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Joy Oram - Don. 2:28

18 May 1997

"Have You Ever Thought of Poetry?"
"Couplets" and the "Poetry"
of Diuxi-Tilantongo Mixtec (1)

1. Introduction

The purpose of this paper is to "open some doors", to get us thinking, to help us "see" our language data in a new way.

Much of the "taking apart" of the discourse structure of DTM has been handled in Kuiper, Oram (1991). Now I would like to "put the discourse back together again".

Let me give you (1) some of the background for this study, (2) some pertinent quotes from several sources, (3) some examples from DTM, and (4) let me pose some questions.

2. Background

For almost 30 years various comments and problems and responses had simmered at the back of my mind. Suddenly, in 1994, they all came together.

At native-author and basic primer and transition primer workshops, the consultants would say, "Get him to add to it, re-think it. It doesn't make sense. It doesn't say anything." Often literacy consultants and linguistic consultants would say, "Where are all the 'and's? Where are the conjunctions? This doesn't read like Mixtec." And I would say, "Don't change it! Don't edit it! It's all there. We just don't understand it."

I understood what the consultants were saying and why they were saying it. I had read most of the same articles on Mixtec and native-authored materials that they had. But DTM just didn't seem to "follow the rules".

One of my colleague's (2) language associates was totally disgusted with the transition primer. I think I understand why. Arturo (3) had made up many of the very short introductory stories. The consultants suggested he "write them for someone at home". So he wrote them for his little sister. If you have ever tried to write those introductory stories using very few letters of the alphabet, you know how difficult it is. For the longer stories I had used the folktales Arturo's grandfather had told him with Arturo's illustrations for them and some of Amelia's (4) stories. But my colleague's language associate already knew how to read and write in both Spanish and Mixtec. What he desperately wanted was to get ahead, to leave the old ways and the poverty. He wanted books that would tell him how to do that, and that wasn't the purpose of the transition primer.

As I was working through Arturo's stories at the native-author workshop I said, "Arturo, are you leaving out parts of the stories? Is there a double meaning?" "No,

Joy, I wouldn't do that to you." In the following quote the underlining is mine. Tannen (p 575) says, "Audience participation in sense-making is required by ellipsis and indirectness...when responding to detail, imagery, or dialog; when interpreting a simile, proverb, or metaphor--in all these, the audience has to fill in, has to work to make meaning." I thought about some of Arturo's and Amelia's stories that had been very difficult to analyze--"The Metro", "The Woman in Jail", "Moro Dancers", "The Sun and the Moon". Why were they difficult?

When Amelia and her daughter and I began to translate the Old Testament Summary into DTM, I assumed that Isaiah and Jeremiah would be exceedingly difficult to translate. They weren't. We "waltzed" through them. When we translated the New Testament, which books did the committee especially enjoy? I and II Peter! "He speaks so plainly. He uses such vivid word pictures!"

When I asked a group of non-SIL friends to read through the English translation of Amelia's stories, they enjoyed "meeting" my friend Amelia, but many of them felt the stories sounded like "primitive people from a primitive culture speaking a primitive language"! Others felt the stories seemed almost like "Dick and Jane", as if they were "primerese". Why? Why did I love the stories? Why could I see Arturo as the keeper of the treasure of the old folktales, and Amelia as a wonderful teacher and a gifted storyteller, a real "wordsmith", and others couldn't? Again, Tannen (p 579) helped me: "...reduplication and higher-level repetition strategies...[are] a source of miscommunication...reduplication results in expressions that sound odd...repetition of key words, phrases, and ideas to establish "thematic continuity" is perceived as redundant and pointless..." The same thing seemed to be happening with Amelia's and Arturo's stories. Non-Mixtecs simply don't say things that way. As Lynn Anderson (1993) says, "You can say that again: repetition in Alacatlalzala Mixtec." -- a double pun!

I would like to encourage all of us to keep on analyzing. In 1967 I collected the stories Amelia had used to teach me DTM and all the other text material I had gathered. I needed 100 pages of text for the Concordance Project. (5) In 1970 with the help of Dr. Robert Longacre, the analysis of those texts became the basis of an MA thesis (Oram, 1970). In 1975 I attended a discourse workshop led by Longacre and Terry Todd. As I read and reread Amelia's and Arturo's stories, they "felt" like poetry--like the parallelism of the Hebrew poetry of the Psalms in the Old Testament of the Bible. I wrote out many of Amelia's stories in a new form. Instead of writing them out in prose, paragraph by paragraph, I wrote them out in clusters of two sentences which I called "couplets".

For many years we have spoken of Mixtec "couplets", the clusters of two syllables, CVCV, CVV, and CV?V, which form the nucleus of words. It seemed to me that these clusters

of two sentences could also be called "couplets". On the discourse level these couplets rather than single sentences seemed to be the building blocks of which paragraphs were made. The texts began with a single sentence, or a cluster of two sentences, a couplet, and then continued on in couplets until the end of the text. Occasionally there would be a single sentence that would open a new paragraph. Very occasionally there would be a single sentence that seemed to close a paragraph or give some parenthetical information. Only rarely would there be a title. Temporal and locative words and phrases, conjunctions, repetition of words and phrases, and paraphrases of clauses and sentences gave the clues as to which sentences formed couplets. I "intuited" the couplets. I couldn't state the rules for them, I "felt" them. (6)

In 1975, I again began to think about couplets. Again, I immersed myself in the DTM texts. Pretty soon I could feel the couplets--there they were, just as plain as anything. Why hadn't other people seen them? Soon I was again writing out Amelia's and Arturo's stories in the new form, in clusters of two sentences rather than in paragraphs. Cluster by cluster, "couplet" by "couplet", I watched the pattern again fall into place.

In 1989, Amelia and I were working through some of my colleague's texts to increase my knowledge of Mixtec as spoken by other native speakers. The story we were working on had been told by an old man who had since died. There was no way to ask him questions. But I didn't understand the story as it was written. Amelia didn't understand it either. It was one thing for me not to understand it, but why didn't Amelia understand it? I began rewriting it in clusters of two sentences instead of in a single paragraph. Within 5 minutes we easily understood the part of the story that had troubled us.

In 1994, I asked the six participants at an SIL Writers' Workshop held in Tucson, Arizona to scan a book I hoped to publish--the life of my friend Amelia told through her stories. I had shared with the group how frustrated I had become that to those who read the stories Amelia often came across as a "poor dumb backward downtrodden Indian" instead of a remarkable teacher and writer. Almost simultaneously, two of the participants asked, "Have you ever thought of poetry?"! (7)

3. Quotations from the reading I have done

Let me share with you some of the material I have been reading of late. (Any underlining is mine.) The quotes from Sommers (1982) and Brannon and Knoblauch (1982) are taken from two articles that Jim Meyer recommended to us at the writers' workshop. Jim says that responding to students' writing is by far the most difficult part of his job as a college-level English teacher. I would suggest

that it may well be the most difficult part of our job in encouraging native-authors to share their language, thoughts, and creativity with us as translators.

Perhaps as linguists and consultants, we should take the following quotes as a warning. It is possible to lose a great deal of insight into the language we are studying by making our data conform to our preconceived notions. Perhaps, it is also possible to destroy a native author's creativity. It is, after all, their language, not ours.

As I pondered the comments made by Sommers and Brannon and Knoblauch, I substituted "translator" or "consultant" for the words "teacher" or "reader" and "native-author" or "language associate" for the words "student" or "apprentice": "...the student [native author] is creating" (S p.153). "...the author's [language associate's] right to make statements in exactly the way they are made in order to say exactly what the writer wishes to say" (BK p.157). "...how arbitrary and idiosyncratic most of our teachers" [translators' or consultants'] comments are...the teacher appropriates the text from the student by confusing the student's purpose in writing the text with her own purpose in commenting" (S p.149). "Thus, we read student texts with biases about what the writer should have said or about what he or she should have written, and our biases determine how we will comprehend the text" (S p.154). "...the reader assumes primary control of the choices that writers make, feeling perfectly free to 'correct' those choices any time an apprentice [language associate] deviates from the teacher-reader's conception of what the developing text 'ought' to look like or 'ought' to be doing" (BK p.158).

The quotes from Tannen and Jakobson are from two of the references cited in Lynn Anderson's paper. (Again, the underlining is mine.)

As we look at the quotes from Tannen (1987), let's look first at repetition: "Repetition is a resource by which speakers create a discourse...Repeating a word, phrase, or longer syntactic unit--exactly or with variation--results in a rhythmic pattern which sweeps the hearer or reader along." (p.574) "Repetition is an essentially poetic aspect of language." (p.577) "'The form of repetition and variation, of constants and contrasts...is no less than a definition of structure itself'" (p.579) Repetition yields "more language more fluently." (p.581) "Almost paradoxically, repeating the frame first foregrounds and intensifies the part repeated, then foregrounds and intensifies the part that is different." (p.583) "'By focusing on parallelisms and similarities in pairs of lines, one is led to pay more attention to every similarity and every difference...'" (p.583) Tannen also says that "instances of repetition may be placed along a scale of fixity in form":

exact - the same words in a similar rhythmic pattern
repetition with variation

questions transformed into statements
 statements transformed into questions
 change of person
 change of tense
 other changes in wording
 paraphrase - similar ideas in different words
 patterned rhythm - wholly different words, but the same
 syntactic or rhythmic paradigm
 a temporal scale - immediate or delayed repetition
 "(The question of where the latter end of the scale is
 situated raised the question of how distant--in time, when
 speaking, or in space, when writing--a second utterance may
be, and yet be seen as repetition.)" (p.586).

Then let's look at "couplets": "He could neither
account for nor appreciate her linguistic ability, until he
gave up the disciplinary linguistic focus on the sentence as
the limit, descriptor, and determiner of language." (p.579)
"Sentences and parts of sentences do not occur in isolation;
rather, they echo each other" (p.601).

Let's move on to poetry: "All language is, to a varying
extent, poetic." (p.574) "Poetry is characterized by
"coupling"." (p.579) "Repetition is an essentially poetic
aspect of language." (p.577) "Both syntactic and
phonological parallelism in poetry." (p.579)
 "...repetition is devalued in everyday conversation, even as
 it is highly valued in literary discourse by creative
 writers and scholars." (p.586) "Evidence of negative
 associations with repetition abound. 'You're repeating
 yourself' can only be heard as a criticism..." This makes "an
obstacle" of "the rhythmical character of poetry."" (p.585).

The following quotes are from Jakobson (1966): "Words
or phrases answering one to another." (p.399) "...any word
 or clause when entering into a poem built on pervasive
parallelism... the verbal art of continuous
 correspondence...all its structure and functions are
 indissolubly interlaced with the near and distant verbal
 environment..." (p.428) "When approaching the linguistic
 problem of grammatical parallelism...the pathbreaking study
 written [in 1859] by Gerard Manley Hopkins: "...the
structure of poetry is that of continuous parallelism..."
 (p.399) [Lowth in speaking of the Hebrew poetry of the
 Psalms speaks of] "Parallels Synonymous, Parallels
Antithetic, and Parallels Synthetic... the several sorts of
 Parallels are perpetually mixed with one another, and this
 mixture gives a variety and beauty to the composition"
 (p.400) "Hightower has translated two Chinese pieces from
 the fifth and sixth centuries...in particular he cites
 Kukai's ninth-century compilation from older Chinese
 sources...which enumerates...twenty-nine modes of
 parallelism." (p.401) Jakobson goes on to say that

Hightower speaks of six types of simple parallelism: reiteration, synonymy, antonymy, "likes - lexical and grammatical similitude, "unlikes" - grammatical similitude without lexical similitude, and "formal pairs" - "far-fetched linkages" in lexical semantics without grammatical similitude.

One more interesting comment found in my reading: Dell Hymes' work is entitled "In Vain I Tried to Tell You": Essays in Native American Ethnopoetics." Intriguing title, is it not?

It's new!!

I am not going to attempt a linguistic analysis of DTM "poetry" in this paper. If I wait until I can technically explain "couplets", with all the rules systematically worked out, I will never share this discovery with you. Almost 20 years have passed since I first tried to write a paper entitled "Couplet: A New Level between Sentence and Paragraph in Diuxi-Tilantongo Mixtec". It's time I shared the "seed", the "germ" of that idea with you. *(5/8)* Jim Meyer worked out the format. By the time I had written out two texts in it I was so excited I could hardly stand it. Jim had "opened a door for me". The texts had become poetry! The rhythm was there--not only in Mixtec, but also in English! At last I could see why Amelia had composed the texts as she had. Thanks to Jim Meyer for his initial consultation on this paper; ~~to Tom Willett, Linguistics Coordinator, for his encouragement: "By all means go ahead and do it--write it up!"~~; ~~and to Mary Hopkins, Assistant to the Literacy Coordinator, for getting it into print.~~

WTE

This is a lovely text--poetry that sings! Tannen's comment is applicable here. "How distant...a second utterance may be, and yet be seen as repetition." (p.586)

This is the original format for this text:

Now the rain is coming. The rain is calling. Hail rain will come. The holy one called from the mountain. The holy one called from the valley. And the rain is going to fall. Now in good season the rain is coming. Indeed our crops will come. Now we will get a harvest. We will plant rainy season seed. The oxen will work with the men. They will plant chickpeas. We will plant habas and rainy season corn. Now in good season the rain has arrived, because we are very poor here, because there isn't water. Only to the sky we look for when the rain will come. Here it is a dry land, there is no water. We only wait for when the rain will come again. But now the holy one has arrived. I am happy, because there we will get the food we will eat, because with that rain, then we live, because here it is a dry land.

This was the first format of couplets:

Now the rain is coming.
 The rain is calling. Hail rain will come.
 The holy one called from the mountain. The holy one called
 from the valley.
 And the rain is going to fall.
 Now in good season the rain is coming. Indeed our crops
 will come.
 Now we will get a harvest. We will plant rainy season seed.
 The oxen will plow with the men. They will plant chickpeas.
 We will plant habas and rainy season corn.
 Now in good season the rain has arrived, because we are very
 poor here, because there isn't water. Only to the sky we
 look for when the rain will come.
 Here it is a dry land, there is no water. We only wait for
 when the rain will come again.
 But now the holy one has arrived. I am happy, because there
 we will get the food we will eat, because with that rain,
 then we live, because here it is a dry land.

At one point I tried to display "fronted material".

Now
 the rain is coming.

The rain is calling.
 Hail rain will come.

The holy one called from the mountain.
 The holy one called from the valley.

And the rain is going to fall.

Now
 in good season
 the rain is coming.
 Indeed our crops will come.

Now
 we will work.
 We will plant rainy season seed.

The oxen will work with the men.
 They will plant chickpeas.

We will plant habas
 and rainy season corn.

Now
 in good season

*to next
page*

the rain has arrived,
 because we are very poor here,
 because there isn't water.

Only
 to the sky
 we look
 for when
 the rain will come.

Here it is a dry land.
 We only
 wait
 for when
 the rain will come.

But now
 the holy one has arrived.
 I am happy,
 because there
 we will get the food we will eat,
 because with that rain,
 then we live,
 because here it is a dry land.

This is the new format:

Now the rain is coming.

The rain is calling.
 Hail rain will come.

The holy one called from the mountain.
 The holy one called from the valley.

And the rain is going to fall.

Now in good season the rain is coming.
 Indeed our crops will come.

Now we will get a harvest.
 We will plant rainy season seed.

The oxen will work with the men.
 They will plant chickpeas.

We will plant habas and rainy season corn.

Now in good season the rain has arrived,
 because we are very poor here,
 because there isn't water.
 Only to the sky we look for when the rain will come.

Here it is a dry land,

*to next
page*

there is no water.
We only wait for when the rain will come again.

But now the holy one has arrived.
I am happy,
because there we will get the food we will eat,
because with that rain, then we live,
because here it is a dry land.

Vitna vaxi dau.

Kana dau.
Kixi dau ñiñi.

N-kana-ia do diki.
N-kana-ia do nina.

Te vax juun dau.

Vitna va'a tiempu vaxi dau.
Chi kixi cosecha-ro.

Vitna kada cosecha-ro.
Dakée-ro tata dau.

Kadatniu ngutu xi'in teyifi.
Dada'u-te nduchi tnduu.

Dakée-ro nduchi haba xi'in nuni tata dau.

Vitna va'a tiempu n-nxee dau,
chi yo kunda'u-ro ya'a,
chi ña tuu ndute.
Diko ni andfu nde'a-ro nakiu kixi dau.

Ya'a kuu ñu'u yichi,
ñatu ndute io.
Diko ni ndetu-ro nañkiu nakixi dau.

Ko vitna n-nxee-ia.
Kudu ini-da,
chi ijan ni'i-ro xa kaa-ro,
chi dau jan dada tuu-ro,
chi ya'a kuu ñu'u yichi.

