

# 6 Independents and Conjuncts in Narrative Discourse

## 6.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I examine the use of independents and conjuncts in narrative discourse, where they have a very different distribution from their use in everyday discourse. Narrative discourse is marked by the high frequency of verbs inflected in the conjunct, which occur in main as well as in subordinate clauses. These conjuncts are usually preceded by the preverb *é-* (I will refer to this preverb-verb combination as an “*é*-conjunct”). This is illustrated by the excerpt given in (1), (verbs are underlined, the use of brackets and the notation “CC” and “NC” are explained below):<sup>1</sup>

(1)

- |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | [I me se ngodek neshnabék <u>é-wdodanwat</u> i je weye <u>é-nshonajtagwat</u> wgetkansewan mine mbish wéd'emwat.] | Once there was a village (some people <u>had a village</u> ) and someone was <u>destroying</u> their gardens and their wells. |
| 2 | [Iw je nish wshkabéwsen <u>é-gi-nokanawat</u> <u>é-wi-kewabmawat</u> wégwéndek o ézhchegét.]                      | So they <u>had</u> two scouts <u>watch out</u> for whomever might be doing that.  |
| 3 | [I je bama zhe na gétén <u>é-byanet</u> weye.]  | Later, sure enough, someone <u>came along</u> .   |

---

<sup>1</sup> Examples contain line numbers to the left of the Potawatomi text, which reference the line numbers in my translations. Line numbers are referenced here as (example:line), as in (1:5). Verbs in the Potawatomi text are roughly indexed to the English translation with underlines. Where the sequence of verbs does not match, numeric indices are given. The code in parentheses after the last line of the English translation indicates the source text. Interlinear glosses of examples are given in Appendix B.

4	[ <u>É-wabmawat</u> kojésen <u>é-bshkobnanet</u> ; jak zhe na <u>é-zhechgénét</u> .]	They <u>saw</u> him <u>pulling out</u> beans and <u>doing</u> all kinds of things.
5	Wabozoyen je ni.	It was Rabbit.

(JS.4.1)

Together, the preverb and conjunct form a construction characteristic of narrative, particularly the genre of mythological narrative called *yadsokanen*.<sup>2</sup> Hockett proposed that this construction functions to “[set] the style of the text, which is a story, not supposed necessarily to be true, at least, not intended as a recounting of anything which once happened to the narrator” (Hockett, 1948d, p. 216).<sup>3</sup> The use of the *é*-conjunct is usually established in the first sentence of a *yadsokan*, which, along with the optional but common formula (*i me se*) *ngodek* ‘once’, functions to announce the narrative performance, as shown in (2) - (4) below:

---

<sup>2</sup> The other main narrative genre, *yajmownen*, includes autobiographical and historical texts. These narrative types, which are not included in the current corpus, need to be considered independently.

<sup>3</sup> Other Central Algonquian languages, such as Ottawa (Nishnaabemwin) and Fox, show a similar use of the conjunct in main clauses for narrative discourse. In Ottawa, the parallel construction is the plain (unchanged) conjunct. According to Valentine, “[t]he reason...is simply that sentences in running narrative sometimes act as if they were subordinated to the whole narrative, or form tight units with adjacent sentences” (Valentine, 2001, p. 951). In Fox, a similar construction takes a conjunct verb preceded by the cognate preverb *e·(h)-* (glossed as ‘aorist’). According to Bloomfield, “[t]his is the commonest form of the conjunct; in hearsay narrative it replaces the independent mode of ordinary speech.” (1927, p. 204) Although Potawatomi is more closely related to Ottawa, speakers of Potawatomi and Fox shared a more recent period of close contact which resulted in many lexical borrowings from Fox into Potawatomi. In this case, it is Fox construction and not that of Ottawa which appears to be the closest to Potawatomi, and may in fact be the source for the Potawatomi construction in its modern form.

(2)

1 [Ngodek wabgonoshkwé é-gche-mwet jik-zibe.]<sub>NC</sub>

Once a rat was crying by the edge of a river.

(HOPT2)

(3)

1 [Ode yadsokan éspen é-bmebtot.]<sub>NC</sub>

This story is about the Raccoon running along.

(JS.4.4)

(4)

1 [I me se ngodek neshnabék é-wdodanwat.]<sub>NC</sub>

Once there was a village. (Literally: 'Some people had a village.'

(JS.4.5)

A main clause verb in the *é*-conjunct, as well as any subordinate clauses forms a grammatical pattern which I will call the *Narrative Construction* (abbreviated NC).<sup>4</sup> The Narrative Construction contrasts with the Conversational Construction in the form of the main clause verb, as shown in (5).

---

<sup>4</sup> A reasonable analysis might limit the domain of the construction to the main clause, defining the distribution of independents and conjuncts *per se*. This, in fact, has been the traditional analysis. However, an argument for including subordinate clauses in the construction comes from the behavior of main clause verbs of speech, where the paradigmatic form of the main clause verb imposes an interpretation on the content of the direct speech in the subordinate clause (this is described in §3.1). Also, the construction is limited to a single main clause verb and any subordinate clauses: verbs in juxtaposed or conjoined main clauses can belong to different construction types, as shown by 24:29 and 24:31. As will be argued below, the CC and NC constructions are associated with different discourse functions, and this domain for the construction (main plus subordinate clauses) is proposed (at least for Potawatomi) as the minimum unit with which these discourse functions can be associated.

(5) A COMPARISON OF THE NC AND CC

<i>Construction Type</i>	<i>Main Clause Verb</i>	<i>Subordinate Clause Verb(s)</i>
Narrative Construction (NC)	é-conjunct	(é-) conjunct
Conversational Construction (CC)	independent	(é-) conjunct

This statement of the contrast between the NC and CC requires qualification. First, it is unclear whether conjuncts in subordinate clauses inflect, taking the preverb *é-* or not, just as they would in conversation. Part of the difficulty in determining this with certainty is the rarity of contexts in narrative clauses that would require a conjunct without *é-*. There are no examples of hypothetical clauses outside of direct speech in the corpus, and only three instances of ‘before’ clauses, two of which show contradictory treatments, given in (6) and (7). In (6), the narrator uses an *é-*conjunct in the adverbial ‘before’ clause, which goes against conversational usage (see Chapter 4, examples 24 - 25); and in (7) a different narrator uses a conjunct without the preverb, in accord with conversational usage:

(6)

50 [*É-bwamshe-nyéwgongek é-byawat giw néyap i je o nene é-nat niw osen, "Nnedwéndan débéndemak."*]<sub>NC</sub>

Before the four days ended, the couple came back, and the man said to his father, “I want our belongings.”

(JS.4.2)

(7)

46 [*Iw je i ga-nakwnegét é-wi-débmat pi bwamshe gwabtonet.*]<sub>NC</sub>

The one that planned it would grab him before he reached the shore.

(MD102694)

There are many sociolinguistic factors which could potentially account for this difference: the speakers are grew up in different communities, belong to different generations, and show idiolectal variation in narrative style. There is also the potential factor of using of *bwamshe* ‘before’ as a preverb in (6), and as a particle in (7).<sup>5</sup> At this point, there is simply too little data to suggest an analysis.

The second qualification concerns narrative sentences with main clause conjuncts that appear without the preverb *é-*. There are a few such sentences in the corpus; examples are given in (8) and (9), which are both from the same text:

(8)

28 [A<sup>6</sup>, babwichgét jigbyék.]<sub>NC</sub> Ah, he waited there by the shore.  
(MD102694)

(9)

35 [A, gkanabmat o wabozo.]<sub>NC</sub> Ah, the Rabbit looked across at him.  
(MD102694)

Since both verbs are imperfective, and the sentences appear in different parts of the story, it is likely that this is some other construction type, rather than a production or

---

<sup>5</sup> There is the additional complexity of (6) and (7) belonging to different narrative discourse types. (6) is a narrative sentence, and (7) is an explanatory aside, which, as will be discussed below, have different grammatical requirements.

