthetic attachments (the pleasing quality of certain forms of parallelism and metonymy in chants), the framing of genres (as illustrated in the use of jini), feelingful iconicity (the naturalness of fit once poetic expectations have been established), and the efficaciousness of genres (the compelling effect of chant generated through aesthetically pleasing constructions). Such uses of repetition and parallelism by individual Navajos take differing forms in differing genres and thus aid in the recognition of those genres and, in the case of chantways, their effectiveness.

When we contrast the repetition and parallelism as described by McAllester (1980a) and Field and Blackhorse (2002) in Navajo songs and chantways with the use of repetition and parallelism in Watchman’s narrative, we see that they partly overlap in function and form but that the specifics also differ. Watchman has structured his narrative by use of lexical pairings (Coyote opens and closes the narrative, “his insides” bracket part 2), syntactic pairing (exact lines are repeated), parallelism pairing (the parallel forms of Coyote’s utterance in part 2), grammatical pairings (through the use of the semeliterative prefix on paired verbs), and narrative architectural pairings (there are two parts that are bracketed both by Coyote and by the focus on a verb of motion in part 1 and a verb of speaking in part 2). Like the use of four to suggest completion in curing ways, the use of pairing by Watchman here seems also to work in a way as to suggest completion. These types of pairing take a variety of forms within Watchman’s narrative, but they all seem to be working toward the same goal—a sense of completion and resolution. Repetition allows for the fulfillment of expectations and further allows for the advancement of the narrative. Repetition as a poetic and rhetorical device is also used in a variety of discourse genres and social and interactional settings among Navajos, as I suggested above.

To push these ideas slightly further, we could begin to argue that the framing of genres and “type” and “token” interdiscursivity, where intertextual references index that a genre is being performed or that a genre is being invoked, can all be seen as expressions of specific linguacultural practices (see Briggs and Bauman 1992; Silverstein 2005; Webster 2004). Intertextuality is an important feature of Navajo curing ways and Coyote narratives (Toelken 1987; Webster 2004), and speech genres are the repetition (with variation) of “other people’s words” (Bakhtin 1986; Bauman 2004). Likewise, ethnopoetic structuring can also be understood as examples of linguaculture (Friedrich 2006; Hymes 1981, 2003; Sherzer 1990). Forms of traditionalization such as the use of ‘alk’idásí found in both the Laterro and Watchman versions or the use of jini as the voice of tradition (epistemic modal) are examples of linguaculture as well (Bauman 2004), as are questions of individual style (see Rumsey 2005, 2006) and feelingful iconicity and heightened affective expressivity (Samuels 2004; Webster 2006b). ‘Alk’idásí—as an intertextual device—can also be found in contemporary written Navajo poetry (Webster 2006a), as well as in everyday Navajo conversations (Field 2007). Jini is also used in contemporary Navajo poetry as an intertextual device (Webster 2004, 2006a). Their continued circulation aids in the patterning of Navajo linguaculture.

Poetic forms with heightened affective expressivity draw listeners into a sense of coparticipation within the narrative frame (Nuckolls 1992) and play a key role in the
rhetoric of Navajo linguaculture. Through the use of affective expressivity, the listener can imagine their own coparticipation within the narrative (Field and Blackhorse 2002; Webster in press). Watchman’s use of ‘alk’id4', for example, connects this narrative with other Coyote narratives (like those told by Laterro). Watchman’s repetition of jini in conjunction with clause-initial adverbial particles created ethnopoetic lines. Overt mentions of the nominal m4'ii at the beginning and ending of the narrative serve to bracket the narrative. The use of náá- was also a way for Watchman to signal that a given narrative encounter or segment had come to completion and that a new encounter or segment was about to begin. This is similar to the use of náá- at the beginning of a number of Coyote narratives told by Curly Tó Aheedliinii. It is thus through the coordination of náá- with repetition and parallelism that we see the architecture of this narrative develop—an architecture that satisfies a Navajo expectation of rhetorical form (Burke 1968; Hymes 1981, 2003). That is, these poetic devices allow for the recognition of specific “types” or genres and for the establishment of expectations concerning the interaction between form and content (see Faris 1994).

The merging of language and culture here is particularly striking. Individual Navajos use Navajo poetic forms to aid in the circulation and perpetuation of a Navajo linguaculture. In this sense, the use of náá-, jini, and other poetic devices that are repeated within Watchman’s narrative become what Anthony Woodbury calls “form dependent expressions.” As Woodbury notes, “In any situation where the arbitrary patterns of a lexicogrammatical code are harnessed to constitute, shape, or model communicative purpose or content, expression is crucially dependent on form” (Woodbury 1998:238). Where I differ from Woodbury is in emphasizing that through circulation, perpetuation, and renewal, these form-dependent expressions gain a feelingful iconicity that makes such patterning “relatively,” but not “completely,” arbitrary. As feelingfully evocative, such expressions are understood by speakers as nonarbitrary, and certain feelingful connections adhere to them through their use. Navajo poet Luci Tapahonso writes in one of her poems,

“What is it?” She asks. “What’s wrong?”
There are no English words to describe this feeling.
“T’áá ‘iighisí biniina shil hóyéé,” I say. (Tapahonso 1993:14)

I would suggest that here, Tapahonso is arguing for a feelingful iconicity—a naturalness of fit—between the Navajo language and the expression of emotions. Such felt attachments to expressive forms accrue over time and lend those forms a naturalness of fit that is evocative of a whole complex of feelingful connections (Feld 1988; Friedrich 1979; Samuels 2004; Webster 2006b; see also Williams 1977:128–35). To quote Sapir, “Language is itself the collective art of expression, a summary of thousands upon thousands of individual intuitions” (1921:231).

