



Per illud quod dicitur in scripturis
quod ab eis comprehensum non est
omne quod in mari est. Quia
conceditur et deinde ostenditur
quod per illud factum est
magis supra delineatum est
et hoc dicitur in
scripturis.

Tropicus
Cancrī

M A R

D E L

CIRCULUS AEQUINOCTIALIS

OCEANUS

Z U R

Tropicus
Capricorni

PERUVI

MARE PACIFICUM

AUSTRALIS

TERRA

OCEANUS

TERRA AUSTRALIS INCOGNITA



OCEANUS

AT

MAR

TICUS

DEL

NORT

AMERICA

BRASILIA

FRANCOFRONCIA

TOUCHU

MANIA

PATAGONIA

AMERICA
noviter delineata

Auct. Willem Blaeuw.
1631.

the soldiers came.

The villagers were not happy, because the village might be destroyed.

The medicine societies were in retreat.

Their food was brought to them, but "Yes, I'll eat," that's not what the
society members were thinking

(falling off) because the village might be destroyed.

They were not happy.

This is the way it w_as

with the societies in retreat.

Now in OUR society

the one who was our

father

was a small boy.

When the food was brought no one ate.

(gently, with a boy's voice) "Let me eat—
I'll eat so I'll be good and full when I die."

That's what

(falling off) the one who was our
father said.

A small boy doesn't understand

so that's the way he talked

while he sat there eating.¹⁹

.

So far we've been talking about words and the way words are delivered
but the sounds in an oral performance include some
which are not

verbal

as in this next passage

which speaks of a long famine:

.

After four years

.

(sighing) there was really
nothing.²⁰

.

Now this next passage needs a cigarette—
(while taking and lighting a cigarette) a good performer can use a cigarette in a
way that effectively punctuates his pauses
and can add to the suspense and mystery of a passage.
This is a story about a Zuni named Pelhna, the strongest Zuni, who ever
lived, who was famed for *(puffing on cigarette)*
robbing and killing white men.
Here a Mexican is going to Gallup
to sell his cows *(puffing)*
and Pelhna is thinking about ambushing him on his way back:

.
They drove the cows to Gallup
they passed through Zuni.
They went to that shortcut
where
Whitewater is, you know. *(a double puff)*

.
Well he saw them driving the cows through there so *(double puff)*

.
he decided he wanted to CHECK on them
so
two days after the
cows passed
he went NORTH *(double puff)*

.
on that ROAD
where he could meet that Mexican again. Probably when he sold his cows,
why he might come around THIS way.
Well
before Old Man Pelhna got to Whitewater he decided not to go too far
that's outside the reservation so *(double puff)*

.
he came back.
And he waited right where this *(single puff)*

Vanderwagen's ranch is right now
and that's the closest and narrowest SPOT there.²¹

The cigarette is something like an instrumental accompaniment in that
episode.

Here is another example of instrumentation:

HE'S NOT LOOKING OUTSIDE.
HE TELLS THE PEOPLE TO GO AHEAD AND WORK IT OUT but
(rapping table at each accent) hé's ríght ínsíde hí's óffice.²²

And then of course some of the motions made by a speaker are direct
illustrations of what he is saying.

Here are a couple of passages in which gesture is in fact ESSENTIAL to
the understanding of the
exact meaning.

First:

They brought a bowl
about so *(indicates a one-foot diameter with hands)*, not a big bowl, and put
the flour in there.²³

And here is the other example:

He hid and
peeped over
the little hill:
one guy's cooking and two guys are talking to each other you know.
FIRST HE AIMED IT *(closes left eye and holds up both*
and decided *forefingers, some distance apart, out*
how he could *in front of the right eye, at arm's*
kill *length, shifting them back and forth until,*

two
one shot.

*on the word "two," both fingers are in a
line with the right eye)*²⁴

Sometimes
a narrator makes use of the immediate circumstances in which he's
performing:

I know one man named Kaskala, he used to live down below
where that Chauncey's wall is (*points out the window, down to the bottom of
the hill, to the southwest, in Upper Nutria, New Mexico*).
Well back of it there used to be houses around there.²⁵

There was a use of place. A narrator may also make use of the immediate
time, time of day or time of year:

And we got to Zuni about this time I think.
Oxen go slow, you know.²⁶

Here the transcript must be annotated
to show that the narration took place
around the time it was getting dark.