In this one, Amelia "takes" me through the stalls in the large market town out on the highway. She teaches me to count and the Mixtec money system as we go. This is one of the few texts she changed when we translated it. As I read the Mixtec back to her and she gave me a Spanish translation, she said, "Wait a minute! That part belongs farther up." In mentally walking through the market, she

had skipped a part. It meant "moving a couplet". As Tannen says, "Almost paradoxically, repeating the frame first foregrounds and intensifies the part repeated, and then foregrounds and intensifies the part that is different" (p.583).

We'll go to market in Nochixtlán.
We'll go buy all that we need.

We will cut cloth.

We'll buy a shawl that costs 100 pesos, a good shawl.
We'll buy a pair of sandals that costs 22 pesos.

We'll buy a hat, a good hat that costs 15 pesos.
We'll buy a good tunic that costs 70 pesos.

We'll buy salt.
We'll buy a measure costing \$5.50.

There we'll buy a kilo of chile costing \$8.50.
We'll buy a block of panela costing 18 pesos.

There we'll buy 12 kilos of corn costing 12 pesos.
We'll buy 6 kilos of black beans costing 15 pesos.

We'll buy a bar of soap at 1 peso 20.
We'll buy a bag of detergent for 1 peso.

We'll buy a peso of bread.
Five of them for 1 peso.

We'll buy a liter of tomatillos.
They cost 10 bits.

Five red tomatoes for 1 peso.

We'll buy a kilo of salt for 70 centavos.
We'll buy a kilo of sugar for 2 pesos 10 centavos.

¡Let's go home!
Let's load up,
so that the burro and the horse will carry it.

Let's go home,
because it's getting late.
Already it's 1 o'clock in the afternoon,
and lest we arrive late.

It'll even be already dark,
at 7 o'clock at night we'll arrive.

Ji'in-ro ya'u Atojon.
Njueen-ro xa ndoñu'u-ro.

Ka'nde-ro da'ma.

Jueen-ro pañu xa ya'u iin cientu, pañu va'a.
Jueen-ro iin ndixa xa ya'u oko uu pexu.

Jueen-ro iin lelu, lelu va'a xa ya'u xa'un pexu.
Jueen-ro iin cotona va'a xa ya'u uni diko uxi pexu.

Jueen-ro ñi.
Jueen-ro iin arrua ya'u o'on kandodo koon.

Ijan jueen-ro iin kilo ya'a ya'u una kandodo koon.
Jueen-ro iin yutu panela ya'u xaun uni pexu.

Ijan jueen-ro uxi uu kilo nuni ya'u uxi uu pexu.
Jueen-ro iñu kilo nduchi tnuu ya'u xa'un pexu.

Jueen-ro iin nama iin pexu oko.
Jueen-ro iin bolsa yuchi nama xa iin pexu.

Jueen-ro iin pexu tila.
O'on-i xa iin pexu.

Jueen-ro iin litru tnana doko.
Ya'u-ti uxi tvini.

O'on tnana kue'e xa iin pexu.

Jueen-ro iin kilo ñi xa uni diko uxi centau.
Jueen-ro iin kilo axuca xa uu pexu uxi centau.

¡Na nu'u-ro!
Na daka-ro,
na kuido burru xi'in caballu.

Na nu'u-ro,
chi vax ñini.
Xá kaa iin xañini kuu,
te nada ñini naxee-ro.

Nde xa n-kunee,
kaa uxa xakuaa naxee-ro.

When Amelia told me this next story, I couldn't understand it. Even with her translation into Spanish, I couldn't keep track of the participants. When it was reformatted into couplets, it all became plain. Note that the last two lines are spoken in Spanish rather than in Mixtec, but the couplet format is retained!

The Moros were first.

The one who is Despaciano was dancing.
Already at 2 o'clock his soldiers had marched in.

There entered the one who is Sultan.
He was dancing with Alferes.

There the Son arrived,
in order to carry the flag of Edican.
There he began the battle they were fighting.

By the sword the Gentile was killed.

Ten little devils arrived to carry him away.
They arrived to bury him.

Another battle in the story of the Christians began,
but they didn't die.
Pilate's died.

The one who is called the Sultan died.
Despaciano killed him.

There they went on in only those battles until they died.

That Pilate died.
The dead ones were finished off.

Only those battles there were.

Alferes, Edican, Despaciano, and the Son won.
They carried away the flag.

Pilate and the Sultan didn't win to carry it away.
The flag of the Christians remained.

But Pilate himself, all of his men died.

All the little devils carried them away.
They arrived to bury them.

The Son won the flag.
He did not lose it.

Long live, long live, the Christian and his flag!
May Pilate and his soldiers die!

N-xio muru ki'na nuu.

Té kuu Despacianu xtaxe'e.
Xá kaa uu n-kida marchari soldado-te.

Ijan n-kée té kuu Sultán.
Xtaxe'e-te xi'in Alferes.

Ijan n-xee Niu,
na xe je'en-te bandera Edicán.
Ijan n-kixe'e-te guerra jantna'a-te.

Machiti n-xi'i gentil.

N-xe nukuido ña'a uxi diablito.
N-xe kuxi ña'a-i.

N-kixe'e inka guerra cuentu cristianu,
ko ñatu n-xi'i-te.
N-xi'i cuenda Pilatu.

N-xi'i té nani Sultán.
N-xa'ni ña'a Despacianu.

Ijan n-kida seguiri-te meni guerra jan nde n-xi'i-te.

Pilatu jan n-xi'i.
Ndi'i té n-xi'i.

Meni guerra jan n-xio.

N-kida ganari Alferes, Edicán, Despacianu xi'in Niu.
N-xe nuje'en-te bandera.

Ñatu n-kida ganari Pilatu xi'in Sultán xa kane'e-te.
N-ndoo na'i bandera cristianu.

Ko mee Pilatu, ndondoo-te n-xi'i.

Ntdaa diablito n-nakuido ña'a.
N-xe kuxi ña'a-i.

N-kida ganari Niu bandera.
Ñatu n-dakuita-te.

¡Viva, viva, cristianu con su bandera!
¡Que muera Pilato con sus soldados!

Even the short texts come out in couplets. Note that some of the sentences are very long. Note also how DTM uses conjunctions.

Now I am grinding.
I am working my dough.

I will make many tortillas.

is next page

I am in a hurry to pat out the tortillas,
so that the patting will be done.

I will prepare the stew,
so that my children will eat dinner.
And I will wash my dishes,
and sweep my house [and] my kitchen,
and I'll go, I'll go wash my children's clothes.

And when I get back,
I'll put on the coffee for my children's supper,
lest it be very dark,
and none of them will eat.
They will be asleep.

And my husband will arrive home,
and he will beat me,
if I won't have given my children their supper.

Vitna ndiko-da.
Tee-da yuxa-da.

Kue'e dita tee-da.
Ndu ini-da tee-da dita,
na ndi'i tee-da.

Kadava'a-da ndeyu,
na kaxde'ñu da'ya-da.
Te najini-da traxti-da,
te nati'u-da ve'e-da, cuxina-da,
te ji'in-da, jin nukate-da da'ma da'ya-da.

Te na nxee-da,
jandodo-da café kaxdini da'ya-da,
nada yo kunee,
te mayo-i kaxdini.
Kidi koio-i.

Te nxee yii-da,
te janña'a-te,
nuxa ma juña'a-da xa kaxdini da'ya-da.

This is another of my favorite texts. When I asked Amelia about men's work, she said, "Let me talk it over with my husband." That night she and Gerónimo worked it out together, and this is what they came up with. Beautiful rhythmic poetry. Consultants have called this a "typical hard-luck story". To me, it's more of a heart-cry. Or perhaps they "put a brave face on it", turning it into a joke on themselves at the end.

I am a farmer.

I work in the fields.
Every day I go to the fields to work.

I go with my oxen.
I go to work.

I plant wheat in seedtime.
Only that work I do,
in order to live on the land.

I turn over the soil,
I plow the furrows with my oxen.
I plant the seed,
I cultivate the cornfield.

All that work is accomplished.

I will cut the wheat.
I will carry it with the mule, [and] with the burro.

The cutting is finished.

And I will thresh,
I will thresh the wheat.
I need it for my expenses.

This land will not produce well.
I get only a small harvest.

It is not level land that produces well.
Only hills,
only gullies,
only that which I hold in place with rocks [and]
trees.

There thus the soil stays in place.
Then a little wheat [and] corn will spring up.

The heavy rains come.
Quickly the water carries away even my wheat.

The water carries away my cornfield.
The flood water carries everything away.

With that, even though I work,
I don't make it.
I get some,
I get some,
but only a little wheat [and] corn.

I am not rich.
I just am.

With that work it is that I am a farmer.
I make enough for food.

Neither do I have any money.
I don't have any good clothes.

Nor do I have any shoes.
Only sandals I wear.

That is my life that I am a farmer.

Daña kuu seyif campesinu.

Kidatniu-da yuku.
Ntdaa kiu xe'en-da yuku kidatniu-da.

Xe'en-da xi'in ngutu-da.
Xe kadatniu-da.

Dada'u-da triu tiempo semilla.
Meni tniu ijan kida-da,
na kutuu-da ñu'u.

Nadaka-da,
xani-da xichi xi'in ngutu.
Dakee-da tata,
xitu-da itu.

Ka'nde-da triu.
Kuido-da xi'in ngutu, xi'in burru.

Ndi'i-da xa'nde-da.

Te kadi-da,
kadi-da triu.
Ndoñu'u-da xa kuu gastu-da.

Ñu'u ya'a ñatu kane va'a.
Yo ita'u cosecha ni'i-da.

Ñatu kuu yodo xa kua'a va'a.
Meni tnduu,
meni de'va,
meni xa nachitnii-da yuú, yutnu.

Ijan da nujuiin ñu'u.
Dada kane ita'u triu, itu.

Vaxi dau nde'e.
Ne'e ni ndute ka'nu nde triu-da.

Ne'e ndute itu-da.

40 next
page

Ntdaa ne'e ndute ka'nu jua'an.

Xijan, juini kidatniu-da,
 ko ñatu ni'i-da.
 Ni'i-da,
 ni'i-da,
 ko ita'u triu, nuni.

Ñatu kukuika-da.
 Da ni kuu-da.

Xi'in trabaju ijan xa kuu-da campesinu.
 Nani xaa-da ni'i-da.

Ni ña tuu na tvini-da.
 Ña tuu na da'ma va'a-da.

Ni ña tuu na zapatu-da.
 Diko ni ndixa yi'i-da.

Xijan kuu vida-da xa kuu-da campesinu.

This text is a dialogue between a mother and her son.
 I had asked Amelia to tell me about her oldest son who had
 gone to Mexico City at age 12 and stayed there ever since.

"Why have you come home?"

"I lost the sheep.
 Searching for them, I didn't find [them]."

I came home.
 I'm going with my father to look for them.

My boss is angry.
 He has a way of yelling fiercely at me.

I'm very afraid.
 When they are found, I'll go take them back.

I'll return to our house.
 I'm not going to go anymore to herd sheep.

"If you're not going anymore,
 come back home.
 I won't punish you."

"Take me to Mexico City!"

¿Nu n-nxee-un?

*is next
page*

N-dajî'in-da tkachi.
 Nanduku-da-tî, ña n-nani'i-da.
 Juan ndii-da.
 Jî'in-da xi'in taa-da nanduku-da-tî.
 Cudeen lamu-da.
 Io mudu-s xa kana ndee ña'a-s.
 Yo yu'u-da.
 Na nani'i-tî, jîn nundeka-da-tî.
 Ndixi-da ve'e-ro.
 Ma jî'in ka-da junuu-da tkachi.
 Nuxa ma jî'in ka-un,
 ndixi-un ve'e-ro.
 Ma teyiki ña'a-r.
 ¡Juan ndeka ña'a-n Ñuko'yo!

Would Amelia's stories of experiences outside the village come out in couplets? Yes, as seen in the following text. I think the language associates had been asked to write a description of what they had seen that was similar to their home villages and what was different.

We went,
 we lived where it's called, where it is the city of
 Ixmiquilpan.

There we saw men setting out onions.
 They plant garlic,
 they plant lettuce,
 they plant radishes,
 they plant Chinese parsley,
 they plant tomatoes,
 they plant tomatillos.

They plant cornfields,
 there is sweet corn.

They plant wheat,
 there is wheat.
 They plant alfalfa,
 there is alfalfa.

We'll go to the foot of the mountain.

There are trees that produce pecans.
 We will gather pecans.

The girl says,
 "Gather, señora.
 Take them.

Indeed eat.
 We don't sell them."

We gathered many.
 We carried our filled carrying baskets returning to our house.

The girl was kind.
 She gave us permission to enter the grove of pecan trees.

We went in and gathered.
 All of us gathered pecans.

I saw slender prickly pear plants.

Prickly pear with long thorns.
 The fruit is white.

I saw maguey, part white, part yellow, part green.

Three-colored are the maguey there.
 The maguey that there are are pretty.

There I climbed the slope there.

There I saw the pine trees there are.
 The trees are there where the barracks are.

That hill is high.
 We were climbing up to see what there is in that town.

N-xe'en-ro,
 n-xo tuu-ro nuu nani nuu kuu ciudad Ixmiquilpan.

Ijan n-xini-ro té dakeé ndua tnujiin.
 Dakeé-te aju,
 dakeé-te lechuga,
 dakeé-te rabanu,
 dakeé-te cilandru,
 dakeé-te tnana kue'e,
 dakeé-te tnana doko.

Dakeé-te itu,
 io ndidi.

Dada'u-te triu,
 io triu.
 Dada'u-te alfalfa,
 io alfalfa.

Ji'in-ro xe yuku.

Io yutnu juun nueces.
Nachii-ro nueces.

Ja'an dichi luchi,
nachii-n, señora.
Kane'e-n.

Chi kaa-n.
Ñatu diko-ro.

Kue'e n-nachii-ro.
N-chitu ndo'o-ro ne'e-ro juan ndixi nde ve'e-ro.

Va'a dichi luchi.
N-taxi-i jin kiu-ro xiti yutnu nueces.

N-kiu-ro nachii-ro.
Ntdaa-ro n-nachii nueces.

N-xini-da tnuvi'nde kuiin.

Vi'nde nani iñu-i.
Kuixi chiki.

N-xini-da yau dava kuixi, dava kuaan, dava kuii.

Uni color yau ijan.
Vili kaa yau io.

Ijan n-xexee-da subida ijan.

Ijan n-xini-da tnuyuxa io.
Io-tnu nuu io cuartel.

Lomu ijan dujun.
Jin xee-ro kunde'a-ro na io ñuu ijan.

This is one of Arturo's texts. It is one of the folktales his grandfather told him. This story was used as the text for the Syntax Sketch (Kuiper, Oram 1991). Here it has been rewritten in couplets.

The rabbit was eating the beans
Daily he went to look and see.

And he arrived.
The rabbit was there.

And he went to put up a soldier of beeswax.
And he went up put up the soldier.

And the rabbit arrived.
The rabbit arrived, talking.

"What are you doing, little one?
Why won't you talk?

Are you going to talk or not?
Or shall I give you a kick?

The rabbit gave it a kick.
It grabbed his foot.

"Why are you holding on to my foot?
Let go!

Let go of my foot!
Or shall I give you another kick?"

He kicked.
"Let go of my foot!"

"Or shall I hit you one?"
He hit it for the last time.

Quickly it grabbed his paw.

The second day the owner of the beans arrived.
"You're the one eating my beans!"

He grabbed the rabbit.
He took it going to his house.

Putting on the hot water, he put him inside a net bag.

The coyote arrived.
"What are you doing here, little one?"

"I'm getting married.
Only my woman is an important one."

"What day are you getting married?"
"Tomorrow the music will be heard."

"Get out!
Let me arrive!"

The coyote got in.
He arrived, carrying the hot water.

"What's this that's in here?"
At that time the coyote was in there.

He quickly poured the hot water down the coyote's back.
It just screamed!

Immediately it broke the strings of the net bag!
It went off crazy!

It went to look for the rabbit.
It found him.

"You deceived me!
Now I'm going to eat you!"

"Why eat me?
Over there is a sheep's head."

The coyote went.

It arrived.
It put out its mouth.

Wasps came out!
They stung it awfully!

The coyote ran away.
It arrived where the rabbit was sitting.

"You deceived me!"
"I don't know anything!"

"I have seven brothers.
I don't know anything!"

The coyote died.
The rabbit was happy.

"I've escaped!
Now let's go look for something to eat!"

A river hawk was chasing him.
There he went in under a rock.

There the snake was curled up!
It grabbed him.

The rabbit died.
Another arrived.

"Now, my brother, let me go!
You've died.

Let me wander.
If I died or escaped."

Xax conejo nduchi.
Du'a ni xe koto-s.

Te n-xee-s.
Conejo ñutuu.

Te xe'en-si jantuu-s soldado ñua ñuñu kuechi.
Te n-xe jantuu-si soldado.

Te n-xee conejo.
N-xee conejo xia'an-ti.

¿Nax kida-nu, seluchi?
¿Nu ña ja'an-nu?

¿Ja'an-nu a ña'a u?
¿A kueñi-r iin a?

N-xeñi conejo iin.
N-tni-i xe'e-ti.