<sup>6</sup> There is a preverb *a-* that appears infrequently and in similar contexts as *é-*. However, the intonation and pauses in the recording of this text indicate that the *a* in (7) and (8) are clearly interjections rather than preverbs. (The interjections *a* and *o* are frequently found at the beginning of sentences in this text, and as is often the case with interjections, their semantic contribution is difficult to pin down).

transcription error. As with the case of adverbial clause usage, more data will have to be analyzed before this can be worked out.

Abstracting away from these complications, we will say for now that the primary difference between the NC and the CC is the form of the main clause verb. This contrast becomes important in narrative, since, although the NC is the predominant construction found in *yadsokanen*, there are usually several instances of the CC in any given text, sometimes occurring in sequences of sentences.

According to Hockett, independent verbs in narrative (that is, instances of the CC) indicate “explanatory material directed to the listener, not integrally part of the story, or else direct quotation” (Hockett, 1948d, p. 216). Indeed, throughout the texts, direct speech always occurs in the conversational pattern. This is illustrated in (10) by the speech of two characters, Rabbit and Lion.

(Sentences in the NC are indicated by surrounding the clause in brackets followed by a subscript “NC” label, and sentences in the CC are indicated by the use of brackets followed by a subscript “CC”. If there is no finite verb in the main clause, as in the case of verbless sentences (see 1:5), or when the main clause verb is a participle (see 14:7), the construction type is formally—although not necessarily functionally—indeterminate, in which case, no surrounding brackets are used.)

(10)

- 44 [Iw je é-bme-byat niw beshkmwén  
é-nat]<sub>NC</sub>["Nsezé! Gyétnam nzéges.]<sub>CC</sub> When he [Rabbit] came across the  
lion he said to him, "Brother, I'm  
very scared.
- 45 [Nwébi'wé].<sub>CC</sub> I'm running away from someone.
- 46 [Weye zhode nshiwagze anwe gé gin  
gneshiwagwes nesh je win nwech].<sub>CC</sub> Someone here is pretty scary; and  
you're scary, but he's even worse.
- 47 [Ibe gge-zhyamen; gétén nshiwagze].<sub>CC</sub> Let's go over there; he sure is scary."
- 48 [Beshkmwé é-kedot],<sub>NC</sub> ["Gzhyamen,  
gge-we-wabmamen"].<sub>CC</sub> Lion said, "Lets go and take a look at  
him."
- (JS.4.1)

Hockett provides three examples of 'parenthetical explanation' which come from the first of two glossed texts in his sketch. These are given in (11) and (12) below (my transliteration, Hockett's translations):

(11)

- 2 [Neshnabé je o wéni'gét éspen gi-yawe].<sub>CC</sub> 'When the Indian went trapping, the  
raccoon went along.'
- (HOPT1)

(12)

- 11 [Gi je yaygénwik je giw;]<sub>CC</sub> [jo je mamda é-  
wi-wépodwat; é-bwa-gkénmat ni wde-  
éspenmen].<sub>NC</sub> 'They were just the same size, these  
two, you see; so it was impossible for  
him [the man] to hit him [the other  
coon]; he couldn't tell which one was  
his own.'
- 12 [Pene je ni wde-éspenmen nam-yegwan gi-  
wjeshnon].<sub>CC</sub> 'His own coon was always  
underneath.'
- (HOPT1)

Hockett's analysis of the use of independents in direct speech need not be disputed, since it is uniformly the case. However, the analysis of remaining instances of independent verbs as occurring in 'explanatory material' raises several questions. One question lies in

defining what is meant or encompassed by ‘explanatory material.’ Is it the case that the CC marks background information? And if this is the case, does the NC by contrast mark foreground information, or the ‘main thread’ of the narrative?

Hockett’s analysis also raises questions of descriptive adequacy. Many instances of the CC in narrative defy categorization as explanatory material, or even inclusion in the wider category of background material. Can these instances themselves be categorized, and if so, what relationship do these uses have, if any, to uses already described?

In the discussion below, I argue that the main distinction between the CC and NC is, in fact, their role in grounding (Section 6.2) and that the remaining uses of the CC can be explained as instances of narrative-internal perspective (Section 6.3).

## **6.2 Grounding**

Linguistic analyses of narrative discourse usually recognize two broad types of clause: one type which provides the main events of a narrative, and another which provides supportive information such as explanations, evaluations and descriptive commentary. The terminology for these two types varies, however, I will refer to the main narrative information as ‘foreground’ and the supportive information as ‘background’.<sup>7</sup> In the following sections, I show that a main function of the CC is to encode background information, and in contrast, the use of the NC in narrative encodes foreground information.

---

<sup>7</sup> The use of these terms is after Hopper (1979a; 1979b) and Hopper and Thompson (1980) who compared this discourse phenomenon to a gestalt figure/ground relationship and tied it into a larger discussion of language and cognition. Labov (1972) uses the terms ‘narrative clause’ and ‘non-narrative clause’. Grimes uses ‘event’ and ‘non-event’

The discussion in this section is based on Grimes’s analysis of narrative (1975) which recognizes the need to partition narrative information into these two categories.

### 6.2.1 Use of the CC for background

According to Grimes, background information includes settings, explanations, and evaluations. Each of these types is discussed in turn below.

**Settings.** Settings include information about the time, place, and location of a narrative, or give information about the circumstances in which a narrative takes place (Grimes, 1975). The excerpt in (12) below contains an example of a setting. After the opening sentence, the storyteller switches to the CC. The reason for the shift is to provide information that sets up events in the story:

(13) In the story of *Raccoon and Wolf*, Raccoon knows where a stash of pork rind is, and while out on his forays, has also found a beehive. In the first episode of the story, Raccoon tricks Wolf into thinking the beehive is the sack of meat. The following information prepares the listener for the setup of the trick:

1	[Ode yadsokan éspen <u>é-bmebtot</u> .]nc	This story is about the Raccoon <u>running along</u> .
2	<u>[É-yé-bmebtot</u> o éspen <u>wgi-wabman</u> amon <u>é-gojnenet</u> .]cc	While Raccoon <u>was running along</u> , he <u>saw</u> bees (a hive) <u>hanging</u> (from a tree).
3	[Ga-zhewébzet je <u>gi-gmegmodé</u> gokosh wzheyen ngoji.]cc	He would go about <u>stealing</u> pork rind somewhere.

(JS.4.4)

Some texts, like that of the example just given, dispense with the setting in a matter of one or two sentences. Other texts have several sentences at the beginning which serve as an setting. In the following excerpt, the setting begins at line 2, and runs through line 6 (and

arguably through line 7, although the discourse pattern of line 7 is not discernable). The narrative proper begins at line 8, which switches to the NC. The NC continues then as the predominant pattern:

(14)

1	[I me se ngodek neshnabék <u>é-wdodanwat.</u> ]nc	Once there was a village. [More literally, ‘some people <u>had a village</u> ’].
2	[ <u>Gi-dbedbowék</u> ; gégo zhena <u>gi-yajdanawat.</u> ]cc	They <u>were having a council</u> ; <u>talking</u> about something.
3	[I je ibe mbesek nawésh [gagita] odan <u>gi-yawen</u> ibe.]cc	And there <u>was</u> a town in the middle of a lake.
4	I je yé i ga-wje-dbedbowéwat.	That’s where they would go for their council.
5	[I je ngot nene neshzhena <u>gi-wijéwé</u> neko.]cc	So there was one man who <u>used to go along</u> for no particular reason.
6	[Jo zhena win gégo <u>gi-zhe-dbowési</u> neshzhena <u>é-zhyat.</u> ]cc	He <u>did not go for the council</u> ; he <u>went</u> for no particular reason.
7	Ga-wje-zhyat je <u>é-wi-mnekwét.</u>	The reason he went <u>was to drink</u> .
8	[Ngodek <u>é-dokit</u> bama zhena jo weye;]nc [jayék <u>gi-majiwagben.</u> ]cc	Once this man <u>woke up</u> and nobody was there; everyone <u>must have left</u> .
9	[ <u>É-gingenayek</u> nsheké.]nc	He <u>was left all alone</u> .
10	[Ngodek jigbyék <u>é-gi-we-jajibdebet</u> gdewanen <u>é-giwadzet</u> i je o mtek <u>é-gi-ggenonat.</u> ]nc	One time he went by the lake and <u>sat</u> by a log, <u>feeling lonely</u> , and the tree <u>spoke</u> to him.