In its main features the system of notation
I've used here
in the passages recited here is a very simple one.
I use a line change as in poetry for a short pause
a double space, that is a strophe break
for longer pauses
capitals
for words or lines that are loud
small type
for words or lines that are soft
and parenthecized italics, as in a play

for a good many other features
such as voice qualities and gestures.
This system of notation catches I think at least the main
outlines of specifically oral features
and displays them graphically
and at a glance, without resort to
a complicated inventory of technical symbols
such as is used by researchers in paralinguistics.²⁷
Professor Vansina has rightly said
that one cannot properly understand a text
without understanding its form,²⁸ and I submit that the oral features I've
been talking about are part and parcel of that form.
Once the importance of these features is accepted
then
it is clear
that tape recordings are infinitely preferable
to texts taken down in dictation.
Dictation hopelessly distorts delivery
especially in the case of a narrative that does not have fixed wording.
The transcription of tapes
should
if at all possible be done by the interviewer himself
and it should be done while the interview is
still fresh in his mind
so that he can provide such details as might not be clear from the tape
alone
such as gestures.
Far from being a mere clerical task
the act of transcription is ITSELF of analytical value
when it is pursued with attention to oral qualities.
There is no better way to find out just exactly what it is that you've got
on that tape.
The finished transcription shows at a glance
the structure
of the narrative
and its delivery
and even provides a much quicker guide to its content
than densely packed prose.
No visual transcription can of course be complete
so it is still absolutely essential that the original tape be saved.
The transcript provides a ready index to the tape in case there is need to
refer back to it.

If anthropologists, folklorists, linguists, and oral historians
are interested in the full meaning
of the spoken word
then they must stop treating oral narratives
as if they were reading prose
when in fact they are listening to dramatic poetry.