¿Nuda xe'e-r tni-nu?
¡Dayaa!

¡Dayaa xe'e-r!
¿A kueñi ka-r iin a?

N-xeñi-ti.
¡Dayaa xe'e-r!

¿A kani-r iin a?
N-kani-ti iin nga.

N-tni ni-i nda'a-ti.

Kiu kuu uu n-xee sto'o nduchi.
¡Ndo'o ni xax nduchi-r!

N-tni-s conejo.
Ndeka-s-ti jua'an nde ve'e-s.

Xandodo-s nte i'ni, n-chituu-s-ti xiti ñunu.

N-xee ñaña.
¿Nax kida-n-ya u, seluchi?

Tnunda'a-r.
Diko xa xa'nu ñadi'i-r.

¿Nde kiu tnunda'a-n a?
Tnee kunini xa kande.

¡Ta kane!

to next page

¡Na xee mee-r!

N-keé ñaña.

N-xee-s, ne'e-s nte i'ni.

¿Nax kuu xa ñutuu ya?

Daa ñaña ñutuu.

N-xodo ni-s nte i'ni yata ñaña.

¡Menga xa kana xiin-ti!

¡Vitna vitna n-xa'nde-ti yo'o ñunu!

¡Juan loko-ti!

N-xe nunduku-ti conejo.

N-naniña'a-ti.

¡Ndo'o n-danda'u ña'a!

¡Vitna kuu xa kaxi a'an-r!

¿Nax kuu xa kaxi a'an-n?

Chi ijan katuu diki tkachi.

Jua'an ñaña.

N-xee-ti.

N-dajin yu'u-ti.

¡N-ka nuu ni yoko!

¡Loko n-ka tuu ña'a-ti!

N-kendava ñaña.

N-xee-ti nuu nukoo conejo.

¡Ndo'o n-danda'u ña'a!

¡Ña xini-da!

Uxa ñani-da io.

¡Ña xini-da!

N-xi'i ñaña.

Kuvete conejo.

¡N-kaku-r!

¡Na jin nduku-ro xa kaa-ro!

Chido ndijun ña'a ñau yute.

Ijan juan ndiu-ti ka yuu.

¡Ijan yuku koo!

N-tnii ña'a-ti.

N-xi'i conejo.

N-xee ka-ti.

Vitna, ñani-r, na ji'in-r.
N-xi'i-n.

Na kuiko nuu-r.
Nu n-xi'i-r a n-kaku-r.

Would Arturo's first-person stories of life in Mexico City, far away from the village, come out in couplets as the folktales did? Yes, they would, as can be seen from the following text.

*

N-xita-da metro Ñuko'yo.
N-xee-da Chapultepec.

N-tnii-da metro.
N-xee-da Merced.

N-xiko suku metro juan ndixi Chapultepec.
N-kachi ini-da xa naxee-i nde Taxqueña.

Tnii na'i ni suku-da metro.
Ndi'i centau-da.

N-xee-da ijan ni Merced.
N-kee-da metro.

Ijan nane-da.
Vitna kuu xa kaka vichi xe'e-da.

Te ña xini-da.

Ijan juan nu'u-da Chapultepec,
juan nu'u-da xika vichi xe'e-da.
N-xiau-da.

Ijan n-xiko-da, nu'u-da nuu xo tuu ku'a-da.

Daa ijan katuu nuu veka'nu kidava'a-s.
Daa ijan nukoo iin se ñuu-da, ndee-s ve'e.

N-kana ña'a-s.
Daa ijan n-nanitna'a-da xi'in-s.

Ijan n-xijan nuu-da iin pexu.
N-tnii-da iin camión, iin camión tnii oko uxi.

Ijan n-keé-da.
Ijan n-kidi-da.

Te ndeka ña'a-i xika.
¡Juneña'a-i vaxi Xochimilco!

put
English
first

Kue'e n-xika vichi xe'e-da ndixi.
N-xiau-da.

Ijan n-tnii-da iin transvia.

Ijan juneña'a-i nuu tuu primu-da.
Ijan n-naxee-da nde nuu tuu-si.

Ijan daa xia'an-da xa n-xita-da.

Ijan ja'an-s,

¡Ja'an-r-nu xa kane'e-n centau ji'in!

¡Aru ne'e jua'an!

¿Nada ne'e-n jua'an?

¡O'on pexu!

¿Nu ne'e-n jua'an,

te nu n-xita-nu?

Uni huelta n-tnii-r metro.

N-tnii-r metro.

¡Xijan kuu xa ndi'i centau-r!

* I got lost on the subway in Mexico City.
I arrived at Chapultepec.

I took the subway.

I arrived at Merced.

The train turned around, returning to Chapultepec.

I thought it would arrive at Tasqueña.

I kept on getting on the subway again.

My money was used up.

I arrived no farther than Merced.

I left the subway.

There I came out.

Now it was that I would have to walk.

And I didn't know, [where or how].

From there I went back to Chapultepec.

I went back walking.

I was tired.

There I turned around, going back to where my sister was living.

At that time there was a huge complex they were building.

to next
page

At that time there was sitting a man from my town guarding the building.

He called to me.

At that time there I met him.

There I asked for the loan of a peso.

I took a bus, a bus that costs 30 centavos.

There I got on.

There I fell asleep.

And it took me a long way.

It was taking me to Xochimilco!

I walked a long way going back.

I was tired.

There I took a trolleycar.

There it was taking me to where my cousin lives.

There I arrived even where he lives.

There that day I told him that I had gotten lost.

There he said,

"I've told you to take money when you go!"

"I did take money when I went!"

"How much did you take?"

"Five pesos!"

"If you took money,

how come you got lost?"

"Three times I took the subway.

I took the subway.

For that reason my money was used up!"

This is a story by an entirely different speaker. As we were chatting one day, I wrote down what she was saying.

Friday was the Calenda Procession.

The sponsors went in procession in the afternoon.

There were fire-bulls.

They went off at 4 o'clock Saturday morning.

There was the Calenda Mass.

It took place at 12 o'clock noon.

There were vespers,

to next page

and church was over.

And there was the parade of the Moros.
They were dancing.

There were five clowns.

And at 5 o'clock in the morning the tower of fireworks went off.
And eight fire-bulls, two airplanes, and two dolls.

And that morning, at 7 o'clock that morning, there was Mass.

At 10 o'clock the Moros were dancing,
and many people came.
Strangers came, bringing two record players.

Monday, on that day, there was the Mass of St. Joseph.

That day they rode the bulls.
Many bulls they rode.

Tuesday they rode the bulls.
There was an awful lot of dancing of only drunks.

Wednesday, on that day, the women drank.
They sang and they danced.

And many of them danced.
The people were happy.

Already I've been home for my town's fiesta.

Now I have seen my town's fiesta.
Next year I won't be here.

I'm going to Mexico City,
neither will I see it again.
I'm going, I'm going to look for work.

Then I'll come home again, even when it's next year's
Carnival.

Yarnexi n-kuu paseu Calenda.
N-xe'en madrina paseu xañini.

N-xio ngutu ñu'u.
N-ka'ndi-ti kaa koon datne sabadu.

N-xio mixa Calenda.
Nujuiin kaa x-uu.

N-xio visper ximetvini,
te n-tu'u veñu'u.

Te n-xio desafio Moro.
Xtaxe'e-te.

N-xio o'on payasu.

Te n-kuu kaa o'on datne n-ka'ndi castillu.
Te una ngutu ñu'u, uu avión, uu muñeca.

Te datne jan, kaa uxa datne, n-xio mixa.

Kaa uxi xtaxe'e Moro,
te kue'e ñayiu n-kixi.
N-xio uu ñadi'i xtaxe'e xi'in Moro.

N-kixi teto'o,
ne'e-te uu vocina xita.

Lonexi, daa, n-xio mixa San José.

Daa n-xodo-te ngutu.
Kue'e ngutu n-xodo-te.

Martexi n-xodo-te ngutu.
Loko n-xio baile meni té xini.

Ñarkolexi, daa, n-ka xi'i ñadi'i.
N-ka xita-ña, n-ka xtaxe'e-ña.

Te kue'e-ña n-ka xtaxe'e.
N-ka kudu ini ñayiu.

Xá n-nxee-da fiesta ñuu-da.

Vitna n-xini-da fiesta ñuu-da.
Nduxi ma kutuu-da.

Ji'in-da Ñuko'yo,
ni ma jini ka-da.
Ji'in-da, jin nduku tniu-da.

Dada ndixi tuku-da nde xa kuu Carnaval nduxi.

Let's see if you can understand this one. For years I couldn't figure it out--and Amelia wouldn't tell me. Finally, I asked Beto to illustrate it. He drew a little girl who wasn't a little girl. "Amelia, she's a doll! It's a riddle, isn't it!" She twinkled all over her face. Had I originally written it out in this form, rather than as a brief paragraph, I might have seen it sooner! Note that the format is different, in that the couplets are now made up of

two antithetical clauses joined by a comma and the conjunction *te* "and". The usual antithetical conjunction is *ko* "but".

Daña kuu Celia.

Io nuu-da,
te ña ku nanda'a-da.

Io yu'u-da,
te ña ku kaxi-da.

Io nda'a-da,
te ña ku tñi-da.

Io xe'e-da,
te ña ku kaka-da.

Io idi diki-da,
te ña ku kuchi-da.

!N-xini-n xa xijan kuu-da xa kudi-da!

My name is Celia.

I have a face,
and I can't wash it.

I have a mouth,
and I can't eat.

I have hands,
and I can't grab.

I have feet,
and I can't walk.

I have hair,
and I can't wash it.

You have seen that that's the way I am that I am lazy!

5. Afterword

After I had finished drafting this paper, I returned to the Jakobson article, simply because I didn't want to leave it "unfinished", "unread". I had previously read the first 10 pages, the part that quoted Lowth on Hebrew parallelism, but I had not gone on to read the rest of the Russian part. I had missed much, as the following quotes show. This discussion seems to parallel my "intuiting" of "couplets". (Again, the underlining is mine.)

"Hightower's delineation of Chinese parallelism may be applied to Russian folk poetry as well. In both languages the distich (9) is the basic structural unit, and 'the first effect of the other varieties of parallelism is to reinforce the repeated pattern. It is on this underlying pattern or series of patterns that the more subtle forms of grammatical and phonic parallelism introduce their counterpoint, a series of stresses and strains'. The typical feature of Chinese parallelistic texts...--the occasional 'isolated single lines' which chiefly signal the beginning and end of an entire text or of its paragraphs--is likewise shared by Russian folk poetry...Hightower designates as a paragraph a larger structural unit 'which is significant both by marking stages in the development of a theme and also by determining to some extent the form of the couplets [distichs] which go to make it up.' Similar observations on pairless verses in the Finnish-Karelian runes at the beginning of songs or of their autonomous parts...In biblical poetry, particularly in the Psalms, 'single lines, or monostichs' as Driver states, 'are found but rarely, being generally used to express a thought with some emphasis at the beginning, or occasionally at the end, of a poem.'"

Yes, I finished the Jakobson article! And I gleaned some other worthwhile quotes. Let me share them with you: "...the fictitious but still indelible view of parallelism as a survival of a primevally helpless, tongue-tied means of expression (p.422). "...the myth of primitive poetry and paucity of creativeness." (p.424) "With all its intricacy, the structure of parallelistic poetry appears diaphanous as soon as it is submitted to a close linguistic analysis, both of the parallel distichs and of their relationship within a broader context." (p.425) "Rhyme has been repeatedly characterised as a condensed parallelism, but rigorous comparison of rhyme and pervasively parallelism shows that there is a fundamental difference. The PHONEMIC equivalence of rhyming words is compulsory, whereas the linguistic level of any correspondence between two paralleled terms is subject to a free choice." (p.427) "The syntactic aspect of parallelism offers 2 types of pairs: either the second line presents a pattern SIMILAR to the preceding one, or the lines complement each other as two CONTIGUOUS constituents of one grammatical construction." (p.428) "...the second line which 'in different ways supplements or completes' the first line..." (Samuel R. Driver, 1922, cited on p.427).

6. Questions

Finally, let me pose some questions:

Does Amelia "talk in poetry" as some of my colleagues say that I do? Or, because I was taking down in longhand her dictation, did she have time to "compose" it as she went

along? Often she would say, "All right, I'll tell you tomorrow." Sometimes she told me that she and her husband had thought about my request and talked about what kind of story Amelia would tell me the next day and then worked it out together. Did she compose and memorize the stories, as might happen in a culture of oral history where there is little writing? As in Arturo's grandfather's stories? Only in two of Amelia's stories were there hesitation markers--the others just "flowed". I took the stories down verbatim. I purposely didn't delete or add a thing, except commas and periods where she paused. Would the stories have been different if they had been taped? We'll never know.

Because I purposely "acted the child" and said time and time again, "Tell me a story, Amelia. Tell me about such and such," did Amelia use narrative discourse structure for all the stories--expository, procedural, and dialogue, as well as narrative?

Do Amelia and Beto have a "gift" that Gerónimo and Juan don't have? Gerónimo and Juan have always said, "We can't translate; Mom and Beto can. We'll do the other work to free them to translate." Vica can think of synonyms and is a valuable part of the team as steady support and encouragement, and is a whiz at the correct analysis of the orthography of compound words, but neither Mixtec translation nor Spanish back-translation "flow" for her as they do for Amelia and Beto. Amelia and Vica said almost together last summer as we worked on the OT Summary, "You have a knack of finding the right word, you have a grasp of Mixtec that is right. We've noticed that and mentioned it among ourselves many times." That absolutely amazes me! It's certainly not accuracy of either grammar or tone, nor even of vocabulary. It must have something to do with the "feeling" of the "poetry".

Do the Diuxi-Tilantongo Mixtec people speak in poetry because they are the descendants of the ancient Mixtec priests and kings? The famous "Eight Deer" who united much of the Mixteca Alta into a single kingdom began his rule in Tilantongo. Or were their ancestors the ones who "wrote"--drew, painted--the codices? (See Caso, Codex Nuttall, Smith, and Spores.)

7. Summary

As I said in the introduction to this paper, I wanted to get us thinking, to help us see our language data in a way we hadn't previously seen it. I wanted to put the discourse back together again.

Edith Schaeffer has written a lovely book called "Hidden Art." As I read the second chapter of that book, I thought again and again of Amelia's and Arturo's stories. (This time, the underlining is hers): "One individual

personality has definite or special talent for expressing in some medium, what other personalities can hear, see...feel...understand...find refreshment in...experience reality in...but which they could not produce themselves" (p 14). "It is not a waste of man's time to be creative. It is not a waste to pursue artistic or scientific pursuits in creativity, because this is what man was made to be able to do (p 24). "...the art which is found in the "minor" areas of life...in the "everyday" of anyone's life, rather than his career or profession (p 31). "...we have been created in the image of the Creator of beauty" (p 32). "...the possibilities all of us have of really living artistically..." (p 33).

We have pretty much gotten away from the idea of "primitive" languages--we've had to as we have analyzed them! But perhaps we still tend to think of "primitive" "uneducated" "marginal" peoples. We set up our criteria for excellence in our language associates and their potential as native authors and co-translators. In so doing we may fail to allow them the human dignity of being endowed by the Creator of us all with as much, or infinitely more, creativity than that with which we ourselves have been endowed.

Some of my colleagues have said, "You cause us to see so much that we would otherwise have missed." That's what I hope I have been able to do in this paper. Goodwin and Goodwin (cited in Tannen, p.579) have suggested that some linguistic study may be like "studying what a musician does but ignoring the MUSIC that is played." I have tried to encourage us to "listen to the music", "rejoice in the hidden art", perhaps find the "poetry" not only of Diuxi-Tilantongo Mixtec, but of all of the truly beautiful Indian languages of Mexico.

Footnotes

1) Hereafter referred to as DTM.

2) Albertha Kuiper joined the team in 1971. Her half of the Syntax Sketch was verb phrases, noun phrases, and parts of speech. Her half of the NT translation has been Matthew, Luke, Acts, Romans, Ephesians, Colossians, I and II Timothy, Titus, Philemon, and Revelation. She has also been responsible for the bilingual DTM-Spanish dictionary.

3) Arturo Martínez Cruz was 15 years old when he went with me to a 3-month literacy workshop. He was a street-wise Mexico City "slum kid" working in the City to help supplement his family's income and make enough money to get married. He was also a young man already earning his own way with his own team of oxen when he was home in San Juan Diuxi, Oaxaca, Mexico. He had had about two years of elementary school in the village and could decipher both Spanish and Mixtec. His grandfather had been one of the very few who could still remember the old folktales.

4) Amelia Martínez de Matías (no relation to Arturo) was about 35 years old when she told me her stories. She was a busy wife and mother who all her life had lived in San Juan Diuxi, Oaxaca. Occasionally over the years she had worked for a month or two in Mexico City to supplement the family income. She spoke Mixtec as her first language and some Spanish as a second language. She had never had an opportunity to go to school. Morning by morning she patiently taught me her language. Later, she became a co-translator of the DTM New Testament. Amelia now reads both Mixtec and Spanish.