(JS.4.5)

*Explanations.* Grimes describes explanations as “not part of the narratives themselves, but [information that] stands outside them and clarifies them,” and that “...explanations and comments about what happens have a secondary role that may be

reflected in the use of distinctive grammatical patterns” (Grimes, 1975, p. 55-6).<sup>8</sup> In Potawatomi, explanations are marked by the use of the CC, which sets them off from the majority of the narrative sentences in the NC. For example, the last clause in (14:8) (which occurs after the setting) explains that the man suddenly finds himself alone because his friends have abandoned him. It is common to find such sentences in the CC occurring in isolation within a narrative. This is probably because explanations generally have a local function, serving as asides that comment on or explain events in nearby sentences. Settings, in contrast, tend to be longer and generally occur at the beginning of a narrative; their location is in keeping with their more global function of providing information which helps stage the narrative as a whole.

Examples like (13:8) which provide additional information about the story-world are what I call *story-internal* explanations. They are fairly common in the corpus, and include Hockett’s examples of ‘parenthetical explanation’ in (11) and (12). Additional examples are given in (15) – (19) below, preceded by a description of the context:

- (15) A village chief has been trying to get Rabbit killed by sending him on all kinds of perilous missions. None of these devices work, and in the end, it is Rabbit who kills himself by following through on a boast that he can walk through a fireplace without harm. Of course, a fireplace isn’t very perilous unless there is a fire in it, so the narrator takes pains to interrupt the story in order to provide the fire:

---

<sup>8</sup> Grimes uses the term ‘background’ for what I am calling ‘explanations’. I reserve the term ‘background’ to refer to the broader category that includes settings, explanations and evaluations.

88 [I je iw bodwagen mégwa shkodé gi-témget.]cc

So there was still a fire in the fireplace.

(JS.4.1)

- (16) A man is out hunting with his wife and son. The woman, in gathering bark to make cord, meets a bear with whom she initiates a sexual relationship. In Algonquian lore, animal-human matings upset the natural balance which can lead to all kinds of trouble, providing plenty of fodder for stories.<sup>9</sup> In this tale, the man's hunting is affected, and he cannot kill anything. The man ends up near starvation, but the woman and the boy are well-fed and happy. As an aside, the narrator posits the following as the reason for their different situations:

9 [Ode mko wgi-sheman.]cc

This bear was feeding them.

(JS.4.6)

- (17) In the *French Story*, a destitute boy and his grandfather are able to raise their fortune as a result of being taught blacksmithing by the French Spirit. In the process of acquiring stock, they obtain a pony that turns out to be magical. The narrator explains the special function of the pony in lines 18 and 19:

18 [O négdoshas wgi-nizhokmagwan.]cc

The pony helped them.

19 [É-bwamshe-je-yewawat négdoshayen wgi-wbesh'egwan seksiyen wgetganéswa.]cc

Before they had the pony, the deer were ruining their gardens.

(JS.4.3)

- (18) A boy and his grandfather discover a scheme to spy on them, cooked up by the man's son and the son's wife. The couple hide her mother in a box, provisioned with food, and leave the box of 'valuables' with the boy and grandfather to guard while they leave to go on a trip. The boy and grandfather discover the old lady in the box, which they have been using as a dinner table. Line 48 provides the prop which the boy uses to suffocate the old lady (line 49) while she is unconscious.

---

<sup>9</sup> This insight is from Richard Rhodes (p.c.).

- 47 [Iw je é-gi-babgemat niw ndemozéyen.]<sub>NC</sub> So he knocked the old lady  
(in the head).
- 48 [Jak bkwézhgasen wa-mijet zhiw gi-  
tène.]<sub>CC</sub> All the crackers for her to  
eat were there.
- 49 [Iw je é-gi-bkwénshkodwat niw  
bkwézhgasen mine iw ziwabo abte é-gi-  
zigwébnék.]<sub>NC</sub> He stuffed the crackers in  
her mouth and poured out half of  
the cider.

(JS.4.2)

- (19) The last example comes from the story of *Raccoon and Wolf*. After Raccoon and Wolf get to a stash of meat inside a shed, Raccoon selects a piece and drags it back out the hole where they crawled in. Wolf, however, gorges himself all night, which explains why he was unable to scramble away when the white people come into the shed to check on their meat:

- 39 [O mwé gi-wzam-débsenyét jo mamda  
é-wi-majnewit é-pich-dbomayek.]<sub>CC</sub> The wolf was too full; he couldn't  
move away while they talked over  
(what to do about) him.

(JS.4.4)

Sometimes, a narrator will refer to a cultural practice in order to explain story events, which I call *story-external* explanations.<sup>10</sup> Two examples are given in (20) and (21).

- (20) A listener in hearing the opening of the *Rabbit Story* (see example 1), might object that the villagers, angry at Rabbit for destroying their gardens, would just kill Rabbit outright. If they could, of course, we wouldn't have much of a story. To counter this potential objection, the narrator interjects a reference to background cultural knowledge: community law prevented the villagers from executing the Rabbit, which is why they tried to set up his 'accidental' death:

---

<sup>10</sup> It is worth noting that the narrator's audience, Hockett, was an outsider to this community, and presumably was not familiar with these cultural practices.

8 [Iw je o wabozo zhiw gi-dbendagze odanek  
jo je mamda i é-wi-zhe-nsawat mamwéché  
bshe gégo gjiyek bama a-je-nsawat.]cc

Since the Rabbit belonged to the village, they couldn't kill him as they please; they would have to get something more on him in order to kill him.

(JS.4.1)

- (21) In the story of the woman who has relations with a bear, the son, who wants to tell his father what is happening, is prevented from doing so because his father is out hunting during the day, and the boy sleeps with his mother at night. The narrator provides cultural information to explain why the husband and wife slept separately. This information also reinforces why the husband's hunting was affected by his wife's behavior: success in hunting is attributable largely to following certain codes of behavior. A man and wife sleeping together during the hunt is enough to affect hunting success, let alone the extraordinary situation of one's wife sleeping with a bear.

10 I je iw pi neshnabék é-giwséwat jo  
[wgi-widpémasiwan wdekwéyomwan babkan  
zhena gi-nbék.]cc

And when people went hunting, they didn't sleep with their wives; they slept separately.

(JS.4.6)

*Evaluations.* Evaluations are clauses that express the speaker's reaction to events in the narrative, or to the narrative as a whole. Evaluative clauses can occur throughout narrative (Labov and Waletzky, 1967), and tend to be mobile, that is, they can be extracted and placed at other points in the narrative without significantly disrupting the narrative continuity (Grimes, 1975). In the Potawatomi narratives I have examined, evaluations tend to occur at the beginnings and ends of narratives, often in thematically paired sequences of sentences where the sentences in the conclusion recapitulate those of the introduction. This seems to be a common phenomenon with stories whose telling serves an explanatory or

moralistic function: as Grimes notes, “a story with a moral is...likely to be an exhortation within which there is an embedded narrative” (Grimes, 1975, p.64).