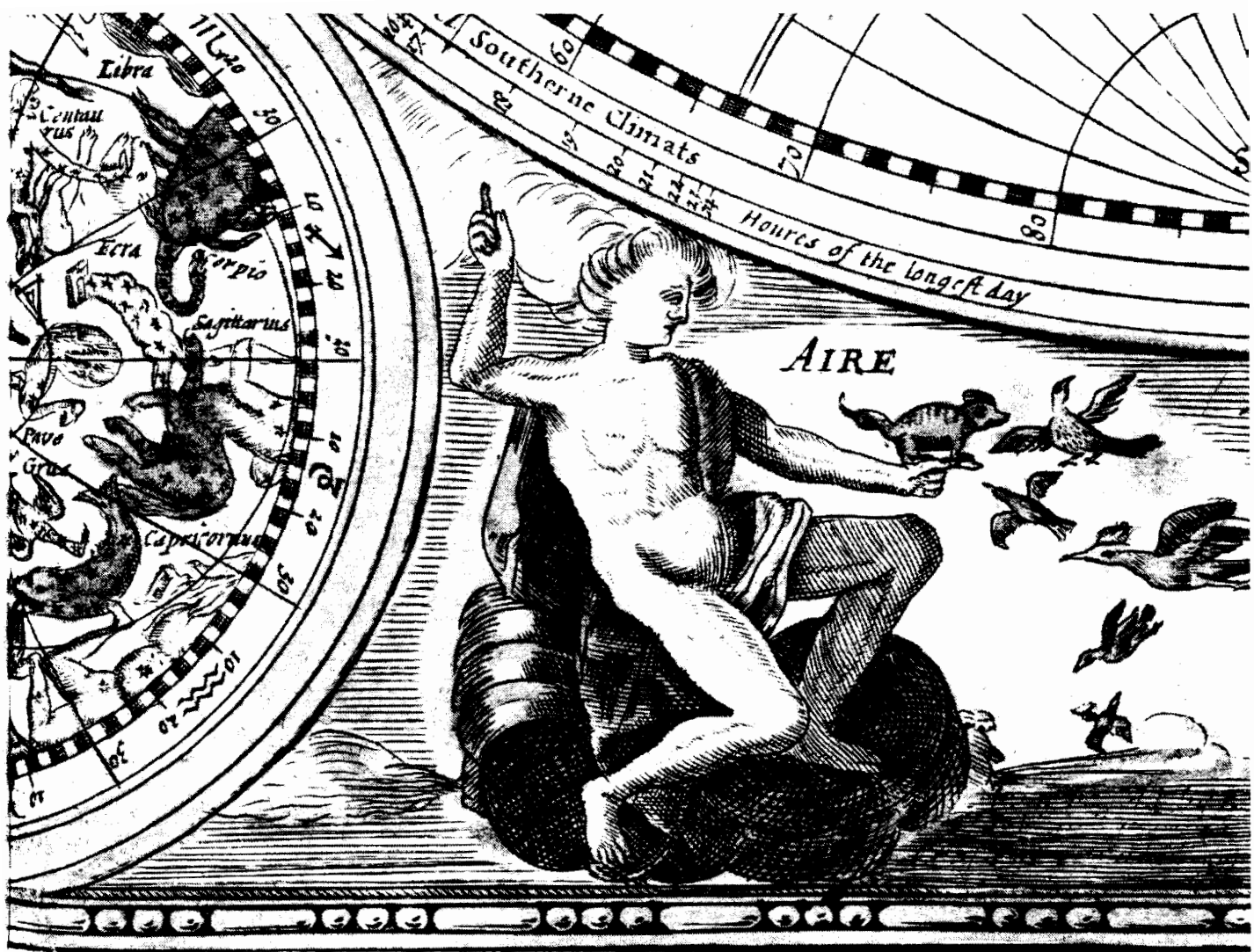
Boston University

NOTES

- 1 Translated from a recording made in the field by Dennis and Barbara Tedlock (1972), XXII.
- 2 Dennis Tedlock, *Finding the Center: Narrative Poetry of the Zuni Indians* (New York: Dial, 1972), 278-80. A translation.
- 3 See Ruth L. Bunzel's version of this same episode in her "Zuni Origin Myths," *47th Annual Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology* (1932), 601-2; and my own "In Search of the Miraculous at Zuni," in *World Anthropology* (The Hague: Mouton, in press); the latter includes a discussion of Zuni divination.
- 4 Jan Vansina, *Oral Tradition: A Study in Historical Methodology* (Chicago: Aldine, 1965), 143-54.
- 5 Ruth Crosby, "Oral Delivery in the Middle Ages," *Speculum* 11 (1936), 88.
- 6 *Ibid.*, 102-8.
- 7 Robert D. Stevick, "Scribal Notation of Prosodic Features in *The Parker Chronicle*, Anno 894 [893]," *Journal of English Linguistics* 1 (1967), 57-66; and Sizzo de Rachewiltz, personal communication.
- 8 Sizzo de Rachewiltz, personal communication.
- 9 Charles Sears Baldwin, *Renaissance Literary Theory and Practice* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1939), 14.
- 10 For a lengthy development of the argument that spoken narratives are poetry, see Dennis Tedlock, "On the Translation of Style in Oral Narrative," in *Toward New Perspectives in Folklore*, ed. Américo Paredes and Richard Bauman (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1972), 114-33. The idea that written prose has no oral counterpart is related to the argument of sociolinguists that the rules given by an ordinary grammar do not describe the full range of competencies necessary to speaking a language properly; see Del Hymes, "The Contribution of Folklore to Sociolinguistic Research," in the above anthology, 42-50, for example.
- 11 For a discussion of pausing, see Frieda Goldman-Eisler, "Continuity of Speech Utterance, Its Determinants and its Significance," *Language and Speech* 4 (1961), 220-31; and "The Distribution of Pause Durations in Speech," *Ibid.*,

232-37. For the psychological meaning of pauses and other delivery features, see G.F. Mahl, "Exploring Emotional States by Content Analysis," in *Trends in Content Analysis*, ed. I. Pool (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1959), 89-130; and R.E. Pittenger, C.F. Hockett, and J.J. Danehy, *The First Five Minutes* (Ithaca: Martineau, 1960).

- 12 *Finding the Center*, 71. A translation.
- 13 *Ibid.*, 220. A translation.
- 14 Dennis and Barbara Tedlock, field tapes (1971), A.
- 15 *Ibid.*, A.
- 16 *Finding the Center*, 27. A translation.
- 17 Field tapes (1971), C.
- 18 *Ibid.*, A.
- 19 Dennis Tedlock, field tapes (1965), 8. A translation.
- 20 *Finding the Center*, 38. A translation.
- 21 Field tapes (1965), 5.
- 22 Field tapes (1971), C.
- 23 Dennis Tedlock, "When the Old Timers Went Deer Hunting," *Alcheringa* 3 (1971), 81.
- 24 Field tapes (1965), 5.
- 25 "When the Old Timers Went Deer Hunting," 79.
- 26 Field tapes (1971), C.
- 27 See Pittenger et al. and George L. Trager, "Paralanguage," in *Language in Culture and Society*, ed. Dell Hymes (New York: Harper & Row, 1964), 274-79.
- 28 Vansina, 65.



Southern Climats

Hours of the longest Day

AIRE

Libra
Centaurus
Scorpio
Sagittarius
Pavo
Grus
Capricornus