5) The concordance was prepared by computer in 1968 at the University of Oklahoma Research Institute, supported by Grant GS-270 of the National Science Foundation.

6) Jakobson quotes Lowth who "laid down the foundations of systematic inquiry into the verbal texture of ancient Hebrew poetry, and adopted the term 'parallelism' for poetics". "The structure of parallelism which underlies biblical and Ugaritic poetry requires a rigorous linguistic analysis, and the seemingly infinite variety of extant parallels must yield to a precise and comprehensive typology." ~~Lowth's bold yet premature effort demands to be resumed on a new level.~~

7) Jim Meyer teaches English at Gordon College, taught English and French for five years in Zaire, is acquainted with Spanish, German, classical Greek, and Swahili, teaches linguistics at SILND, and had come to hold writers' workshops for SIL Mexico Branch members. Alice Beebe has studied New Testament Greek, Spanish, and Popoloca, headed up the computer department in Mexico, and often writes rhyming skits. Both of them are competent to recognize poetry when they see it.

8) I have studied Latin, French, New Testament Greek, Spanish, and Mixtec, occasionally write "poems", and read incessantly. Some of my SIL colleagues say that I "talk in poetry". Over the years folks have commented on the letters I wrote home about life in the village of San Juan Diuxi, Oaxaca, where I lived off and on from 1966 until 1980. People say "your letters and your oral reports are 'pictures', that make us 'see' where you have been and what you have experienced." From the beginning, our program has been very much a "displaced" language project. I learned Mixtec by reading and re-reading, analyzing and re-analyzing, pondering and re-pondering Amelia's 80 stories and Arturo's 35 stories, and by working with Amelia, her husband Gerónimo, their youngest daughter Vica, and their youngest son Beto on the translation of our half of the DTM New Testament. Relatively little of my study of DTM has been through paradigmatic analysis and elicitation procedures. Even my half of the Syntax Sketch was basic sentences, other phrases, intersentential relations, and the text. I don't have a theory-oriented mind. I do linguistics the way I knit a sweater or bake a cake--I take a "recipe" and "make variations on a theme". I am only "opening a door" that I hope will affect not only our

continuing study of Mixtec languages but perhaps other Mexican Indian languages as well.

9) Distich - "A couplet; a couple of verses or poetic lines making complete sense." (The New Webster Encyclopedic Dictionary of the English Language. 1952).

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add Delly?

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add Pike + Oram
add Schram

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Appendix: A Short Description of DTM

Diuxi-Tilantongo Mixtec is spoken by about 5,000 people living in and around two municipal centers, San Juan Diuxi and Santiago Tilantongo, in the District of Nochixtlán, Oaxaca, Mexico. Large colonies of speakers of this language are found also in Mexico City, the city of Puebla, and Oaxaca City.

Primary schools have been in the area for perhaps five decades, and secondary schools for perhaps fifteen years. Many of the men and some of the women have a working knowledge of Spanish. Among themselves, however, they speak Mixtec by preference, and children continue to learn Mixtec.

Diuxi-Tilantongo Mixtec has the following segmental phonological units: voiceless stops and affricate t ch k kw, voiced stops d g (only after n), voiceless fricatives s sh x xw, voiced fricatives v (bilabial) ~~ɣ~~ y, nasals m n ñ, liquids l r, laryngeal h (glottal stop), oral vowels i e ĩ a u o, and nasalized vowels in en (rare) in an un on.

Two analyses have been proposed for the tone system of this language, one by Pike and Oram (1976), and one by Daly (1978).

Completive aspect is written as n followed by a hyphen. Following this proclitic, a number of consonants undergo phonological changes. Voiceless consonants except t and ch become voiced; sh, which is often somewhat retroflexed, becomes a voiced retroflexed alveopalatal affricate; x and xw become g and gw; and y, which is a voiced alveopalatal fricative, becomes a voiced alveopalatal affricate.

Postclitic pronouns are preceded by a hyphen. In a handful of compound words glottal stop is represented by a hyphen.

The orthography developed by SIL for the Diuxi-Tilantongo area has been used in the examples in this paper.

How do you "find" the couplets in DTM?

In July and August 1995, I wrote out Amelia's 80 texts and Arturo's 35 texts in couplet form, but I still couldn't explain what I was doing; I was still "intuiting". In December 1995, I reread this paper and Tom Willett and I chatted briefly about how to publish it. That night I kept "hearing" a phrase from the Jakobson's article: "Words or phrases answering to one another." And again, Driver's comment, cited by Jakobson: "The second line which 'in different ways supplements or completes' the first." Suddenly, I "saw" it!

1) Assume the first 2 sentences of the text are a couplet.

a) The first line is not a complete sentence? Then assume it is a title.

b) The first sentence doesn't "fit" with the second? Let it stand alone.

2) Do the 2nd and 3rd sentences seem to "fit together" in some way? ~~That~~ That is the 1st couplet. Proceed, marking the couplets of 2 sentences, until you find a sentence that seems to stand alone. Go on to the next 2 sentences.

3) In this kind of poetry, you won't find 2 "single" sentences "together". That is, a sentence that "stands alone" will mark the end of a paragraph or the beginning of a paragraph, but there will not be a single sentence to end one paragraph followed by a single sentence to begin another paragraph.

4) You may not find any "single" sentences at all.

What are the "clues" that 2 sentences "fit together" as a "couplet"?

1) same subject

2) same event

3) a main participant and a peripheral participant

4) a main event and something added to it

5) a dialogue, in which one speaker comments and the other speaker responds

6) In the case of a dialogue couplet, the next couplet, or the next several couplets, may be the continued response of the second speaker.

7) same temporal marker

8) same locative marker

9) repetition of initial conjunction

10) same "type of thing" is spoken of in both parts of the couplet

11) additional description

12) synonymous

13) antithetic

Let's look at some examples:

to next page

1) Same subject

n/kana-ia do diki
COM/call DEI direction head

The holy one called from the mountain.

n/kana-ia do nina.
COM/call DEI direction ?

The holy one called from the valley.

2) Same event

xween ro ñii.
POT-buy we-IN salt

We'll buy salt.

xween ro iin arua yahu ohon kandodo koon.
POT-buy we-IN one measure CON-be-worth

ohon kandodo koon.
five CON-lie-on-top-of four [or] five POT-carry four

We'll buy a measure costing \$5.50.

3) Main participant and a peripheral participant

The rabbit and the coyote are the main participants; we have no idea who "he" is, he is only a pronoun without an antecedent.

shash konexo nduchi
CON:eat rabbit bean

The rabbit was eating the beans.

duha ni she koto-s.
thus LIM CON:go POT:examine-he-MS

Daily he (the man) went to look and see.

4) Main event and something added to it

All of the activities in the 2nd sentence are peripheral to the tasks of grinding the corn and preparing the meal for her family, which are the main concerns of the text.

kadavaha da ndeyu, na kashdehñu dahya da.
 POT-make I-RES ~~dinner~~ ^{stew}, HORT POT-eat-dinner child my-RES

I will prepare the stew, so that my children will eat dinner.

te naxini da trasti, te natihu da vehe da, kushina
 and POT-wash I-RES dish my-RES and POT-sweep I-RES house

da, te xihin da xin nukate da dahma
 my-RES and POT-go I-RES POT-~~go~~ POT-wash I-RES cloth

dahya da.
 child my-RES

again-place

And I will wash my dishes, and sweep my house [and] my kitchen, and I'll go, I'll go wash my children's clothes.

te kuu despasianu shtashehe.
 he-WS CON-be Despaciano CON-dance

The one who is Despaciano was dancing.

sha kaa uu n/kida machari soldado te.
 already metal two COM/do march soldier his-WS

Already at 2 o'clock his soldiers had marched in.

5) Dialogue--one speaker comments and the other responds

aru nehe xwahan.
 I CON-carry COM-go

"I did take money when I went!"

nada nehe/n xwahan.
 how-much CON-carry/you-FAM COM-go

"How much did you take?"

6) Dialogue--the next couplet may be the continued response of the second speaker

ndoho n/dandahu ñaha.
 you COM/deceive KNO

"You deceived me!"

ña shini da.
 NEG CON-see I-RES

"I don't know [anything].

usha ñani da io.
seven brother-ME my-RES CON-exist

I have seven brothers.

ña shini da.
NEG CON-see I-RES

I don't know [anything]."

7) Same temporal marker

daa ixan katuu nuu vekahnu
that-time over-there CON-lie-be face house-big-SG

kidavaha/s.
CON-make/he-MS

At that time they were building a huge complex there.
~~building-~~

daa ixan nukoo ñin se ñuu da
that-time over-there CON-sit one he-MS town my-RES

ndee/s vehe.
CON-strong/he-MS house

At that time a man from my town was sitting there
guarding the building.

8) Same locative marker

ixan n/kee da.
over-there COM-enter I-RES

There I got on.

ixan n-kidi da.
over-there COM/sleep I-RES

There I fell asleep.

9) Repetition of initial conjunction

te ñin vehe i io ranchu buena vista
and one house UN CON-exist ranch Buena Vista

And one of their houses is at Buena Vista ranch.

te iin vehe i tuu cuesta borrachu yuñuu tdaa.
and one house-UN CON-exist hill drunk mouth-town Tidaa

And one of their houses is at Drunk's Hill at the edge of Tidaa.

10) Same "type of thing"

xween ro iin kilo ñii sha uni diko ushi sentau.
POT-buy we-IN one kilo salt CMP three twenty ten centavo

We'll buy a kilo of salt for 70 centavos.

xween ro iin kilo ashuka sha uu peshu ushi sentau.
POT-buy we-IN one kilo sugar CMP two peso ten centavo

We'll buy a kilo of sugar for 2 pesos 10 centavos.

11) Additional description

xween ro iin litru tnana doko.
POT-buy we-IN one liter tomato husk

We'll buy a liter of tomatillos.

yahu ti ushi tvini.
CON-be-worth it-SPH ten money

They cost ~~\$1.25~~ *\$2.50 [per kilo]*.

12) Synonymous

n-she nukwido ñaha ushi diablito.
COM-go POT-carry-again-place KNO ten devil

Ten little devils arrived to carry him away.

n-she kushi ñaha i.
COM-go POT-bury KNO UN

They arrived to bury him.

13) Antithetical

xwan ndishi i chapultepek.
COM-go POT-return UN Chapultepec

The [train] turned around, returning to Chapultepec.

n-kachi ini da sha nashee i nde taskeña.
COM-say insides I-RES CMP POT-return UN until Tasqueña

I thought it would arrive at Tasqueña.

io shehe da, te ña ku kaka da.

CON-exist foot me-RÉS, and NEG CON-be-able POT-walk

I have feet, and I can't walk.

Note that these "couplets" do not appear to be the same as the "doublets" described by Judith L. Schram (1979). I find a comment made in the abstract of that article very interesting. "Of special interest also is the analysis in Section 3 of the doublet construction, a special type of construction which may be more widespread in languages than might appear at first. In Mazatec, doublets may have descriptive, contrastive, or dramatic functions."

*These 2 papers are dedicated to:
 Ken + Evelyn Pike, the first SIL linguists
 to study Mixtec
 Eunice Pike, my first consultant.*

Afterword

In May 1997 I saw a copy of Dell Hymes' book "In vain I tried to tell you": Essays in Native American Ethnopoetics in our SIL library. It was just being accessioned - I was the first to read it. Yet again, let me share some quotes with you:

"There is linguistics in this book, and that will put some people off. 'Too technical,' they will say. Perhaps such people would be amused to know that many linguists will not regard the work as linguistics. 'Not theoretical,' they will say, meaning not part of a certain school of grammar. And many folklorists and anthropologists are likely to say, 'too linguistic' and 'too literary' both, whereas professors of literature are likely to say, 'anthropological' or 'folklore,' not 'literature at all... And if linguistics is the study of language, not grammar alone, then the study of these materials adds to what is known about language. The joy, the understanding, the language are all of a piece. They come together, because they were put together by the people who made the texts (p 5). 'When things were said or sung within the native culture, explicit analysis -- a detailed meta-language for dealing with form--was not needed. Performer and audience shared an implicit knowledge of language and ways of speaking. For us, there is no alternative to explicit analysis. As with the grammar of these languages, so with the verbal art: underlying relationships, taken for granted by their users, must be brought to light by conscious effort. Once brought to light, they can enable us to understand the creativity and cogency of the discourse in which they occur" (p 6). "It is strange that there has been so little explicit analysis of Native American verbal art. But then it is perhaps also strange that so little of it has been preserved. Native Americans themselves, by and large, had no precedent for maintaining verbal tradition other than through oral learning by successive generations. Conquest, disruption, conversion, schooling, decimation eliminated most such learning" (p 6). "In vain I tried to tell you" indeed, when editing censors structure. Fortunately, many of the published texts are faithful enough for their character as verse to be discovered.... Mostly what is required is to "listen" to the text in all its details. The work is structural in method, poetic in purpose.... Something of the creative imagination... can be seen (p7). "...genuine 'works,' aesthetic accomplishments, literature..." (p 8). "...to be carrying over into English the architecture of Chinookan myth..." (p 12). "...growing up on a reservation in the midst of a shattered way of life" (p 13). "...who was dead before I was four, yet whom through years with her texts I seem to have come to know... I think it is a kind of death for words such as hers to lie unread, even out of print, their form and the meanings dependent on their form, unrecognized... without attention to linguistic detail the

life of the texts will be lost..." (p 14). "Discovery of verse and line...the initial elements of sentences. The formulaic elements of Slavic, Greek, and other oral poeties occur within, manifest and adapt to, verse that is regulated by another principle. In Chinookan and, I suspect, in American Indian oral narrative generally, the recurrent initial elements represent the regulatory principle itself. They are aspects of the measuring which makes the material verse. I use the term measure because the material does not consistently exhibit either phonological regulation of lines (syntactic parallelism and framing). One or both of these properties is usually expected when one speaks of meter. To be sure, lines usually contain or consist of a verb, and a segmentation of narratives in accordance with the principle of one verb, one line, would go far toward approximating the true pattern. Not lines, but what are here called 'verses,' however, appear to be the pivotal unit. And verses are recognized, not by counting parts, but by recognizing repetition within a frame, the relation of putative units to each other within a whole. Covariation between form and meaning, between units and a recurrent Chinookan pattern of narrative organization, is the key...The recurrent initial particles that have annoyed to many linguists, ethnographers, and readers by their monotony--'Now,' 'Then,' 'Now then,' 'Now again,' and the like--turn out to be far from the tedious trivia of primitive minds. They are marks of measure. When a text...is segmented according to the initial occurrence of a standard particle pair 'Now then,' the greater part of the poetic organization of the narrative becomes apparent at once. The initial particle defines a verse. The verses, so defined, are grouped in sets of three and five ('stanzas'). Within the verses, verbs signal lines...The overall pattern enables one to recognize a small set of substitutable initial elements which, once recognized, have clear expressive roles (e.g., 'Now again' instead of 'Now then' within a sequence of actions; 'Indeed' to highlight a climatic point) (p 318). The discovery of such patterning was a surprise to me (and a delight). I had worked with the Chinookan materials for almost twenty years without appreciating its presence. That initial elements of certain kinds were significant markers of organization, yes (Hymes 1958, but not the pervasive structuring of narratives to the level of verses. Once discovered, the patterning does not seem surprising, in Chinookan or elsewhere. We know the languages to be marvels of intricate coordination of form and meaning. Why should the narrative use of the languages be less? And in a literature exclusively realized in oral performance, what better peg on which to hang signals of measure than initial elements?...With patience a consistent pattern always emerges." (p319) "The discovery of such pattern is not mechanical, and it is not arbitrary...While certain elements regularly serve to mark verses, this role is dependent upon the organization of the whole. The particle 'now' may occur within lines in its

purely lexical role. A mechanical segmentation of a text in terms of the occurrences of "Now" would distort the narrative pattern" (p 320). "The principle...is flexible in keeping with specific narrative situations, but inescapable" (p 320). "At each level at which the pattern applies, it segments and organizes the material without discontinuity, without leftovers. Experience with the texts simply makes it seem the mold into which narration flows. Time and again, a point at which the organization was not clear has been clarified by viewing the material in terms of this pattern. And analyses that went forward without regard to the pattern have turned out to embody it" (p.320). "I should like to discuss a discovery which may have widespread relevance. The narratives of the Chinookan peoples of Oregon and Washington can be shown to be organized in terms of lines, verses, stanzas, scenes, and what one may call acts. A set of discourse features differentiates narratives into verses. Within these verses, lines are differentiated, commonly by distinct verbs. (Sometimes items in a catalog, expressions in a song, and the like serve to differentiate lines.) The verses themselves are grouped, commonly in threes and fives. These groupings constitute "stanzas" and, where elaboration of stanzas is such as to require a distinction, "scenes." In extended narratives, scenes themselves are organized in terms of a series of "acts" (p 309).