The excerpt in (21) is from a modern text that ‘explains’ why rabbits today have short tails. Lines 1-5 contain the initial evaluative material. The narrator returns to this theme in line 56 after the conclusion of the main narrative:<sup>11</sup>

(22)

- |   |   |  |
|---|---|--|
| 1 | [O, neko <u>ngi-babzedwak</u> neshnabék <u>é-yayaajmowat</u> éyayéngajmowat.] <sub>cc</sub> | I used <u>to listen</u> to the people <u>telling stories</u> ; something they laughed about. |
| 2 | [Iw je] ni wabozoyen ngodek <u>é-gi-yajmawat</u> .  | Once they <u>told about</u> Rabbit.  |
| 3 | [O, bnewi neko o wabozo <u>gi-gnewanwé</u> .] <sub>cc</sub>                                 | Oh, at one time Rabbit had a long tail.  |
| 4 | [ <u>Gi-gnewanwédek</u> <u>kedwik</u> .] <sub>cc</sub>                                      | He <u>must have had a long tail</u> , they <u>say</u> .                                      |
| 5 | Iw je i wéch-shkwanwat ngom <u>ga-zhewébzet</u> .   | That’s why he has a short tail today, <u>because of what happened to him</u> .               |

Continued...

- |    |  |  |
|----|--|--|
| 56 | Iw je iw yédek wéch-ngom-shkwanwat o wabozo, [ <u>gi-kedwik</u> neko gi gékyajek neko <u>é-gi-wnanodogwa</u> <u>é-yangajmowat</u> .] <sub>cc</sub> | That’s must be why Rabbit has a short tail today, the elders used to <u>say</u> , <u>when I heard them telling funny stories</u> . |
|----|--|--|

(MD102694)

The French story, given in (23) – (25) and discussed below is a similar example, having extensive thematically related evaluative sections.

---

<sup>11</sup> Labov (1972, p. 371) notes that narrators sometimes stop in the middle of narration to address the listener and tell what the point of the story is. He calls this ‘external evaluation’, since it is a break from the storytelling frame. The example in (22) would fall under Labov’s category of ‘embedded evaluations’, a more sophisticated device which does not break the continuity of the story.

## 6.2.2 Use of the NC for foreground

If a primary function of the CC in narrative is to indicate background, then one must next address whether the NC is used for foreground. In order to see if this is the case, we will now examine the *French Story*, a short narrative given in its entirety in (23) – (25) below.

This narrative is an example of a story told as an explanation for a real world phenomena. As discussed above, a story which functions as an explanation commonly has evaluation sections which bracket an embedded narrative. In this case, the embedded narrative tells the story of how the French Spirit helps out a destitute boy and his grandfather. The evaluation sections explain that some Potawatomi cultural practices are ultimately attributable to the French (via the French Spirit).

The story begins with an evaluative section (lines 1-13) which is told almost entirely in the CC. Most of the verbs are imperfective, and the clauses are not temporally ordered:

(23)

1	[Ngom wdopi wémtegozhi <u>yewak</u> naganit.] <sub>CC</sub>	Up to today, the French <u>are</u> the leaders somewhere.
2	[Iw je ngom wdopi <u>nnodamen</u> weye <u>é-wépodek biwabek wizhgya é-nayek</u> wi zhé ibe Kansas mémek.] <sub>CC</sub>	Nowadays we <u>hear</u> someone <u>blacksmithing</u> , especially there in Kansas, they <u>say</u> .
3	O je yé o gche-mnedo éng[e]t wémtegozhi.	That's the great spirit of the French.
4	O yé o gangezot wémtegozhi ékdonegek.	That's the lost French, so they say.
5	[I je ngom <u>bme-yewak</u> zhena nekmek.] <sub>CC</sub>	Now he is <u>moving around</u> in different places.
6	[Jo win <u>gdemagzesi</u> ginan wi énesnabéwigo <u>gdekdomen</u> .] <sub>CC</sub>	He is <u>not poor</u> ; we who are Indians <u>say</u> that.
7	[Wémtegozhi <u>manéton</u> wzaw-zhonya mine mkedé-biwabek.] <sub>CC</sub>	The French <u>have</u> lots of gold and black iron.
8	[Mine ngom <u>é-gkéndemgo</u> bgoch-négdoshayek mine seksik jak zhena <u>é-yemgek</u> .] <sub>NC</sub>	And today we <u>know</u> wild horses and deer and so forth <u>are there</u> .
9	[Ode je nene win <u>wdebénman</u> .] <sub>CC</sub>	This man <u>owns</u> them.

- |    |   |  |
|----|---|--|
| 10 | [Ode je wémtegozhi gzhé-mnedon <u>wgi-nizhokmagon</u> <u>é-wi-mishgwezet</u> ode je anet gikansenan Spanish <u>é-nayek<sub>1</sub></u> ode <u>wdekwénzhgewan<sub>2</sub></u> .]cc | Now God <u>helped</u> the French to <u>be powerful</u> , but our brother the Spanish <u>was victorious<sub>2</sub></u> , they <u>say<sub>1</sub></u> . |
| 11 | [I je ngom wdopi ode wémtegozhi nwech zhe <u>ninweze</u> zhode kik.]cc  | Up to today, the French <u>are very weak</u> in the world.   |
| 12 | [Ngodek je ode wémtegozhi <u>wgi-nizhokmowen</u> neshnabén.]cc  | At one time, the French <u>helped</u> out the Indians.   |
| 13 | [I je i pi ode wémtegozhi <u>wgi-minan</u> ngenwen i je yé i ngom gode neshnabék <u>é-yewat</u> i je ode ngom nim'ediwen gode neshnabék <u>é-gche-yowat</u> .]cc                  | At that time the French <u>gave</u> him a song, and that's the one these Indians <u>here use</u> in their dancing to this day.                         |

(JS.4.4)

The switch to the NC in line 8 is at first surprising, since it seems to be a free clause just like the surrounding sentences.<sup>12</sup> However, it is different in that it takes place in ‘real’ time, as opposed to ‘story’ time. It is structurally similar to line 2, which also is framed as the present with *ngom* ‘now, today’. However, the reference to wild horses is based in reality (there were, for example wild horses on certain Potawatomi reservations within people’s memory) compared to the blacksmith of line 2, which seems to represent a mythical or spiritual being. The function of line 8 seems to be an aside, making it an aside within the larger evaluative section which is in itself a kind of aside. Since the CC is expected in evaluations, perhaps the preferred way to distinguish such ‘double asides’ is to switch into the NC.