Linguaculture merges language and culture through poetics to create feelingful attachments to discursive practices. The poetic devices that individuals use are thus the locus of such expressions of linguaculture. Linguacultures are discursive achievements that linger in the memories of speakers (thus forming stocks of knowledge, senses of continuity, and structures of feeling) and are made possible through and
by—among other things—poetics. But which linguistic devices are used and in what ways (e.g., in the framing of genres or the sense of completion) become ethnographic questions. By returning to the texts collected by previous generations, we can suggest the poetic resources that were in use in the circulation, constitution, reconstitution, and perpetuation of discursive genres in past linguacultural practices. It can also begin to allow us to recognize the “rhetorical, aesthetic, and expressive loss in language shift” (Woodbury 1998:234; see also Webster 2006a).

In comparing this narrative to the narrative collected by Parsons, we are able to fill in gaps and resolve ambiguities in that version. The reason we were able to accomplish that was because Parsons recorded some of the source-language original. It is a shame that more of the narrative was not recorded in Navajo. The traces, however, found in the Parsons, Laterro, and Lewis versions are suggestive. For example, the use of the opening and closing framing devices tells us that the narrator was familiar with certain conventions and that he placed his narrative within those genre conventions. In comparing the Watchman version to the Laterro version, we begin to fulfill Hymes’s urging that scholars and others who may investigate narratives collected by earlier researchers “use all there is to use” (2003:36). In so doing, we pay respect to those places where the original Navajo language remains in earlier presentations of Navajo narratives and in what they suggest about the discursive history of Navajo linguaculture. We also gain a sense of Watchman’s individual poetic achievement with respect to Navajo linguaculture. This article is but one step in the understanding of Navajo linguaculture specifically and linguaculture more broadly. It has been an initial foray into a discourse-centered approach to linguaculture, one method of which is ethnopoetics.

Notes

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1. Contrast this use of semantic couplets in Quechua with Navajo, where we find “linguistic synecdoche” (Reichard 1944:38). In Navajo, a single word may be used to refer to both the generic and the specific (e.g., saad, language, word; ljj, domesticated animal, horse; or tsin, tree, wood). We might term this, instead, semantic ambiguity that is disambiguated pragmatically. Reichard (1944) is arguing against any “naive” literal translation of Navajo. A number of Navajo consultants I have worked with would agree that “literal” translations between Navajo and English are an impossibility. I take this up in Webster (2006b).
2. The use of repetition has also been noted in Apache verbal genres as well. For discussions of repetition in Chiricahua Apache, see Webster (1999b); on Lipan Apache, see Webster (1999a) and Dagmar Jung (2000); on Western Apache, see David Samuels (2004) and Eleanor Nevins and Thomas Nevins (2004). For a general discussion of repetition in Athabaskan languages, see Melissa Axelrod (2000).

3. David Dinwoodie (1999) has analyzed the “poetic” and pragmatic features of the Sapir field school and the “voices” of Sapir’s consultants. Dinwoodie’s work reminds us that the linguistic elicitation of these narratives by Sapir from Watchman was also an engagement between social actors (see also Webster 1999a, 1999b).

4. Note that the Navajo word for Coyote is spelled either with or without a nasal hook.

5. In a survey of the Wall and Morgan (1994:109) Navajo/English dictionary that I did, there were only nineteen entries under the heading “M.” Eight of those words began with mq’ii (e.g., mq’iidag, coyote’s food; or mq’itiish, wolf, big coyote). Most of the others were loan words such as magi (monkey), mosti (cat), and miil (one thousand).

6. When nt’ee occurs clause final, it appears to now operate as a “past-tense” marker. This seems to be a relatively recent form of “grammaticization” (see Chee et al. 2004). However, there are no examples in the Watchman narrative of nt’ee operating as a past-tense marker. In the narrative discussed in this article, it functions as an initial adverbial particle that seems to highlight key moments of the narrative.

7. I have changed the title of the narrative from Sapir and Hoijer’s “Horned Toad and the Corn Patch” to “Coyote and Horned Toad” in order to better reflect the two main characters of the narrative. I have also adapted the orthography to be more aligned with that found in Robert Young and William Morgan (1987).

8. An enclitic is a semibound morpheme that attaches to the end of both nouns and verbs in Navajo. It differs from a suffix in that it does not generally suffer the phonological influences of the lexical item it is attached to. Clitics are an intermediate morphological type between affixes and words.

9. Morgan (1949:31–40) also presents a version of this narrative. In that version, Morgan presents the sound-symbolic form as shiid and “translates” it as “ssst.” This appears to be the one normally used by Navajos to “hush” others. Blackhorse Mitchell, in working through another narrative with me, translated the form as “listen.” This may also be the form that Hill and Hill are reporting. That this sound may function both as a hushing sound and as the sound of flatulence seems plausible.

10. “K’a” was Parsons’s way of writing “gah.” Likewise, “ping” was Parsons’s way of writing “bijh.” She had a good ear. [p] and [b] are allophones in Navajo of /b/, so it is understandable how she heard [p] instead of [b]. The nasal /ng/ was her way of writing the nasal quality to the vowel /i/. Likewise, /g/ in Navajo is actually closer to English /k/ than it is to /g/. The glottal marker ‘/ was probably Parsons’s attempt to indicate the degree of aspiration in the word. Not only is /g/ in Navajo closer to /k/ in English, it tends to have more aspiration. This is especially true, in my experience, when having people repeat the form in an isolated manner.

11. The setting up of expectations of rhetorical form also means that such expectations can be thwarted as well (see Woodbury 1985). The process of enjambment—the misaligning of poetic forms—is a case in point. Hymesian ethnopoetic methodology seems least able to account for and recognize instances of enjambment, precisely because it seeks recurrent forms.

12. See Paul Friedrich (1979) on the relative arbitrariness of the symbol.

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