(4)

Tedlock - 11 July 97 - thanks to Dale Savage
Finding the Center, Narrative Poetry of the Zuni Indians.
Translated by Dennis Tedlock. From Performances in the Zuni
by Andrew Peynetsa and Walter Sanchez. 1972. 298 pp.

From Appreciation by Jerome Rothenberg, San Diego, February
1971.

"For what Tedlock has done here is to reveal as poetry what other men had confused with prose--confused, I mean, in spite of the premonition many of them had that something more than prose was going on here. His revelation (once he's come to it) is very direct and simple, the single act that culminates a long series of events that seem now to have been always moving in this direction." (xi)

"It would have been (had in fact started out to be) a collection of prose tales as translations from the spoken narratives of Andrew Peynetsa and other Zuni story-tellers. Nothing more likely in a world where men speak "prose" and sing "poetry"--or so even the best minds of our generation would more or less have told us...page after page of prose--undifferentiated like most prose except for paragraph indentations and bits of punctuation...all of which would have implied that the narrator's art was almost wholly in the structure of events, the "plot"..." (xi, xii)

"Tedlock is the first one doing what he does who hears and makes us hear the silence--and there, just there, is the simple action that turns everything around...once he's let us hear them--it's no longer possible ever not to hear them. Not just in these poems of Peynetsa's, but through the whole body of tribal narratives previously gathered and translated as prose. It's a fantastic proposition, isn't it, that the fundamental language of man (at least of the man who hasn't come to writing) isn't prose at all, but, in the way it turns upon its silences, is something more like voice. Which has a lot to say about where poetry came from at the start, and where it continues to emerge--in each of us." (xii)

"Tedlock is an anthropologist who becomes a poet...to become the poetic voice of the people he translated, but also a voice the rest of us can hear." (xii, xiv)

"Their language is unrelated to those spoken by the other Pueblos, and in fact has no clear relationship with any other American Indian language." (xv)

"I was first led to consider the possibility that Zuni narratives might be poetry by Edmonson's discovery that the Popol Vuh, which had always been treated as prose by translators, was composed entirely of complete." (xviii)
Munro S. Edmonson, trans., The Book of Counsel: The Popol Vuh of the Quiche Maya of Guatemala, Publications of the

Middle American Research Institute of Tulane University, 35 (1971). Dell Hymes has also used semantic structure to break text into lines, as in "Some North Pacific Coast Poems: a Problem in Anthropological Philology," *American Anthropologist*, 67 (1965), 316-341. (xxdii) "But my search for a similar structure in Zuni stories did not uncover anything which would justify a completed format." (xix)

"The intensive listening involved...greatly improved my knowledge of the Zuni language..." (xix)

"The results of this effort have convinced me that prose has no real existence outside the written page. Narratives of the kind presented here have been labeled and presented as "oral prose" for no better reason than that they are not sung or (in most passages) chanted." (xix)

"Zuni lines vary constantly in length, ranging from one syllable to more than seventy...The loudness of Zuni narration ranges from just short of a shout to just short of a whisper." (xx) Tedlock then speaks of line-final stress, and the pitch of the chanting as the criteria for marking off lines. Just as he did not find the couplets of Maya to be applicable to Zuni, so I do not find line-final stress and the pitch of chanting to be applicable to DTM. He also presented "the special manipulations of voice quality (or tone of voice)" and "imitations of the voices of the story characters", "as would be indicated in the script for a play." (xxiv) Again, I have not found these in DTM. Later he speaks of meaning as an appropriate guide to the arrangement of the translation. For me in DTM, meaning and the use of 13 grammatical signals mark off the "lines answering to one another" which then mark off the couplets. So while Tedlock's presentation of the Zuni poetry may appear to be similar to mine for DTM, the basis for that presentation is not the same.

Tedlock's comments on Zuni audience participation and repetition (xxv, xxvi) are fascinating. Then he adds, "Even when repeated lines are not accidental they are usually removed from written presentations. But repetition is a common feature of oral discourse, whether formal or informal, in any language, and its elimination in writing is self-conscious and artificial." (xxvi)

"Zuni narratives contain many words, usages, and phrases which would be absent in completely neutral everyday speech, including the formulaic frames...esoteric terms borrowed from ritual language, highly formal greeting exchanges, and archaic interjections." (xxvii) The very interesting discussion of how to translate these continues to xxxc.

"The Boy and the Deer"

"The Hopis and the Famine"

Have You Ever Thought of Poetry?:
Couplets in Diuxi Tilantongo Mixtec

Joy Oram

1. Introduction

The purpose of this paper is to open some doors, to stimulate my colleagues to think about the language data they have gathered in a new way. For this reason I will not take apart discourses in Diuxi-Tilantongo Mixtec (DTM)<1> to analyze their components. Much of this type of analysis has been done in Kuiper and Oram (1991). Rather, I will put discourses back together again by showing how they can be organized in the form of couplets, in the same way that Robert Lowth introduced the concept of Hebrew parallelism in 1778. His was a preliminary attempt, as Jakobson (1966:400-401) noted:

The structure of parallelism which underlies biblical and Ugaritic poetry requires a rigorous linguistic analysis, and the seemingly infinite variety of extant parallels must yield to a precise and comprehensive typology. Lowth's bold yet premature effort demands to be resumed on a new level."

Thus this is a preliminary attempt to look at Mixtec discourse as poetry. I do not propose a new level of Mixtec discourse between sentence and paragraph, although I believe the evidence presented here points in that direction. My purpose is to encourage others to begin looking at other Mixtec languages, and perhaps other Mexican languages, in this same way.

In section 2 I sketch the background of the present study, and in section 3, I develop it further using some quotes gleaned from my reading. Then, in section 4 I show how I arrange Mixtec texts in the form of poetry, and in section 5 I explain the principles I used to organize them that way. Finally, in section 6 I pose some questions, and in section 7 I draw some conclusions.

2. Background

For many years I wondered why the Mixtec discourses I had gathered didn't seem into fit anyone else's mold. At workshops for the preparation of native-authored literature and reading primers, the consultants would say of the stories that DTM speakers produced, "Get him to add to it, to re-think it. It doesn't make sense; it doesn't say anything." At other times literacy and linguistic consultants would say, "Where are all the conjunctions? This doesn't read like Mixtec." And I would intuitively react, "Don't change it! It's all there. _We_ just don't understand it." I understood what the consultants were saying and why they were saying it. I had read most of the same articles on Mixtec and native-authored materials that they had. But DTM just didn't seem to follow the same rules as other languages.

Once a Mixtec speaker of another dialect said he was totally disgusted with our transition primer. Arturo<2> had made up many of the very short introductory stories, where he could only use certain letters. The consultants had suggested he write them for someone at home, so he wrote them for his little sister. For the longer stories I had used Arturo's folktales, accompanied by his own illustrations, and some of Amelia's<3> stories. But this other Mixtec speaker, who already knew how to read and write both Spanish and his own language, wanted desperately to leave the old ways and the poverty he associated with them. So he wanted books that would tell him how to get ahead, which wasn't the purpose of our transition primer. He saw the language as a "conduit...a neutral vehicle for conveying information. Any use of language that does not convey

in Tannen 1987:585).

Another time I asked Arturo if he was leaving out parts of the stories or if he were purposely using double entendre. He replied, "No, Joy. I wouldn't do that to you." His response reminded me of what Tannen (1982:575) had said:

Audience participation in sense-making is _required_ by ellipsis and indirectness;...by imagery and detail;...by dialog;...and by figures of thought and tropes which operate on meaning,...such as metaphor and irony. All these are ways of communicating more than, or other than, what is denoted by the literal meaning; when responding to detail, imagery, or dialog; when interpreting a simile, proverb, or metaphor--in all these, the _audience_ has to fill in, has to work to make meaning. (emphasis mine)

I thought about some of Arturo's and Amelia's stories that had been very difficult to analyze--such as "The Metro," "The Woman in Jail," "Moro Dancers," and "The Sun and Moon" cited in section 4--and asked myself why. When Amelia and her daughter helped me translate portions of Isaiah and Jeremiah from the Old Testament, I assumed they would be very difficult to render in Mixtec, but they weren't. We waltzed through them! And when we translated the New Testament, which books did the committee reviewing them especially enjoy? I and II Peter! "He speaks so plainly," they commented. "He uses such vivid word pictures."

When I asked a group of non-linguist friends to read through the English translations of Amelia's stories, they enjoyed "meeting" my friend through them, but many felt that the stories sounded like "primitive people from a primitive culture speaking a primitive language." Others felt they seemed almost like Dick and Jane stories, as if they were written in primerese. I asked myself why they reacted that way when I didn't. Why did I see Arturo as the keeper of the treasure of the old folktales and Amelia as a wonderful teacher and gifted storyteller, a real wordsmith, but no one else say them this way? Again Tannen (1982:579) helped me:

Gumperz et al. (1982) find the use of reduplication strategies to be a source of _miscommunication_ when [Asian] Indians speak English to British interlocutors. Reduplication results in expressions that sound odd to British ears ('I just make sure to eat slowly and slowly', 49). More disastrously, Indian English speakers' repetition of key words, phrases, and ideas to establish 'thematic continuity' is perceived as redundant and pointless by British interlocutors, who consequently may interrupt Indian interlocutors before they make their point.

The same thing seemed to happen with Amelia's and Arturo's stories. Non-Mixtecs simply don't say things that way. As Lynn Anderson (1993:38), using a double pun, puts it in the title of her paper, "You Can Say That Again: Repetition in Alacatlalzala Mixtec."

In 1967 I put together the stories Amelia had used to teach me DTM and the other text material I had gathered into a 100-page corpus for a concordance project.<4> In 1970 I wrote up an analysis of these text with the help of Robert Longacre (Oram 1970). Up to this point I was looking at them as prose.

Then in 1975 I attended a discourse workshop led by Longacre and Terry Todd. There I reread Amelia's and Arturo's stories, but this time they struck me as better organized as poetry, using parallelisms like those used in Biblical Hebrew. So I rewrote Amelia's stories in this form instead of in prose paragraphs. Each cluster of two sentences I called a 'couplet'.

This term was not without precedent. For many years people had spoken of Mixtec couplets, meaning the clusters of two syllables (CVCV.

term in the larger context of discourse where the couplets, instead of single sentences, seemed to be the major building blocks of which paragraphs were made. That is, texts either began with a single sentence or a couplet of two sentences, then continued on mostly in couplets. Occasionally there would be a single sentence that would open a new paragraph, and in a few cases a single sentence seemed to close a paragraph. Only rarely did a text have a title. Temporal and locative words and phrases, conjunctions, repetitions of words and phrases, and paraphrases of clauses and sentences gave the clues as to which sentences were couplets, but at this point I was still identifying couplets more by intuition than by rule.

In 1982 I looked over the DTM texts and again began to think about couplets. This time, as I wrote out all of Amelia's and Arturo's stories as series of couplets, I found that they made much more sense to me. Then, in 1989, Amelia and I looked at a text from a different variety of Mixtec. We found it hard to understand in prose form, and since we couldn't question the deceased author, we tried rewriting it in couplet form. Within five minutes we easily understood the part of the story that neither of us had understood before. Judging from Amelia's native-speaker reaction, I realized we were onto something significant.

In 1994 I participated in a general writer's workshop. I asked the other participants to look at my English translations of Amelia's stories, explaining how frustrated I had become that, to most of those who had read them previously, Amelia had come across as a poor, backward Indian instead of the remarkable teacher and writer I knew her to be. Two of my friends simultaneously replied, "Have you ever thought of poetry?" One of these is an English professor who is also well versed in the literature of other languages. The other had studied several languages and often skit scripts in rhyme. Their reaction confirmed my suspicions that DTM texts were better viewed as poetry.<5>

3. Relevant quotes.

This view of DTM discourse is supported in the literature. I identified with the quotes given below from Sommers and from Brannon and Knoblauch when our writing instructor told us that responding to students' writing is by far the most difficult part of his job as a university English professor. I suggest that it may well be the most difficult part of our job as linguists, namely to encourage native authors to share their language, thoughts, and creativity with us non-native speakers. Perhaps we should take the following remarks as a warning. It is possible to lose a great deal of insight into the language we are studying by making our data conform to our preconceived notions. It may even be possible to destroy a native author's creativity by our insensitivity to their language, not ours.

In the following quotes, I view myself as taking the place of the teacher or reader, and I view Mixtec speakers as taking the place of the student or apprentice (all emphasis is mine):

...the student is creating (Sommers 1982:153).

...the author's right to make statements in exactly the way they are made in order to say exactly what the writer wishes to say (Brannon and Knoblauch 1982:157).

...how arbitrary and idiosyncratic most of our teachers' comments are.... [T]he teacher appropriates the text from the student by confusing the student's purpose in writing the text with her own purpose in commenting (Sommers 1982:49).

Thus, we read student texts with biases about what the writer should have said or about what he or she should have written, and

1982:154)

...the _reader_ assumes primary control of the choices that writers make, feeling perfectly free to 'correct' those choices any time an apprentice deviates from the teacher-reader's conception of what the developing text 'ought' to look like or 'ought' to be doing (Brannon and Knoblauch 1982:158).

Next consider these quotes from Tannen (1987) regarding repetition (again, all emphasis is mine):

Repetition is a resource by which speakers _create_ a discourse.... Repeating a word, phrase, or longer syntactic unit--exactly or with variation--results in a rhythmic pattern which sweeps the hearer or reader along (p. 574).

'The form of repetition and variation, of constants and contrasts, in verbal organization' is no less than an _definition_ of structure itself (p. 579, citing Dell Hymes).

[Repetition yields] more language more fluently (p. 581).

By focusing on parallelisms and similarities in pairs of lines, one is led to pay more attention to every similarity and every difference (p. 583, citing Roman Jakobson and Krystyna Pomorska).

Instances of repetition may be placed along a scale of fixity in form...

exact: the same words in a similar rhythmic pattern
repetition with variation:

questions transformed into statements
statements transformed into questions
change of person
change of tense
other changes in wording

paraphrase: similar ideas in different words

patterned rhythm: wholly different words, but same
syntactic or rhythmic paradigm

temporal scale:

immediate repetition
delayed repetition

The question of where the latter end of the scale is situated raises the question of how distant--in time, when speaking, or in space, when writing--a second utterance may be, and yet be seen as repetition.... Finally, repetitions may be classified according to their functions (p. 586).

Now consider these quotes pertaining to couplets (emphasis all mine):

He could neither account for nor appreciate her linguistic ability, until he gave up the disciplinary linguistic focus on the _sentence_ as the _limit_, descriptor, and determiner of language (Ron Scollon, cited in Tannen 1987:579).

Words or phrases answering one to another (Robert Lowth, cited in Jakobson 1966:399).

Sentences and parts of sentences do not occur in isolation: rather, they echo each other.... [O]ne cannot therefore understand the full meaning of any sentence without considering its relation to other sentences (Tannen 1987:601).

Now consider these quotes pertaining to poetry in general (emphasis all mine):

All language is, to a varying extent, poetic (Tannen 1987:574).

Poetry is _characterized_ by 'coupling' (Tannen 1987:579)

Repetition is an essentially poetic aspect of language (Tannen 1987:577).

Poetic language de-automatizes standard language (Tannen 1987:580).

Both syntactic and phonological parallelism in poetry (Paul Kiparsky, cited in Tannen 1987:579).

[R]epetition is devalued in everyday conversation, even as it is highly valued in literary discourse by creative writers and scholars (Tannen 1987:586).

Evidence of negative associations with repetition abound. 'You're repeating yourself' can only be heard as a criticism.... 'This makes an obstacle [of] the rhythmical character of poetry' (W.H. Auden, cited in Tannen 1987:585).

[A]ny word or clause when entering into a poem _built_ on pervasive parallelism_ is, under the constraint of this system, immediately incorporated into the tenacious array of cohesive grammatical forms and semantic values. The metaphoric image of 'orphan lines' is a contrivance of a detached onlooker to whom _the verbal art of continuous_ correspondence remains aesthetically alien. Orphan lines in _poetry of pervasive parallels_ are a contradiction in terms, since whatever the status of a line, all its structure and functions are _indissolubly interlaced_ with the near and distant verbal environment_, and the task of linguistic analysis is to disclose the levels of this coation (Roman Jakobson, cited in Tannen 1987:601).

When approaching the linguistic problem of grammatical parallelism one is irresistibly compelled to quote again and again from the pathbreaking study written [in 1859] by Gerald Manley Hopkins: 'the structure of poetry is that of continuous parallelism' (Jakobson 1966:399).

Hightower has translated two Chinese pieces from the fifth and sixth centuries which are composed in the so-called 'parallel prose'.... Aware of the necessity for discerning all the varieties of parallelism, the scholar consults the native Chinese tradition of studies in this field.... In particular he cites K/ukai's ninth-century compilation from older Chinese sources...which enumerates twenty-nine modes of parallelism (Jakobson 1966:401).

Jakobson goes on to say that Hightower himself speaks of six types of _simple_ parallelism: reiteration, synonymy, antonymy, "likes" (lexical and grammatical similitude), "unlikes" (grammatical similitude without lexical similitude, and "formal pairs" ("far-fetched linkages" in lexical semantics without grammatical similitude 1977:???)