The next section contains the narrative proper. This begins at line 14, where the storyteller switches to the NC. The NC is used throughout this section to form the matrix of sequential events in the story. The sentences that occur in the conversational pattern (indented here from the other text) are background information. Like the clauses in the

---

<sup>12</sup> The first verb is a conjunct, since it has the *é-* preverb rather than stem-internal change expected of the participle. The main and subordinate clauses are therefore in the NC.

opening evaluation, these sentences tend to be non-sequential (lines 19 and 30) and frequently contain verbs with imperfective aspect (lines 18, 25, and 29):

(24)

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <p>14 [I je o wémtegozhi <u>é-gi-nat</u> niw gigabéyen]<sub>NC</sub> ["Nasena <u>zhechgén</u> ézh-widmonan."]<sub>CC</sub></p>  | <p>The French <u>told</u> one boy, “Be careful <u>to do</u> things the way I tell you to.”</p>  |
| <p>15 [I je o wémtegozhi <u>é-wishteyaywat</u><sub>1</sub> <u>é-gkeno'mewat</u><sub>2</sub> ni gigabéyen.]<sub>NC</sub></p>   | <p>So that French (Spirit) <u>was teaching</u><sub>2</sub> the boy how <u>to blacksmith</u><sub>1</sub>.</p>  |
| <p>16 [I je o gigabé wikapi <u>é-gi-ne-wishteyaywat</u> <u>é-gi-gkeno'mowat</u> niw wmeshomsen.]<sub>NC</sub></p>   | <p>Finally, the boy started <u>to blacksmith</u>, and he <u>taught</u> his grandfather.</p>   |
| <p>17 [Wikapi <u>é-gi-négdoshayensawat</u> mine zhená <u>gégo</u>.]<sub>NC</sub></p>  | <p>Finally, they <u>had a pony</u> and so forth.</p>  |
| <p>18 [O <u>négdoshas</u> <u>wgi-nizhokmagwan</u>.]<sub>CC</sub></p>  | <p>The pony <u>helped</u> them.</p>   |
| <p>19 [É-bwamshe-je-yewawat <u>négdoshayen</u> <u>wgi-wbesh'egwan</u> <u>seksiyen wgetganéswa</u>.]<sub>CC</sub></p>  | <p><u>Before they had</u> the pony, the deer were <u>ruining</u> their gardens.</p>   |
| <p>20 [Gigabé <u>é-ggenonat</u> ni <u>négdoshayen</u>, ]<sub>NC</sub> ["Ni je <u>wa-zhechgéyan</u>?"]<sub>CC</sub></p>  | <p>The boy <u>asked</u> the pony, “What <u>should I do</u>?”</p>  |
| <p>21 [I je o <u>négdosha</u> <u>é-nat</u>,]<sub>NC</sub> ["Wigbish mtegor wdenen <u>ge-dkobdon</u> <u>nkwégnak gekwedso'</u> <u>égme-kezhyép</u> <u>ge-giwta'omgon</u> iw ggetganwa.]<sub>CC</sub></p> | <p>And the pony <u>said</u>, “Get some bark from the basswood tree, <u>tie</u> it around my neck, <u>jump on</u>, and ride me around your garden every morning.</p> |
| <p>22 [I je gi seksik <u>é-wi-zégzewat</u>.]<sub>CC</sub></p>   | <p>The deer <u>will be scared</u>.</p>  |
| <p>23 [Nesh je gégo zhe <u>gwi-zhe-ngok</u>."]<sub>CC</sub></p>   | <p>Of course, they <u>will say</u> something to you.”</p>   |
| <p>24 [O seksik <u>é-kedot</u>]<sub>NC</sub> ["Wégni je o wakayabdé <u>byé-zizdeyatek</u>?"]<sub>CC</sub></p>   | <p>The deer <u>said</u> “What does that round-tooth <u>have sticking out between his legs</u>?”<sup>13</sup></p>  |
| <p>25 [Égme-kezhyép zhená o je wémtegozhi <u>nizhokmowen</u> i je mine <u>wa-mijwat</u><sub>1</sub> <u>wiyas</u> o <u>gi-wje-wdetnanawa</u><sub>2</sub>.]<sub>CC</sub></p>                              | <p>Every morning the French Spirit <u>helped</u> them, and that’s how they <u>obtained</u><sub>2</sub> their meat <u>to eat</u><sub>1</sub>.</p>                    |
| <p>26 [Ga-gish-jagnénet wdenwémagnen wmeshomsen <u>ga-gish-mbonet</u> <u>é-gi-majit</u>.]<sub>NC</sub></p>  | <p>After his relatives and grandfather <u>died</u>, he <u>left</u>.</p>   |

<sup>13</sup> Native speakers are unsure exactly how this sentence should be translated. It may be a sexual joke, or it may refer to the monstrous appearance of a man riding horseback. Round-tooth may be an epithet for a human being (as used by the deer!).

- 27 [I je géyabe wémtegozhi nizhokmowan  
géyabe je ngom gnizhokmagnan.]cc Still the French helped him,  
and is helping us to this day.
- 28 I je ngom pi neshnabé wémtegozhi  
mskwé wéj-gwgezhek o wémtegozhi  
é-gi-zhwénmat. Up to today Indians have  
French blood inside them,  
because the French (Spirit)  
blessed them.
- 29 [Ode gigabé é-gi-majit é-gi-byat odanek  
neshnabén éyenet;]nc This boy left and came to where there  
was an Indian village;  
[ga-gkéndek je ni wémtegozhiyen  
wgi-gkeno'mowan neshnabén  
wa-zhi'enet.]cc what he learned from the  
French he taught the people  
who were there.
- 30 [Ga-gish-gkeno'mowat wiznabén  
wa-zhetonet, gégo wgi-nan:]cc ["Gégo  
nsedi'kégon,"]cc [ wgi-nan.]cc After he taught his fellow  
people what to do, he told  
them something: "Don't kill  
one another," he said.
- 31 [I je o wémtegozhi é-gi-nat niw gigabéyen  
ga-widmowak é-wi-bwa-mje-dodadwat,]nc And the French told the boy what to  
tell them, that they should not abuse  
each other,  
[mine i je ngom wdopi neshnabék  
énwék-dbénbwék.]cc and so up to this day, the  
Indians are surely civilized.

(JS.4.3)

In the conclusion of the story, the narrator returns to the evaluative theme of the introduction, reiterating the reason for the story's telling. Once again we have the evaluative information coded in the CC.

(25)

- 32 [I je ngom wdopi déwé'gen-nim'ediwen  
débwétanawa neshnabék i yé i ga-gowat ni  
wémtegozhiyen.]cc Up to this day the Indians believe in  
the drum dance; that's the one the  
French told him about.
- 33 [Iw je ngom wdopi jak neshnabék  
wdébwétanawa ode madmowen iw je  
wéj-mno-widokwdadwat.]cc And up to today, all the Indians  
believe this way and that's why they  
are good friends.
- 34 [Nchiwénmok é-wabdawat ngom wdopi.]cc They are happy to see each other up  
to today.
- 35 Iw je ékwak ode wémtegozhi yajmowen. So that's how long this French story  
is.

### 6.2.3 The grounding function of the CC and NC

Based on the data presented above, it seems clear that a primary function of the CC and NC in narrative is to distinguish foreground and background information.<sup>14</sup> It is no surprise that Potawatomi should grammaticalize a grounding contrast. It has been proposed that the foreground/background distinction is a functional universal in narrative discourse (Hopper, 1979b). Nor is it surprising that such a contrast should be achieved by means of morphological marking on the verb: languages show considerable variation in the grammatical devices which they employ to encode grounding; these range from the use of specialized discourse particles to the verbal properties of aspect, voice, and even word order (Hopper, 1979a). In some languages, such as English, grounding isn't associated with any single grammatical feature, but rather is associated with a set of properties (Hopper and Thompson, 1980).<sup>15</sup>

---

<sup>14</sup> It might be suggested that the CC and NC are not being used for grounding at all, but are rather the result of a process like clause chaining. In languages that use clause chaining in narrative, a series of non-finite clauses is terminated by a finite clause. The function of clause chaining appears to be to delimit sentences by topic, since each finite clause corresponds roughly to the end of a paragraph (Longacre, 1985, p. 265). Under a clause chaining analysis we would therefore expect a more even distribution of independent verbs to reflect thematic divisions in the text. However, as we have seen, independent verbs do not have an even distribution; in fact, at first glance they appear to have a scattershot distribution except in the introductions and conclusions of texts, where they cluster (due to their use for settings and evaluations).