Jakobson also quotes Lowth who "laid down the foundations of systematic inquiry into the verbal texture of ancient Hebrew poetry, and adopted the term 'parallelism' for poetics:

Of the three different sorts of Parallels [Synonymous, Antithetic, and Synthetic] every one hath its peculiar character and proper effect... It is to be observed that the several sorts of Parallels are perpetually mixed with one another, and this mixture gives a variety and beauty to the composition (Jakobson 1966:400)

Lowth also brought to notice that in biblical pairs of lines, which

parallelism equally apparent, and almost as striking, which arises from the similar form and equality of the lines, from the correspondence of the members and the construction (Jakobson 1966:401)

The following quotes from Jakobson (1966) exactly parallel my intuition about viewing Mixtec discourse as poetry.

Hightower's delineation of Chinese parallelism may be applied to Russian folk poetry as well. In both languages the distich⁷ is the basic structural unit, and "the first effect of the other varieties of parallelism is to reinforce the repeated pattern. It is on this underlying pattern or series of patterns that the more subtle forms of grammatical and phonic parallelism introduce their counterpoint, a series of stresses and strains." The typical feature of Chinese parallelistic texts...--the occasional "isolated single lines" which chiefly signal the beginning and end of an entire text or of its paragraphs--is likewise shared by Russian folk poetry... Hightower designates as a paragraph a larger structural unit "which is significant both by marking stages in the development of a theme and also by determining to some extent the form of the couplets [distichs] which go to make it up." Similar observations on pairless verses in the Finnish-Karelian runes at the beginning of songs or of their autonomous parts... In biblical poetry, particularly in the Psalms, "single lines, or monostichs" as Driver states, "are found but rarely, being generally used to express a thought with some emphasis at the beginning, or occasionally at the end of a poem" (p. 408)

Such examples could be easily multiplied and they clash with the fictitious but still indelible view of parallelism as a survival of a primeval helpless, tongue-tied means of expression (p. 422-23).

If everything has to be said twice, then the first saying must have been only have achieved and defective (p. 423, citing Johann Gottfried Herder, 1782).

...the myth of primitive poverty and paucity of creativeness (p. 424)

[T]here is abundant scope for variety (p. 424, citing Jan Gonda; cf. "scope for the imagination" in Anne of Green Gables).

Conjectural schemes of a gradual decomposition of canonical parallelism on the path from primitivism to highly developed forms are nothing but arbitrary constructs (p. 424).

With all its intricacy, the structure of parallelistic poetry appears diaphanous as soon as it is submitted to a close linguistic analysis, both of the parallel distichs and of their relationship within a broader context (p. 425).

Rhyme has been repeatedly characterized as a condensed parallelism, but rigorous comparison of rhyme and pervasive parallelism shows that there is a fundamental difference. The phonemic equivalence of rhyming words is compulsory, whereas the linguistic level of any correspondence between two paralleled terms is subject to a free choice (p. 427, author's emphasis).

...the second line which "in different ways supplements or completes" the first line (p. 427, citing Samuel R. Driver, 1922).

The syntactic aspect of parallelism offers two types of pairs: either the second line presents a pattern similar to the preceding one, or the lines complement each other as two

author's emphasis).

Dell Hymes (1981) even wrote a book about poetry in indigenous languages which he entitled *In vain I tried to tell you: Essays in Native American Ethnopoetics*.

4. Examples.

In this section I present several Mixtec texts in poetry format.<6> They are written in the practical orthography developed by S.I.L. Non-verbal words or phrases appearing on a line by themselves are in focus; they are fronted in Mixtec. Verbal phrases modifying the main verb of the sentence are further indented below them.

The first text is lovely--poetry that sings! A comment by Tannen is applicable here: "How distant...a second utterance may be, and yet be seen as repetition" (1987:586).

Vitna vaxi dau.

Now the rain is coming.

In the next text, Amelia takes us through the stalls in the large market town out on the highway. She teaches us the Mixtec systems of counting and money as we go. This is one of the few texts she changed when we transcribed it. Rearranging the order of the steps meant moving a couplet, not just a single sentence. As Tannen says, "Almost paradoxically, repeating the frame *_first_* foregrounds and intensifies the part repeated, *_then_* foregrounds and intensifies the part that is different" (1987:583, author's emphasis).

We'll go to market...

When Amelia told me this next story, I couldn't understand it. Even with her translation into Spanish, I couldn't keep track of the participants. But when it was retranscribed into couplets, it all became plain. Notice that the last two lines are spoken in Spanish rather than in Mixtec, but the couplet format is still retained.

The Moros were first...

The next story is by a different Mixtec speaker. As we were chatting one day, I wrote down what she was saying.

Friday was the Calenda Procession...

Even the shorter texts come out better in couplets. In the next text, note the long sentences used to fill out the couplets. This is how DTM uses conjunctions.

Now I am grinding...

The next text is another of my favorites. When I asked Amelia about men's work, she said, "Let me talk it over with my husband." That night she and Ger/onimo worked it out together, and this is what they came up with--beautiful rhythmic poetry. Some have called this a typical hard luck story; Beto's illustration also pictures it that way. But to me it's more of a heart cry. Or perhaps Ger/onimo and Amelia simply put a brave face on it, turning it into a joke on themselves at the end.

I am a farmer...

The next text is a dialogue between a mother and her son. I had asked Amelia to tell me why her older son had gone to Mexico City at age 12 and had stayed there ever since.

"Why have you come home?"...

The next text is fascinating because Amelia was able to incorporate my questions (written in italics) into the rhythm of the poetry. (Dashes in the English indicate name of flora and fauna that are difficult to translate.)

Aunt Margaret and the Earth-People...

The next text illustrates why both Amelia and Arturo seldom use quote markers: they are necessary when couplets are used.

The Moon and the Sun...

The next text shows that when Amelia relates her experiences outside the village, they also come out in couplets.

We went, we lived where it is called...

The next example is one of the folktales Arturo's grandfather told him. This story appears in prose form in Kuiper and Oram (1991); here it is rewritten in couplets.

The rabbit was eating the beans...

The next example shows that Arturo's first person stories of life in Mexico City, far from the village, also come out in couplets just as his folktales do.

I traveled on the metro in Mexico City...

The last example is a riddle whose meaning baffled me when it was written in paragraph form. Note that the couplets are here made up of two short clauses not joined by a conjunction.

5. Principles.

Two phrases from Jakobson (1966) finally helped me spell out the way I was intuitively organizing Mixtec poetry into couplets. The first is: "Words or phrases answering to one another" (p. 399). The second is: "[T]he second line which 'in different ways supplements or completes' the first line (p. 427, citing Driver).

First, here are the general principles I use to divide a text into single sentences and couplets:

1. Assume the first two sentences are a couplet until proven otherwise.
 - a. If the first line is not a complete sentence, assume it is a title.
 - b. If the first sentence doesn't fit with the second (see separate criteria below), try fitting the second sentence with the third.
2. Proceed marking couplets of two sentences until you find one that seems to stand alone. Skip over it and continue looking for couplets.
3. If two contiguous sentences both seem to stand alone, one ends a paragraph and the next begins a paragraph.

Second, here is a list of clues that two sentences go together as a couplet:

1. They both have the same subject. For example:

nkana ia do diki

The holy one called from the mountain.

2. They describe the same event or concept. For example:

xween ro ñii We'll buy salt.
xween ro iin arua yahu ohon kandodo koon
 We'll buy a measure costing \$5.50.

3. They have the same temporal or locative marker. An example of each follows:

daa inxan katuu nuu vekanhnu kidavahas
 At that time there was a huge complex they
 were building.

daa inxan nukoo iin se ñuu da, ndees vehe
 At that time there was sitting a man from
 my town guarding the building.

inxan nkee da There I got on.
inxan nkidi da There I fell asleep.

4. The initial conjunction is repeated. Two examples are:

te iin vehe i io ranchu buena vista
 And one of their houses is a Buena Vista
 Ranch.

te iin vehe i tuu cuesta borrachu yuñuu tdaa
 And one of their houses is at Drunk's Hill
 at the edge of Tidaa.

xween ro iin kilo ñii sha uni kiko ushi sentau
 We'll buy a kilo of salt for 70 centavos.
xween ro iin kilo ashuka sha uu peshu ushi sentau
 We'll buy a kilo of sugar for 2 pesos 10
 centavos.

5. One has a main participant and the other has a peripheral participant. For example:

shash konexo nduchi The rabbit was eating the beans.
duha ni she kotos Daily he (the man) went to look and see.

6. One describes a main event and the other describes a related event or events. Two examples are:

te kuu despasianu shtashehe
 The one who is Despaciano was dancing.
sha kaa uu nkida machari solndado te
 Already at 2:00 his soldiers had marched
 in.

cadavaha da ndeyu, na kashdenñu dahya da
 I will prepare the stew so that my children
 will eat dinner.

te naxini da trasti, te natihu da vehe da, kushina da, te xihin da
xin hukate da danhma dahya da
 And I will wash my dishes and sweep my
 house, my kitchen, and I'll go, I'll go
 wash my children's clothes.

7. One describes a main event and the other adds additional description of the same event. For example:

xween ro iin litru tnana doko
 We'll buy a liter of tomatillos.
yahu ti ushi tvini

7. They are synonymous or antithetic. An example of each follows:

nshe nukwido ñaha ushi diablito	
	Ten little devils arrive to carry him away.
nshe kushi ñaha i	They arrived to bury him.
xwan ndishi i chapultepek	
	The train turned around, returning to Chapultepec.
nkachi ini da sha nashee i nde taskeña	
	I thought it would arrive at Tasqueña.

8. The make up a dialogue interchange (one speaker comments and the other responds). For example:

aru nehe xwahan	I did take money when I went!
nada nehen xwahan	How much did you take?

9. In the case of a dialogue couplet, the next one or more couplets may be the continued response of the second speaker. For example:

ndoho ndandahu ñaha	You deceived me!
ña shini da	I don't know anything.
usha ñani da io	I have seven brothers.
ña shini da	I don't know anything.

These uses of couplets in DTM are probably related to the doublets in Mazatec described by Schram (1979:??):

Of special interest also is the analysis...of the doublet construction, a special type of construction which may be more widespread in languages than might appear at first. In Mazatec, doublets may have descriptive, contrastive, or dramatic functions.

6. Questions

Now that I have reanalyzed Mixtec texts as poetry, several questions arise:

1. Does Merlia talk in poetry as people say I do? Or, because I was writing down her texts as she produce them, did this give her time to compose it as she went along? Often she would not dictate a text when I asked her to until the following day. Sometimes she and her husband thought about my request and talked about what Amelia would tell me the next day, working it out together. Did she compose and memorize these stories as if they pertained to her culture's oral history as Arturo's grandfather's folktales do? Only in two of the texts Amelia told me did she hesitate; the others just flowed. I took all the texts down verbatim, only adding commas and periods when she paused appropriately. Would they have been different if they had been taped first?

2. Because I purposely acted like a child and repeatedly asked Amelia, "Tell me a story. Tell me about such-and-such," did Amelia use narrative discourse structure for all the texts--expository, procedural, and dialogue, as well as narrative?

3. Do Amelia and Beto have a gift that others don't have? Ger/onimo and Juan say they can't translate. They always volunteered to do other language work so those they considered gifted at translation could concentrate on that. Vica can find synonyms and is a valuable part of the team in other ways, but neither Mixtec translation nor back-translation into Spanish flow from her as they do for Amelia and Beto. Both Amelia and Vica have told me, "You have have often commented that a knack for finding

because I have a thorough knowledge of DTM grammar or vocabulary; in fact, I struggle with the complex tone system. It must be something to do with feeling the poetry.

4. Are DTM speakers capable of talking in poetry because they are the descendants of the ancient Mixtec priests and kings? The famous "Eight Deer" who united much of the Mixteca Alta into a single kingdom began his rule in Tlantongo. Or were their ancestors the ones who wrote, drew, and painted the codices (see Caso 1979a, 1979b; Codex Nuttall 1974; Smith 1973; Spores 1967)?

7. Conclusion

This paper has been my attempt to help others see the language data they gather in a way they hadn't seen it before. I wanted to show them how, after taking a discourse apart, they could put it back together again.

Edith Schaeffer (1971), in the second chapter of her book *Hidden Art*, makes the following statements (all emphasis is the author's):

One individual personality has definite or special talent for expressing in *some* medium, what other personalities can hear, see...feel...understand...find refreshment in...experience reality in...but which they could *not* produce themselves (p. 14).

It is not a waste of man's time to be creative. It is not a waste to pursue artistic or scientific pursuits in creativity, because this is what man was *made* to be able to do (p. 24).

...the art which is found in the "minor" areas of life...in the "everyday" of anyone's life, rather than his career or profession (p. 31).

...we have been created in the image of the Creator of beauty (p. 32-33).

...the possibilities all of us have of really *living* artistically (p. 33).

We have pretty much gotten away from the idea of primitive languages--we've had to as we analyzed them! But perhaps we still tend to think of the speakers as primitive, uneducated, or marginal. We set up our criteria for excellence in our language associates and their potential as native authors and translators. In so doing we may fail to allow them the human dignity of being endowed by the Creator of us all with as much, or infinitely more, creativity that that with which we ourselves have been endowed.

Some of my colleagues have said to me, "You cause us to see so much that we would otherwise have missed." That's what I hope I have been able to do in this paper. Goodwin and Goodwin (cited in Tannen 1987:579) have suggested that some linguistic study may be like "studying what a musician does but ignoring the *music* that is played" (author's emphasis). I have tried to encourage us to listen to the music, to rejoice in the hidden art, and to find the poetry, not only in DTM, but perhaps in other languages of Mexico as well.

Footnotes

1. A short description of Diuxi-Tlantongo Mixtec is given in the Appendix.
2. Arturo Mart/inez Cruz was 15 years old when he went with me to a 3-month literacy workshop. He was a street-wise, Mexico City 'slum kid' working in the city to help supplement his family's income and make enough money to

when he was home in San Juan Diuxi, Oaxaca, Mexico. He had had about two years of elementary school and could decipher both Spanish and Mixtec. His grandfather had been one of the very few who could still remember the old folktales.

3. Amelia Mart/inez de Mat/ias (no relation to Arturo) was about 35 years old when she told em her stories. She was a busy wife and mother who all her life had lived in San Juan Diuxi. Occasionally she had worked for a month or two in Mexico City to supplement the family income. She spoke Mixtec as her first language and some Spanish as a second language. She had never had an opportunity to go to school, yet she capably and patiently taught me to speak her language. Later she become a co-translator of the DTM New Testament. Amelia now reads both Mixtec and Spanish fluently.

4. The concordance was prepared by computer in 1968 at the Oklahoma Research Institute, supported by National Science Foudation grant GS-270.

5. I too have studied several langauges and occasionally write poems. Some of my colleagues even say that I talk in poetry. Many people have commented about the letters I wrote home about my experiences living in the San Juan Diuxi between 1966 and 1980. "Your letters and your oral reports are like pictures." Also, I have learned Mixtec mostly by studying texts rather than by analyzing the morphology and syntax. These factors have all contributed to my perspective on Mixtec discourse.

6. Jim Meyer is the one who suggested the format to display the DTM poetry and couplets. It immediately opened a door for me: the texts had _become_ poetry! The _rhythm_ was there, not only in Mixtec but also in English. At last I could see _why_ Amelia had composed the texts as she had. Jim also helped me write and edit this paper. Both he and Tom Willett encouraged me to get my ideas into writing.

7. "A couplet; a couple of verses or poetic lines makeing complete sense" (The New Webster Encyclopedic Dictionary of the English Language, 1952).

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Appendix: A Short Description of Diuxi-Tilantongo Mixtec

Diuxi-Tilantongo Mixtec (DTM) is spoken by about 5,000 people living in and around two municipal centers, San Juan Diuxi and Santo Tilantongo. Large colonies of speakers of DTM are also found in Mexico City, Puebla City, and Oaxaca City.

According to Caso (1979a, 1979b), based on his study of the Codex Nuttall (1902), Tilantongo was the capital of a vast Mixtec city-state. Eight Deer, an eleventh century ruler, subdued one town after another until he controlled almost all of the Mixteca. After his death, however, the empire he build was dissolved, and it never regained its past glory.

Because both Diuxi and Tilantongo are situated in badly eroded land, at least one member of each family unit spends six or more months each year working in a major city to supplement the family income.

Primary schools have been in the area for perhaps five decades, and secondary schools for perhaps fifteen years. Many of the men and some of the women have a working knowledge of Spanish. Among themselves, though, they speak Mixtec by preference, and children continue to learn Mixtec as their first language.

DTM has the following segmental phonological units: voiceless stops and affricate t, ch, k, kw (labialized); voiced stops d, g (only after n); voiceless fricatives s, sh (alveopalatal), x, xw (labialized); voiced fricatives v (bilabial), -d, y; nasals m, n, ñ; liquids l r; laryngeal h (glottal stop); oral vowels i, e, i, a, o, u; and nasalized vowels in, en, in, an, on, un. In Spanish loanwords, some of the above phonemes have a wider distribution, and the following additional phonemes occur: p, b, gw, f, r.