<sup>15</sup> Foreground clauses are associated with high transitivity, with verbs that tend to be perfective, sequential, kinetic events and realis; background clauses are associated with low transitivity, with verbs that tend to be imperfective, non-sequential, stative and irrealis (Hopper and Thompson, 1980).

### 6.3 Use of the CC for internal viewpoint

Once we redefine the primary use of the CC in narrative as encoding background information, we take care of many instances of the CC, notably settings and evaluations, which cannot be perspicuously defined as ‘explanatory material’. However, several puzzling instances remain which defy even this wider categorization.<sup>16</sup>

In this section, I argue that these problematic examples show the use of the CC for narrative-internal viewpoint, where the narrator represents information as coming from a particular character’s point of view. This imposition of a unique perspective different from the narrator’s can have the effect of making the narrative more lively: the audience ‘sees’ through the character’s eyes.<sup>17</sup> A primary function of internal viewpoint is therefore for vividness. However, because internal viewpoint limits vision to the character, it can also be used to restrict the validity of information to that character. Along with the function of vividness then, another function of internal viewpoint is to emphasize the epistemic distance between the narrator’s thoughts and beliefs, and those of a character.

This analysis finds support in the use of the CC for direct speech, which has also been shown to be a kind of internal viewpoint. In a study of news texts, Sanders and Redeker

---

<sup>16</sup> A likely explanation for why Hockett missed these problematic cases was that the texts he collected contain relatively few instances of the CC outside of direct speech. Modern texts that were first audiotaped and then transcribed indicate a much more frequent use of the CC, and therefore many more instances outside of direct speech which require an explanation.

<sup>17</sup> I use the term ‘internal’ perspective in contrast with ‘external’ perspective, where narrators report the actions of characters. This is the classical distinction between mimesis and diegesis (Plato, 1968). This topic has received considerable attention in the field of narratology, where it is also referred to as ‘focalization’—see Genette (1980) for a discussion.

(1996) found that internal perspective is an important function of reported speech: with indirect speech, the narrator shares responsibility for the content with the subject, however in direct speech, the responsibility is presented as remaining entirely with the subject. Therefore, treating the examples below as cases of internal perspective subsumes them under the broader umbrella of perspective phenomena that includes direct speech, allowing what would otherwise be problematic instances of the CC to be easily assimilated into the present analysis.

Section 6.3.1 contains examples of the CC used for vividness. Section 6.3.2 shows the use of the CC for epistemic distance, in a particular context I call ‘quote frames’. Section 6.3.3 shows other cases of epistemic distancing. In Section 6.3.4, I argue that the use of the CC for epistemic distancing has been extended to a new context, what I call ‘semantic opposition’.

### **6.3.1 Vividness**

Internal viewpoint can be used so that the narrative seems to come from a particular character’s point of view. This has the effect of making the narrative more lively; the narrator ‘shows’ what happened instead of reporting it.

In the story of *How Rabbit Got a Short Tail*, the narrative begins with the Rabbit stopped on the shore of a river, wishing to cross it in order to get to the clover on the opposite side. In line 12, the Crocodile character is introduced. Line 13 is in the NC. In line 14, the narrator switches to the CC, apparently taking the rabbit’s perspective, since what is ‘sticking out’ is most apparent to an observer above the water:

(26)

- 12 I je gé wi zhi o gaganago i yédek. So must be Crocodile was there.
- 13 [Béshoch zhe na zhi jigbyék [gé] He was floating in the water near the  
é-gégwijek.]nc shore.
- 14 [Zagwjanégwijen zhi.]cc His nose was sticking out there.
- (MD102694)

In the next example, we again see through the Rabbit's eyes, since the crocodile is only in 'last place' if he is located at the opposite shore from Rabbit:

(27)

- 46 [[win] ibe shkwéyak gi-nshkwéshen i ga- The Crocodile that planned it lay at  
nakwégét gaganago.]cc the end, there in last place.
- (MD102694)

The use of the CC for vividness seems to be less common among the 1940's texts, although the following are two possible examples (the story of *Raccoon Running Along*), where the viewpoint in line 28 is the Raccoon's, and the Wolf's in line 29:

(28)

- 28 [Éspen o mtegor gi-gdegosi é-wawabmat niw The Raccoon was high (in a tree) and  
mwén wéte zhe é-gi-bdek'egaznet.]cc saw the Wolf get badly stung.
- 29 [I je o mwé jo gi-nshkadzesi; néshnégé That Wolf didn't get mad; he still  
mégwa gi-dnéndan i wa-zhyawat é-wi-gmodwat thought the meat would be there, and  
gokoshen.]cc wanted to go there and steal that  
pork.
- (JS.4.4)

What makes it difficult to decide on a vividness analysis for examples like (28) is that they could also be explained as instances of explanations. While it is difficult to tease these two analyses apart, the fact that most potential 'vividness' examples show this dual

interpretation could be an added motivation for the development of the CC as a perspective device.

### 6.3.2 Quote frames and epistemic distancing

As we have seen, the conversational pattern is always used in narrative to represent the speech or thoughts of a character. In (26), an excerpt from the story of *Raccoon and Wolf*, the discourse of the two characters (lines 6-10) takes place in the CC.<sup>18</sup> In the larger sentence which embeds each quote, the verb of speech is in the conjunct, indicating the use of the NC which is consistent throughout the larger passage (as shown by the inclusion of lines 5 and 11):

(29)

5	[Gété zhená <u>é-gi-nkwéshkwat</u> mwén.] <sub>NC</sub>	Sure enough, he (the Raccoon) <u>met</u> Wolf.
6	["Nshi, <u>gde-ton</u> ne gégo <u>wa-mijyan</u> ?"] <sub>CC</sub> [ <u>é-nat</u> éspenen.] <sub>NC</sub>	“Brother, do you <u>have</u> anything to <u>eat</u> ?” he <u>said</u> to the Raccoon.
7	["Jo zhe kwéch bkéji <u>nde-ton</u> <u>wa-mijyan</u> nawkwék,"] <sub>CC</sub> [ <u>é-nat</u> éspen.] <sub>NC</sub>	“Not much, I just <u>have</u> a little to <u>eat</u> for my own dinner,” <u>said</u> the Raccoon.
8	[Mwé <u>é-natewat</u> ,] <sub>NC</sub> ["Wégni je <u>étuyen</u> ?"] <sub>CC</sub>	Wolf <u>asked</u> him, “What do you <u>have</u> ?”

---

<sup>18</sup> The use of the CC for direct speech also extends to multiply-embedded quotes, where characters report the speech of other characters. In the following example, both the narrator’s and the character’s quotations are in the CC:

20	[Épitajmewat ngot mine <u>é-kedot</u> ,] <sub>NC</sub> ["Shebzhí <u>ngi-nek</u> , ['Nin <u>nda-nsa</u> ,'] <sub>CC</sub> <u>kedo</u> ."] <sub>CC</sub>	While they were talking, another man <u>said</u> , “Lion <u>said</u> to me ‘I <u>can kill</u> him’ [he <u>said</u> ].”
		(JS.4.1)

- 9 [Éspen é-nat,]NC ["Mteno zhe na bkéji gokosh-wzhey ndesa,"]CC [é-nat.]NC Raccoon said, "I have just a little meat-rind," he said.
- 10 [Mwé é-nat,]NC ["Mojma shemshen o wzhey." ]CC Wolf said, "Please feed me that rind."
- 11 [I je o éspen msach é-gi-minat.]NC So the Raccoon finally gave it to him.
- (JS.4.2)

While the use of the NC to frame quotations appears to be the norm; it is not universally the case, as shown by the example from the *Hard Life* story in (30). In lines 64-66, it is the CC and not the NC which frames the quotations:

(30)