Two analyses for the tone system of DTM have been proposed, one by Pike and Oram (1976) and one by Daly (1978).

Completive aspect is written as n followed by a hyphen. Following this proclitic, a number of consonants under go phonological changes. Voiceless consonants except t and ch become voiced; sh, which is somewhat retroflexed normally, becomes a voiced retroflexed alveopalatal affricate;

becomes a voiced alveopalatal affricate.

Five enclitics pronouns are also written with a hyphen: -r 'I (familiar)', -n 'you (respect)', -n 'you (familiar, man speaking)', -s 'he (man speaking)', and -t 'it (animal)'.

Shaul:
Analysis first -
best part!
Summarize lit.
afterwards

[Tom, this is a later style--the result of writing out all 80 of Amelia's texts and 35 of Arturo's texts in Couplet form this summer. I like this style better. Also, what slight amount of editing was needed in the Mixtec, was done by Amelia's daughter Vica, and then accepted or not accepted by Amelia. So, this is the truly "finished product." You will note that fronted (focused) and unusual constructions are set off by indentation, as are "additional" verbs.]

1) English

Now

the rain is coming.

The rain is calling.
Hail rain will come.

The holy one called from the mountain.
The holy one called from the valley.

And the rain is going to fall.

Now

in good season
the rain is coming.
Indeed our crops will come.

Now

we will work.
We will plant rainy season seed.

The oxen will work with the men.
They will plant chickpeas.

We will plant habas
and rainy season corn.

Now

in good season
the rain has arrived,
because we are very poor here,
because there isn't any water.

Only

to the sky
we look
for when
the rain will come.

Here it is a dry land,
there is no water.

We only
wait
for when

the rain will come again.

But now
the holy one has arrived.
I am happy,
because there we will get the food we will eat,
because with that rain,
then we live,
because here it is a dry land.

1) Mixtec

Vitna
vaxi dau.

Cana dau.
Quixi dau ñiñi.

N-cana-ia do diqui.
N-cana-ia do nina.

Te va juun dau.

Vitna
vaha tiempu
vaxi dau.
Chi quixi cosecha-ro.

Vitna
cadatniu-ro.
Daquee-ro tata dau.

Cadatniu ngutu xihin teyii.
Dadahu-te nduchi nduu.

Daquee-ro nduchi haba
xihin nuni tata dau.

Vitna
vaha tiempu
n-xee dau,
chi yo cundahu-ro yaha,
chi ña tuu ndute.

Diconi
andiū
ndeha-ro
naquiū
naquixi dau.

Yaha cuu ñuhu yichi,
ñatu ndute io.

Diconi
ndetu-ro
naquiū

naquixi dau.

Co vitna
 n-xee-ia.
Cuduhini-da,
 chi ijan nihi-ro xa caa-ro,
 chi dau-jan
 dada tuu-ro,
 chi yaha cuu ñuhu yichi.

2) English

We'll go to market
 in Nochixtlán.
We'll go buy
 that which we need.

We will cut cloth.

We'll buy a shawl
 that costs 100 pesos,
 a good shawl.
We'll buy a pair of sandals
 that costs 22 pesos.

We'll buy a sombrero,
 a good sombrero,
 that costs 15 pesos.
We'll buy a good tunic
 that costs 70 pesos.

We'll buy salt.
We'll buy a measure
 costing \$5.50.

There
 we'll buy a kilo of chile
 costing \$8.50.
We'll buy a block of panela
 costing 18 pesos.

There
 we'll buy 12 kilos of corn
 costing 12 pesos.
We'll buy 6 kilos of black beans
 costing 15 pesos.

We'll buy a bar of soap
 1 peso 20.
We'll buy a bag of detergent
 for 1 peso.

We'll buy a peso of bread.

p 4r

Five of them
for 1 peso.

We'll buy a liter of tomatillos.
They cost ten bits.

Five red tomatoes
for 1 peso.

We'll buy a kilo of salt
for 70 centavos.
We'll buy a kilo of sugar
for 2 pesos 10 centavos.

Let's go home.
Let's load up,
so the burro and the horse will carry it.

Let's go home,
because it's getting late.
Already it's 1:00 in the afternoon,
it will be dark when we arrive.

It'll already be dark,
at 7:00 at night
we'll arrive.

2) Mixtec

Jihin-ro yahu
Atojon.
Jin njueen-ro
xa ndoñuhu-ro.

Cahnde-ro dahma.

Jueen-ro pañu
xa yahu iin sientu,
pañu vaha.
Jueen-ro iin ndixa
xa yahu oco uu pexu.

Jueen-ro iin lelu,
lelu vaha,
xa yahu xahun pexu.
Jueen-ro iin cotona vaha
xa yahu uni dico uxi pexu.

Jueen-ro ñi.
Jueen-ro iin arrua
yahu ohon
candodo coon.

p 5r

Ijan
 jueen-ro ìin kilo yaha
 yahu una
 candodo coon.
Jueen-ro ìin yutu panela
 yahu xaun uni pexu.

Ijan
 jueen-ro uxi uu kilo nuni
 yahu uxi uu pexu.
Jueen-ro ìñu kilo nduchi tnuu
 yahu xahun pexu.

Jueen-ro ìin nama
 ìin pexu oco.
Jueen-ro ìin bolsa yuchi nama
 xa ìin pexu.

Jueen-ro ìin pexu tila.
Ohon-i
 xa ìin pexu.

Jueen-ro ìin litru tnana doco.
Yahu-tì
 uxi tvini.

Ohon tnana cuèhe
 xa ìin pexu.

Jueen-ro ìin kilo ñìì
 xa uni dico uxi sentau.
Jueen-ro ìin kilo axuca
 xa uu pexu uxi sentau.

Na nuhu-ro.
Na dacao-ro
 na cuído burru xihin cavayu.

Na nuhu-ro,
 chì vax ñini.
Xà caa ìin xañini cuu,
 ñini naxee-ro.

Nde xà n-cunee
 caa uxa xacuaa
 naxee-ro.

3) English

The Moros were first.

The one who is Despaciano
 was dancing.

Already at 2:00
his soldiers had marched in.

There
entered
the one who is Sultan.
He was dancing
with Alferes.

There
the Son arrived
to carry the flag of Edican.

There
he began
the battle they were fighting.

By the sword
the Gentile was killed.

Ten little devils arrived to carry him away.
They arrived to bury him.

Another battle in the story of the Christians began,
but they didn't die.
Those of Pilate died.

He died,
the one who is called Sultan.
Despaciano killed him.

There
they went on in only those battles,
until they were finished off.

That Pilate died.
He was finished off dead.

Only those battles
there were.

Alferes, Edican, Despaciano
and the Son won.
They carried away the flag.

Pilate and the Sultan didn't win
to carry it away.
The flag of the Christians remained.

But Pilate himself,
all of his died.

All the little devils
carried them away.
They arrived to bury them.

The Son won the flag.
He did not lose it.

Long live, long live,
the Christian and his flag!
May Pilate and his soldiers die!

3) Mixtec

N-xio Múru ditnanuu.

Tè cuu Despasianu
xtaxehe.
Xà caa uu
n-quida machari solndado-te.

Ijan
n-quèe
tè cuu Sultán.
Xtaxehe-te
xihin Alferes.

Ijan
n-xee Niu
na xe jehen-te bandera Edicaan.
Ijan
n-quixehe-te guerra jantnaha-te.

Machiti
n-xìhi Gentiil.

N-xe nucuido ñaha uxi diablito.
N-xe cuxi ñaha-i.

N-quixehe inca guerra cuenta Cristianu,
co ñatu n-xìhi-te.
N-xìhi cuenta Pilatu.

N-xìhi-te,
tè nani Sultán.
N-xahni ñaha Despasianu.

Ijan
n-quida seguiri-te meni guerra-jan,
nde ndihì-te.

Pilatu-jan n-xìhi.
Ndhì-te n-xìhi.

Meni guerra-jan
n-xio.

N-quida ganari Alferes, Edicaan, Despasianu
xihin Niu.

N-xe nujeheh-te bandera.

Ñatu n-quida ganari Pilatu xihin Sultán
xa canehe-te.

Ndoo nahi bandera Cristianu.

Co mee Pilatu
ndondoo-te n-xihi.

Ntdaa diablito
nacuido ñaha.

N-xe cuxi ñaha-i.

N-quida ganari Niu bandera.

Ñatu n-quida pederi-te.

¡Viva! ¡Viva!

¡Cristiano con su bandera!

¡Que muera Pilato con sus soldados!

4) English

Friday

was the Calenda procession.

The sponsors went in procession in the afternoon.

There were fire-bulls.

They went off at 4:00 Saturday morning.

There was the Calenda Mass.

It took place at 12 noon.

There were vespers

and church was over.

And there was the parade of the Moros.

They were dancing.

There were five clowns.

And at 5:00 in the morning

the tower of fireworks went off.

And eight firebolls,

two airplanes, two dolls.

And that morning,

at 7:00 in the morning,

there was Mass.

p 9r

At 10:00
 the Moros were dancing,
 and many people came.
There were two women
 dancing with the Moros.

Strangers came.
They were bringing two loudspeakers.

Monday,
 on that day
 there was the Mass of St. Jospeh.

That day
 they rode the bulls.
Many bulls
 they rode.

Tuesday
 they rode the bulls.
There was an awful lot of dancing
 of only drunks.

Wednesday,
 on that day
 the women drank.
They sang,
 they danced.

And many of them
 danced.
The people were happy.

Already
 I've been home for my town's fiesta.

Now
 I have seen my town's fiesta.
Next year
 I won't be here.

I'm going to Mexico City,
 neither will I again see it.
I'm going,
 I'm going to look for work.

Then I'll come home again
 until it's next year's Carnival.

4) Mixtec

Yarnexi

n-cuu paseu calenda.
N-xehen madrina paseu xañini.

N-xio ngutu ñuhu.
N-cahndi-ti caa coon datne sabadu.

N-xio mixa calenda.
Nujuiin caa xhuu.

N-xio visper ximetvini
te n-tuhu veñuhu.

Te n-xio desafio muru.
Xtaxehe-te.

N-xio ohon payasu.

Te n-cuu caa ohon datne
n-cahndi castiyu.
Te una ngutu ñuhu,
uu avioon, uu muñeco.

Te datne-jan
caa uxa datna
n-xio mixa.

Caa uxi
ntaxehe muru
te cuehe ñayiu n-quixi.
N-xio uu ñadihi
ntaxehe xihin muru.

N-quixi tetoho.
Nehe-te uu posina xita.

Lonexi
daa
n-xio mixa San Josee.

Daa
n-xodo-te ngutu.
Cuehe ngutu
n-xodo-te.

Martexi
n-xodo-te ngutu.
Loco n-xio baile meni tè xini.

Ñarculexi
daa
n-ca xihí ñadihi.
N-ca xita-ña,
n-ca xtaxehe-ña.

p 11r

Te cuehe-ña
n-ca xtaxehe.
N-ca cuduhini ñayiu.

Xà nxee-da fiesta ñuu-da.

Vitna
n-xini-da fiesta ñuu-da.
Nduxi
ma cutuu-da.

Jihîn-da Ñucohyo,
ni ma jini ca-da.
Jihîn-da,
jin nducu tniu-da.

Dada ndixi tucu-da
nde xa cuu carnavaal nduxi.

5) English

Now
I am grinding.
I am working my dough.

Many tortillas
I will make.
I am in a hurry
to pat out the tortillas
so that the patting will be done.

I will prepare the stew,
so that my children will eat dinner.
And I will wash my dishes,
and sweep my house, the place where my fire burns,
and I'll go,
I'll go wash my children's clothes.

And when I get back,
I will put on the coffee
for my children's supper,
lest it get dark,
and none of them will eat.
They will be asleep.

And my husband will arrive home,
and he will hit me,
if I haven't given my children
that which they will eat.

5) Mixtec

Vitna
 ndico-da.
Tee-da yuxa-da.

Cuehe dita
 tee-da.
Nduhini-da
 tee-da dita
 na ndihî tee-da.

Cadavaha-da ndeyu
 na caxdehñu dahya-da.
Te najini-da trasti-da,
 te natihu-da vehe-da, nuu cayu ñuhu-da,
 te jihin-da,
 jin nucate-da dahma dahya-da.

Te na naxee-da,
 jandodo-da cafee
 caxdini dahya-da,
 nada yo cunee
 te mayo-i caxdini.

Quidi coio-i.

Te n-xee yîi-da,
 te janñaha-te,
 nu xa ma juñaha-da
 xa cax coio dahya-da.

6) English

I am a farmer.

I work in the fields.

Every day
 I go to the fields
 to work.

I go with my oxen.
I go to work.

I plant wheat in seedtime.
Only that work
 I do,
 in order to live on the land.

I turn over the soil,
 I plow the furrows with my oxen.
I plant the seed,
 I cultivate the cornfield.

That work is accomplished.

I will cut the wheat.

I will carry it
with the mule, with the burro.

The cutting is finished.

And I will thresh,

I will thresh the wheat.

I need it

for my expenses.

This land

will not produce well.

Very little harvest

do I get.

It is not level land

that produces well.

Only hills,

only gullies,

only that which I hold in place
with rocks, trees.

There

thus the soil stays in place.

Then a little wheat, corn will spring up.

The heavy rains come.

Quickly the water carries away
even my wheat.

The water carries away my cornfield.

Everything

the flood water carries
away.

With that,

even though I work,

I don't "make it."

I get some,

I get some,

but only a little wheat, corn.

I am not rich.

I just am.

With that work,

it is that I'm a farmer.

I make enough

for food.

Neither do I have any money.

I don't have any good clothes.

Nor do I have any shoes.

Only sandals
I wear.

That is my life
that I am a farmer.

6) Mixtec

Daña cuu seyîî campesinu.

Quidatniû-da yucu.
Ntdaa quiû
xehen-da yucu
quidatniû-da.

Xehen-da xihin ngutu-da.
Xe cadatniû-da.

Dadahu-da triû
tiempu tata.
Meni tniû ijan
quida-da,
xa tuu-da yucu.

Nadaca-da,
xani-da xichi xihin ngutu.
Daquêe-da tata,
xitu-da itu.

Ndihi tniû ijan.

Cahnde-da triû.
Cuido-da
xihin machu, xihin burru.

Ndihi n-xahnde-da.

Te cadî-da,
cadî-da triû.
Ndoñuhu-da
xa cuu gastu-da.

Ñuhu yaha
ñatu cane vaha.
Yo itahu cosecha
nihi-da.

Ñatu cuu yodo
xa cuaha vaha.
Meni tnduu,

meni dehwa,
meni xa nachitnií-da
yüu, yutnu.

Ijan
da nujuuin ñuhu.
Dada cane itahu triu, itu.

Vaxi dau ndehe.
Nehe ni ndute juahan
nde triu-da.

Nehe ndute itu-da.
Ntdaa
nehe ndute cahnu
juahan.

Xijan,
juini quidatniu-da,
co ñatu nihi-da.
Nihi-da,
nihi-da,
co itahu ni triu, nuni.

Ñatu cucuica-da.
Dani cuu-da.

Xihin tniu ijan
xa cuu-da campesinu.
Nani xaa-da
nihi-da.

Ni ña tuu na tvini-da.
Ña tuu na dahma vaha-da.

Ni ña tuu na sapatu-da.
Diconi ndixa
yihí-da.

Xijan cuu vida-da
xa cuu-da campesinu.

7) English

"Why have you come home?"

"I lost the sheep.
Searching for them,
I didn't find them.

I came home.
I'm going with my father

to look for them.

My boss is angry.
He has a way
of yelling fiercely at me.

I'm very afraid.
When they are found,
I'll go take them back.

I will return to our house.
I'm not going to go anymore
to herd sheep."

"If you're not going anymore,
come back home.
I won't punish you."

"Take me to Mexico City!"

7) Mixtec

¿Nu nxee-un?

N-dajihín-da tcachi.
Na nducu-da-tî,
ña nanihi-da-tî.

Juan ndii-da.
Jihín-da xihín taa-da
na nducu-da-tî.

Cudeen lamu-da.
Io mudu-s
xa cana ndee ñaha-s.

Yo yuhu-da.
Na nanihi-tî,
jín nundeca-da-tî.

Ndixi-da vehe-ro.
Ma jihin ca-da,
junuu-da tcachi.

Nu xa ma jihin ca-un,
ndixi-un vehe-ro.
Ma teyica ñaha-r.

¡Juan ndeca ñaha-n Ñucohyo!

8) English

Aunt Margaret and the Earth-People

She says
 that there are houses of the Earth-People
There are male Earth-People,
 there are female Earth-People.

She says
 that they are little,
 they don't have heels.
They have heads,
 faces,
 mouths,
 hands,
 feet,
 but they don't have toes.

She says
 that thus appear their feet.
Their feet are very square,
 they don't have heels,
 they don't have toes.