- 62 [Ga-gish-ngo'wawat gigabé néyap é-wawidmewat niw kewéziyen,]NC ["Nmesho, ngodwak gwkéngo'gazo o ndemozé." ]CC After they buried her, the boy went back and excitedly told the old man, "Grandfather, one hundred dollars is buried with that old lady.
- 63 [Nwi-mon'wa." ]CC I'm going to dig her up."
- 64 [Kewézi]CC "Jo, gégo" [wdenan.]CC But the old man said, "No, don't."
- 65 ["Gda-bon-gdemagzemen iw ngodwak," ]CC [wdenan.]CC "We could quit living poorly with that hundred," he said to him.
- 66 [Kewézi]CC "Gégo" [wdenan.]CC "Don't," said the old man.
- (JS.4.2)

In the story of *How Rabbit Got a Short Tail*, we find a similar example of the CC used for a quote frame:

(31)

- 27 ["A, iw zhe yédek é-wi-dkemozh'ewat gode," ]CC [zhedé'é o wabozo.]CC "Ah, must be they [the Crocodiles] will take me across," thinks the Rabbit.<sup>19</sup>
- (MD102694)

<sup>19</sup> In Potawatomi narrative, reported speech, including the inner speech of thought, is typically represented as direct speech. Potawatomi has indirect speech, however, outside of narrative.

However, two sentences earlier in the same text, we have the following minimally distinct example, with the Rabbit's thoughts framed in the NC:

(32)

- 25 ["Gégo zhe ode gaganago nwi-nakwnek,"]cc ["This Crocodile has something  
planned for me."] thought the Rabbit.  
(MD102694)

A few lines later in the same story, we have another example of Rabbit's inner speech framed in the NC:

(33)

- 36 "O, wzam ne zhe géte ode? "Oh, can this really be?  
37 [Gaganago nwejitmagodek?"]cc [é-  
zhdé'at.]nc Will Crocodile really help me?" he  
thought.  
(MD102694)

What both (32) and (33) appear to have in common is Rabbit's suspicion of Crocodile's intentions. These stand in contrast with (31), where Rabbit thinks Crocodile and his cronies will help him out. In the latter cases, Rabbit's suspicion is in accord with the beliefs of at least the narrator and probably the audience as well, who likely come to the story with expectations about the Crocodile's dubious character. In (31), however, we have the contrast of Rabbit's naiveté; an epistemic state which the narrator represents as distant from her own.

The analysis that the CC is used by narrators for epistemic distancing finds support in the otherwise problematic instances of the Crocodile's speech in the *How Rabbit Got a Short Tail* story (lines 15 and 19), where the quotes are framed in the CC:

(34)

15 ["A! Nshi! Ni je ézhwébzeyen?"]<sub>CC</sub> [ wdenan  
ni wabozoyen. ]<sub>CC</sub> "Ah, little brother! What's the  
matter?" he said to the Rabbit.

(MD102694)

(35)

19 ["O, jo wi zhe na gégo abje yawsenon  
i,"]<sub>CC</sub> [kedo o gaganago. ]<sub>CC</sub> "Oh, there's nothing much to that,"  
said the Crocodile.

(MD102694)

These can also be analyzed as epistemic distancing, since the narrator and audience are unlikely to have empathy for the Crocodile character.

Returning again to the example in (30) (repeated below), the reported speech in lines 64-66 framed in the CC may also represent internal viewpoint. Here however, there seems to be a shift: the contrast is not between the epistemic state of the narrator versus the character, but rather between the characters themselves, who hold conflicting points of view.

(36)

62 [Ga-gish-ngo'wawat gigabé néyap  
é-wawidmewat niw kewéziyen,]<sub>NC</sub> ["Nmesho,  
ngodwak gwkéngo'gazo o ndemozé."]<sub>CC</sub> After they buried her, the boy went  
back and excitedly told the old man,  
"Grandfather, one hundred dollars is  
buried with that old lady.

63 [Nwi-mon'wa. ]<sub>CC</sub> I'm going to dig her up."

64 [Kewézi]<sub>CC</sub> "Jo, gégo" [wdenan.]<sub>CC</sub> But the old man said, "No, don't."

65 ["Gda-bon-gdemagzemen iw ngodwak,"]<sub>CC</sub>  
[wdenan.]<sub>CC</sub> "We could quit living poorly with  
that hundred," he said to him.

66 [Kewézi]<sub>CC</sub> "Gégo" [ wdenan. ]<sub>CC</sub> "Don't," said the old man.

(JS.4.2)

### 6.3.3 Other cases of epistemic distancing

We now turn to examples other than quote frames which show the use of the CC for epistemic distancing.

In the story of *How Rabbit Got a Short Tail*, as Rabbit is running across the bridge created by the crocodiles' backs, we are told (using the CC) that coming from his perspective ('if someone were to see it'), there appears to be a hole in the water (the narrator later described it as the entrance to a burrow). The audience, of course, knows that it isn't a hole at all, but Crocodile's gaping jaws, waiting to grab Rabbit:

(37)

48 [O, [nme pa zho] mégwa é-gche-bmebtot bama Oh, as he was dashing across, he  
zhe géte... [o] bikwa zhe na wangoyane soon [saw something] that looked just  
wiye gégo é-wabdek.]<sub>cc</sub> like a hole. [more literally: it was  
just like a hole when somebody saw  
it].

(MD102694)

Any character can serve as the locus of viewpoint in a story, including the narrator in the past. In (38), which comes from the end of the *How Rabbit Got a Short Tail* story, the narrator tells a mini-narrative about when she saw rabbits as a child and believed their tails had really been bitten off. She begins in the NC (line 59). In line 60, she restricts the viewpoint to her thoughts as a little girl, switching to the CC to show the epistemic contrast with her current adult knowledge. She evaluates this belief from an adult perspective in line 61:

(38)

59 [Iw je o wabozo neko é-wi-wabmek mégwa  
é-penójéwyan, iw zhe neko i é-gwdenmewek  
iw wzewangos.]<sub>NC</sub>

And when I used to see the rabbit,  
when I still was a child, I used to feel  
his little tail.

60 [O, géte zhe na ode gi-gishkjegadének iw  
wzewangos, neko ngi-zhdé'a.]<sub>CC</sub>

Oh, for sure that little tail was bitten  
off, I used to think.

61 Nmet se na yédek wi na!

I don't know about that!

(MD102694)

### 6.3.4 Semantic opposition

The last set of examples from the corpus that are subject to an internal perspective interpretation are shown in (39) and (40):

(39)

28 [I je ode nene é-gi-nme-ninwezet é-wzam-  
bkedét],<sub>NC</sub> [i je ode kwé mine o gigabé  
pené zhená winwa gi-gimoch-wisnik.]<sub>CC</sub>

So this man got to be weak from  
hunger, but the woman and the boy  
were secretly eating.

(JS.4.6)

(40)

116 [I je gi wéwíwdeyek é-gi-yewat jayék  
débéndemwat é-gi-mbomgek é-gi-  
gdemagzewat.]<sub>NC</sub>

And the couple settled; all that they  
owned [their stock and fowl] died,  
and they were poor.

117 [Mine wzhonyamwa é-gi-jagsanek.]<sub>NC</sub>

Also their money ran out.

118 [O je kewézi mine gigabé gi-mno-  
bmadzik.]<sub>CC</sub>

But the old man and the boy lived  
happily.

(JS.4.2)

These examples have similar adversative semantics, comparing the opposite situations of the protagonist and antagonist. Although the participants whose situation is framed in the CC changes (in (39) it is the antagonist's whereas in (40) it is the protagonist's), in both cases the second situation mentioned is the one framed in the CC.

Also, in both cases, the character(s) mentioned in the first part of the comparison are the ones that have been the subjects of the immediately preceding discourse.