They sing,
 they dance.
White,
 white
 are the Earth-People.

She says
 that their hair
 is red or yellow.

She says
 that yellow, yellow
 is their hair.

As for those men,
 there hair is yellow.
And as for the Earth-People women
 their hair is red.

They use the leaves of the -----
 for their plates,
 for their cups.

-----berries are their oranges.
-----berries are the eggs of their chickens.

Acorns are their squash.
-----is their corn.

-----are their flowers.

Blue cardinal flowers...

-----are their flags.

-----are the flowers of their brides.

Every day

there is work for the Earth-People.

She says

that the songbirds are their chickens,
their sheep are the deer.

She says,

"Listen,

let me tell you a story

that I am sick with singing sickness."

She sang,

but I didn't like it.

Pretty

are the tones she sings.

Long

thus she ends those tones.

As for her,

because she is sick,
and sadly, sadly
she sings.

["When did she see them?

At night? During the day?"]

When she was sleeping.

At night,

during the day,
when she was sleeping.

She would wake up

and she would be singing.

["How big were they?"]

She says

that like Juan, Stella.

The Earth-People are not tall.

I thought

that like Beto or Vica,
but she says no.

They are a little bit bigger.

["Do they talk?"]

Yes,

it's that they sing.

["Where is their town?"]

She says
that one of their houses is at the river
behind where her alfalfa is.

And one of their houses
there is at Buena Vista ranch.

And one of their houses
is at Drunk's Hill
at the edge of Tidaa.

Just there are their houses,
she says.

She died of singing sickness.

That's why
she sang the songs of the Earth-People.
They bewitched her.

But when
she made the offerings,
then she had diarrhea
and more diarrhea.

Fidelia said
that with that diarrhea
her heart could not stand it.

Fidelia said
that seven times
she made the offerings
every fifteen days,
every twenty days.
Thirty pesos each one.

8) Mixtec

Didi Margarita xin Ñutilu

Jahan-ña
xa io vehe Ñutilu.
Io Ñutilu yîî,
io Ñutilu dîhî.

Jahan-ña
xa cuechi-i,
ña tuu xedeyu-i.
Io dîquî-i,
nûu-i,
yuhu-i,
ndaha-i,
xehe-i,

co ña tuu dīquī xehe-i.

Jahan-ña
 xa duha caa xehe-i.
Yo cuadradu xehe-i,
 ña tuu xedeyu-i,
 ña tuu dīquī xehe-i.

Xita-i,
 xtaxehe-i.
Coloor
 cuixi xa cuixi
 cuu Ñutilu.

Jahan-ña
 xa idi dīquī-i
 cuehe o cuaan.
Jahan-ña
 xa cuaan xa cuaan
 idi dīquī-i.

Teyīi-jan,
 cuaan idi dīquī-i,
 te Ñutilu dīhī,
 cuèhe idi dīquī-i.

Netniu-i ndaha tnuyaa
 cuu coho-i,
 cuu tàxa-i.

Ndeha tnutditnu cuu tcuee-i.
Ndeha tnutndiu cuu ndiu chuun-i.

Chihngo cuu yājān-i.
Itu tcaca cuu nīñī-i.

Ita vixa cuu ita-i.
Ita nchiquirioho....

Ita tcundi cuu bandera-i.
Ita tndeca ñuhu cuu ita novia-i.

Ntdaa quīu
 io tniū Ñutilu.

Jahan-ña
 xa chilidaa cuu chuun-i,
 tcachi-i cuu idu.

Jahan-ña,
 cunini,
 na najani-r cuentu
 xa cuhu-r cuexita.

N-xita-ña,
 co ña n-tnahini-da.

Vili caa
 tono xita-ña.
Nani
 da jin ndihi-ña tono-jan.

Mee-ña,
 xa cuhu-ña,
 te cohyo xa cohyo
 xita-ña.

When did she see them?
At night? During the day?

Hora
 n-xo quidi-ña.
Xacuaa,
 nduu,
 hora n-xo quidi-ña.

Ndito-ña
 te xo xita-ña.

How big were they?

Jahan-ña
 xa nani Juanito, Estela.
Ñatu dujun Ñutilu.

N-xani ini-da
 xa nà Betu o Vica,
 co jahan-ña ñaha.
Cahnuca-i itahu.

Do they talk?
Joon,
 cuu xa xita-i.

Where is their town?
Jahan-ña
 xa ñin vehe-i tuu yute
 yata nuu io alfalfa mee-ña.

Te ñin vehe-i
 io ranchu Buena Vista.
Te ñin vehe-i
 tuu Cuesta Borrachu
 yuñuu Tdaa.

Ijan ni cuu vehe-i,
 jahan-ña.

N-xihi-ña cuexita.

Xijan cuu xa
n-xita-ña corrido Ñutilu.
N-xadi ñaha-i.

Co hora
ndee tahu-ña,
te junehe-i
xa junehe-i.
N-jahan Fidelia
xa juun-jan
ña n-cundee anu-ña.

N-jahan Fidelia
xa uxa huelta
ndee tahu-ña,
ntna xahun quiu,
ntna oco quiu.
Oco uxi pexu iin iin.

9) English

We went,
we lived
where it's called,
where it is the city of Ixmiquilpan.

There
we saw
men setting out onions.
They plant garlic,
they plant lettuce,
they plant radishes,
they plant Chinese parsley,
they plant tomatoes,
they plant tomatillos.

They plant cornfields,
there is sweet corn.

They plant wheat,
there is wheat.
They plant alfalfa,
there is alfalfa.

We'll go to the foot of the mountain.

There are trees that produce pecans.
We will gather pecans.

The girl says,
"Gather, señora.

Take them.

Indeed eat.
We don't sell them."

Many
 we gathered.
Our filled carrying baskets
 we carried returning
 to our house.

The girl was kind.
She gave us
 permission to enter
 the grove of pecan trees.

We went in
 and gathered.
All of us
 gathered pecans.

I saw slender prickly pear plants.

Prickly pear
 with long thorns.
The fruit is white.

I saw maguey,
 part white,
 part yellow,
 part green.

Three-colored
 the maguey there.
The maguey that there are
 are pretty.

There
 I climbed
 a steep place there.

There
 I saw
 the pine trees there are.
The trees are there
 where the barracks are.

That hill
 is high.
We were climbing
 to see
 what there is
 in that town.

9) Mixtec

N-xehen-ro
 n-xo tuu-ro
 nuu nani,
 nuu cuu cuidaa Ixmiquilpan.

Ijan
 n-xini-ro
 tè dàquee ndua tnujiiin.
Dàquee-te aju,
 dàquee-te lechuga,
 dàquee-te rabanu,
 dàquee-te culandru,
 dàquee-te tnana cuèhe,
 dàquee-te tnana doco.

Daquee-te itu,
 io ndidi.

Dadahu-te triu,
 io triu.
Dadahu-te alfalfa,
 io alfalfa.

Jihin-ro xeyucu.

Io yutnu juun nueces.
Nachii-ro nueces.

Jahan dichi luchi,
 nachiin-n, didi.
Canehe-n.

Chi caa-n.
Natu dico-da.

Cuehe
 nachii-ro.
N-chitu ndoho-ro
 nehe-ro juan ndixi
 nde vehe-ro.

Vaha dichi luchi.
N-taxi-i
 jin quiu-ro
 xiti yutnu nueces.

N-qui-u-ro
 nachii-ro.
Ntdaa-ro
 nachii nueces.

p 25r

N-xini-da tnuvihnde cuiin.

Vihnde
nani iñu-i.
Cuixi chiqui.

N-xini-da yau
dawa cuixi,
dawa cuaan,
dawa cuii.

Uni coloor
yau ijan.
Vili caa
yau io.

Ijan
n-xexee-da ñin nuu ndichi ijan.

Ijan
n-xini-da tnuyuxa io.
Io-tnu
nuu io cuartel.

Lomu ijan
dujun.
Jin xee-ro
cundeha-ro
na io
ñuu ijan.

10) English

The rabbit was eating the beans.
Daily
he went to look and see.

And he arrived.
The rabbit
was there.

And he went,
to put up a soldier of beeswax.
And he went to put up the soldier.

And the rabbit arrived.
The rabbit arrived
talking.

"What are you doing,
little one?
Why won't you talk?

Are you going to talk
or not?
Or shall I give you a kick?"

Quickly the rabbit gave it a kick.
It grabbed his foot.

"Why are you holding on to my foot?
Let go!

Let go of my foot!
Or shall I give you another kick?

He kicked.

"Let go of my foot!
Or shall I hit you one?"

He hit it for the last time.
Quickly it was holding on to his paw.

The second day.

The owner of the beans arrived.
You're the one
eating my beans!"

He was taking hold of the rabbit.
He was taking it
going to his house.

He was putting on the hot water.
He was putting it inside
a net bag.

The coyote arrived.
What are you doing here,
little one?"

"I'm getting married.
Only
it's that
my woman is an important one."

"What day
are you getting married?"
"Tomorrow
the music will be heard."

"Get out!
Let me arrive!"

The coyote got in.

He arrived,
 carrying the hot water.

"What's this
 that's in here?"
At that time
 the coyote
 was in there.

He quickly poured the hot water
 down the coyote's back.
It just
 screamed!

Immediately
 it broke the string of the net bag!
It went off
 crazy!

It went to look for the rabbit.
It found him.

"You
 deceived me!
Now it is
 that I'll eat you!"

"Why
 eat me?
Indeed over there
 is lying a sheep's head."

The coyote went.

It arrived.
It put out its mouth.

Quickly wasps came out!
They stung it awfully!

The coyote ran away.
It arrived
 where the rabbit was sitting.

"You
 deceived me!"
"I don't know anything.

I have
 seven brothers.
I don't know anything."

The coyote died.
The rabbits were happy.

I've escaped!
Let's go look for
for something to eat!

A river hawk was chasing him.
There
he went under a rock.

There
the snake was curled up.
It was grabbing him.

The rabbit died.

Another one arrived.
"Now,
my brother,
let me go.

You've died.
Let me wander,
if I've died,
or escaped."

10) Mixtec

Xax conejo nduchi.
Duhani
xe coto-s.

Te n-xee-s.
Conejo
ñutuu.

Te xehen-si,
jantuu-si solndado ñua ñuñu cuechi.
Te n-xe jantuu-si solndado.

Te n-xee conejo.
N-xee conejo,
xiahah-ti.

¿Nax quida-n u?
se luchí.
¿Nu ña jahan-n u?

¿Jahan-n,
a ñaha u?
¿O cueñi-r iin a?

N-xeñi ni conejo iin.
N-tni-i xehe-ti.

¿Nu da xehe-r
tni-i-n u?
iDayaa!

iDayaa xehe-r!
¿O cueñi ca-r iin a?

N-xeñi-ti.

iDayaa xehe-r!
¿A cani-r iin a?

N-cani-ti inga.
Tni-i ni-i ndaha-ti.

Quiu cuu uu.

N-xee stoho nduchi.
iNdoho ni
xax nduchi-r!

Tni-i-s conejo.
Ndeca-s-ti
juahan nde vehe-s.

N-xee ñaña.
¿Nax quida-n-ya?
se luchi.

Tnundaha-r.
Diconi xa
xahnu ñadihi-r.

¿Nde quiu
tnundaha-n?
Tnee
cunini xa cande.

iTa cane!
iNa xee mee-r!

N-quèe ñaña.
N-xee-si,
nehe-s ntehihni.

¿Nax cuu
xa ñutuu-ya?
Daa
ñaña
ñutuu.

N-xodo ni-s ntehihni
yata ñaña.

p 30r

¡Menga xa
cana xiin-ti!

Vitna
vitna
n-xahnde-ti yoho ñunu.
¡Juan loco
juan duha-ti!

N-xe nunducu-ti conejo.
Nanihi ñaha-ti.

¡Ndoho
n-dandahu ñaha!
¡Vitna cuu xa
caxi ñaha-r!

¡Nax cuu
caxi ñaha-n?
Chi ijan
catuu diqui tcachi.

Juahan ñaña.

N-xee-ti.
N-dajin yuhu-ti.

¡N-ca nuu ni yoco!
¡Loco n-ca tũu ñaha-ti!

N-quendawa ñaña.
N-xee-ti
nuu nucoo conejo.

¡Ndoho
n-dandahu ñaha!
Ña xini-da.

Uxa ñani-da
io.
Ña xini-da.

N-xihi ñaña.
Ca cuvete conejo.

¡N-cacu-r!
Na jin nducu-ro
xa caxi-ro.

Chido ndijun ñaha ñau yute.
Ijan
juan ndiu-ti cayuu.

Ijan

p 31r

yucu coo.
Tñiñ ñaha-ti.

N-xihi conejo.

N-xee ca-ti.
Vitna,
 ñani-r,
 na jihin-r.

N-xihi-n.
Na cuiconuu-r,
 nu n-xihi-r
 a n-càcu-r.

11) English

I travelled on the metro in Mexico City.

I arrived at Chapultepec.
I took the subway.

I arrived at Merced.
The train turned around again.

It returned to Chapultepec.
I thought
 that it would arrive at Tasqueña.

I kept on getting on the subway again.
My money was used up.

I arrived
 no farther than Merced.
I left the subway.

There
 I came out.
Now it was that
 I would have to walk.

And I wasn't knowing [where or how].
From there
 I went back to Chapultepec,
 I went back walking.

I was tired.
There
 I turned around,
 to go back
 to where my sister was living.

At that time
 there
 there was a huge complex
 they were building.
At that time
 there
 a man from my town was sitting,
 guarding the building.

He called to me.
At that time
 there
 I encountered him.

There
 I asked for the loan of a peso.
I took a bus,
 a bus that takes 30 centavos.

There
 I got on.
There
 I fell asleep.

And it was taking me a long way.
It was taking me to Xochimilco!

I walked a long way going back.
I was tired.

There
 I took a trolleycar.
From there
 it would take me
 to where my cousin lives.

There
 I arrived
 even where he lives.

There
 at that time
 I was telling him
 that I had gotten lost.

There
 he was saying,
 "I'm telling you
 that you must take money
 when you go."

"I
 did take it
 when I went!"

"How much did you take?"

"Five pesos!"

"If you took money
when you went,
how come you got lost?"

"Three times
I took the subway!"

I took the subway!
For that reason
my money was used up!"

11) Mixtec

N-xica-da metro Ñucohyo.

N-xee-da Chapultepec.
N-tnii-da metro.

N-xee-da Merced.
N-xico ntucu metro.

Juan ndixi-i Chapultepec.
N-cachi ini-da
xa naxee-i nde Tasqueña.

Tnii nahi ni ntucu-da metro.
Ndihi sentau-da.

N-xee-da
ijan ni Merced.
N-quee-da metro.

Ijan
nane-da.
Vitna cuu xa
caca vichi xehe-da.

Te ña xini-da.
Ijan
juan nuhu-da Chapultepec,
juan nuhu-da xica vichi xehe-da.

N-xiau-da.
Ijan
n-xico-da,
nuhu-da
nuu n-xo tuu cuha-da.

Daa
ijan
catuu iin vecahnu
quidavaha-s.

p 34r

Daa
 ijan
 nucoo ìin se ñuu-da,
 ndee-s vehe.

N-cana ñaha-s.

Daa
 ijan
 nanitnaha-da xihin-s.

Ijan
 n-xijan nuu-da ìin pexu.
N-tniì-da ìin camión,
 ìin camión tniì oco uxi.

Ijan
 n-quèe-da.

Ijan
 n-quidi-da.

Te ndeca ñaha-i xica.
ìJuneñaha-i vaxi Xochimilco!

Cuehe n-xica vichi xehe-da ndixi.
N-xiau-da.

Ijan
 n-tniì-da tranvia.

Ijan
 juneñaha-i
 nuu tuu primu-da.

Ijan
 naxee-da
 nde nuu tuu-sì.

Ijan
 daa
 xiahàn-da
 xa n-xita-da.

Ijan
 jahan-s,
 ìjahan-ru
 xa canehe-n sentau
 jìhin!

"ìAru
 nehe
 juahan!"

"ìNàda nehe-n juahan?"
"ìOhon pexu!"

"ìNu nehe-n
 juahan,

p 35r

te nu n-xita-n u?"
"Uni huelta
n-tni-i-r metro!"

iN-tni-i-r metro!
iXijan cuu xa
ndih-i sentau-r!"

12) English

My name
is Celia.

I have a face,
and I can't wash it.

I have a mouth,
and I can't eat.

I have hands,
and I can't grab.

I have feet,
and I can't walk.

I have hair,
and I can't wash it.

You have seen
that therefore
I am lazy!

12) Mixtec

Daña
nani Celia.

Io nùu-da,
te ña cu nandaha-da.

Io yuhu-da,
te ña cu caxi-da.

Io ndaha-da,
te ña cu tni-i-da.

Io xehe-da,
te ña cu caca-da.

Io idi diqui-da,
te ña cu cuchi-da.

iN-xini-n
 xa xijan cuu xa
 xa cudi-da!