It is possible that this adversative-like use of the CC could have developed out of the use of internal perspective for epistemic distancing, with the intermediate step of examples with quote frames that contrast the mental opposition of two characters within the story. From this point, it is but a short leap in use to contrast the opposite situations of those characters. These three uses are contrasted in examples (41) – (43) below:

(41) EPISTEMIC DISTANCE BETWEEN NARRATOR AND CHARACTER (repeated from (31))

- |    |   |  |
|----|---|--|
| 27 | ["A, iw zhe yédek <u>é-wi-dkemozh'ewat gode,</u> "] <sub>CC</sub> [ <u>zhedé'é</u> o wabozo.] <sub>CC</sub> | “Ah, must be they [the Crocodiles] <u>will take me across,</u> ” <u>thinks</u> the Rabbit. <sup>20</sup> |
|    |   | (MD102694)   |

(42) EPISTEMIC DISTANCE BETWEEN CHARACTERS (repeated from (30))

- |    |  |  |
|----|--|--|
| 62 | [Ga-gish-ngo'wawat gigabé néyap <u>é-wawidmewat niw kewéziyen,</u> ] <sub>NC</sub> ["Nmesho, ngodwak gwkéngo'gazo o ndemozé."] <sub>CC</sub> | After they buried her, the boy went back and excitedly told the old man, “Grandfather, one hundred dollars is buried with that old lady. |
| 63 | [Nwi-mon'wa.] <sub>CC</sub>  | I’m going to dig her up.”  |
| 64 | [Kewézi] <sub>CC</sub> "Jo, gégo" [ <u>wdenan.</u> ] <sub>CC</sub>   | But the old man <u>said</u> , “No, don’t.”   |
| 65 | ["Gda-bon-gdemagzemen iw ngodwak,"] <sub>CC</sub> [ <u>wdenan.</u> ] <sub>CC</sub>   | “We could quit living poorly with that hundred,” he <u>said</u> to him.  |
| 66 | [Kewézi] <sub>CC</sub> "Gégo" [ <u>wdenan.</u> ] <sub>CC</sub>   | “Don’t,” <u>said</u> the old man.  |
|    |  | (JS.4.2)   |

---

<sup>20</sup> In Potawatomi narrative, reported speech, including the inner speech of thought, is typically represented as direct speech. Potawatomi has indirect speech, however, outside of narrative.

(43) OPPOSING SITUATIONS OF CHARACTERS / ADVERSATIVE (repeated from (39))

28 [I je ode nene é-gi-nme-ninwezet é-wzam-  
bkedét,]<sub>NC</sub> [i je ode kwé mine o gigabé  
pené zhená winwa gi-gimoch-wisnik.]<sub>CC</sub>

So this man got to be weak from  
hunger, but the woman and the boy  
were secretly eating.

(JS.4.6)

## 6.4 Summary

In the preceding sections, I have identified the uses of the NC and CC in narrative as shown in (41). As compared with the single discourse use of the NC for foreground clauses, the CC presents a rather large array of functions. The analysis presented above suggests grouping these into two main discourse contexts: background and internal viewpoint.

### (44) USES OF THE NC AND CC IN NARRATIVE

<b>Narrative Construction (NC):</b>	<b>Conversational Construction (CC):</b>
1. Foreground clauses	1. Background: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a. Settings</li><li>b. Explanations<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>i. Story-internal</li><li>ii. Story-external</li></ul></li><li>c. Evaluations</li></ul>
	2. Internal viewpoint: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a. Direct Speech</li><li>b. Outside of direct speech<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>i. Vividness</li><li>ii. Epistemic distance between narrator and character</li><li>iii. Epistemic distance between characters</li><li>iv. Semantic opposition / adversative</li></ul></li></ul>

As a marker of foreground clauses, it is not surprising that the NC is the most common construction encountered in narrative. In contrast, it is surprising that the less frequent CC should occur in such a wide variety of narrative contexts. A possible series of historical developments that could explain these various uses of the CC is outlined below.

## 6.5 Possible historical sequence of CC uses in narrative

It is likely that the first step in the development of the various uses of the CC in narrative was its use to represent direct speech. Here the CC is clearly iconic for basic conversation; we construe characters' dialog in a story as a *kind* of conversation, based on our understanding of how conversations work in reality. At this point, by virtue of its use to represent direct speech, the CC could become associated with internal viewpoint.

Presumably, the reported conversation of characters in a story is normally used for vividness,<sup>21</sup> so it is likely that this was an early use of the CC outside of direct speech. However, internal viewpoint naturally extends to the representation of epistemic distance, allowing the CC to extend to these contexts as well.

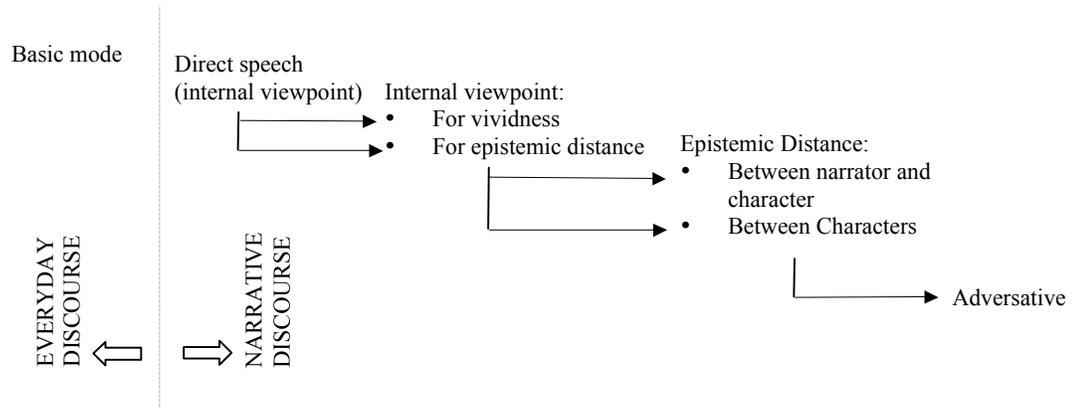
The primary use of the CC for epistemic distancing appears to be a contrast between the narrator and character's point of view. However, we have also seen cases where this is extended to represent opposing points of view between characters in a narrative, as in (30). Once the construction comes to represent a contrast contained within the bounds of the narrative, it is a short step to its use as an adversative, as in examples (39) and (40).

Thus we have the following hypothetical series of developments:

---

<sup>21</sup> There is no choice of direct or indirect speech in Potawatomi narrative, at least, one never finds indirect speech. However, a narrator can choose to report what characters say or simply describe their actions.

(45)



With this analysis, once we establish direct speech as primary among the uses of the CC in narrative, the development of the other uses follow in a straightforward fashion. Although the beginning and endpoint of the series (direct speech and adversative uses) are quite different from each other, the stages in between represent rather small semantic changes.



(Hockett, 1948a)

(Hockett, 1948b)

(Hockett, 1948c)

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Bloomfield, L. 1927. Notes on the Fox Language. *International Journal of American Linguistics*, 4.181-219.
- Genette, Gérard. 1980. *Narrative Discourse, an Essay in Method*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.
- Grimes, Joseph E. 1975. *The Thread of Discourse*. vol. 207: *Janua Linguarum Series Minor*. The Hague: Mouton.
- Hockett, C. 1948a. Potawatomi I: Phonemics, Morphophonemics, and Morphological Survey. *International Journal of American Linguistics*, XIV.1-10.
- . 1948b. Potawatomi II: Derivation, Personal Prefixes, and Nouns. *International Journal of American Linguistics*, XIV.63-73.
- . 1948c. Potawatomi III: The Verb Complex. *International Journal of American Linguistics*, XIV.139-49.
- . 1948d. Potawatomi IV: Particles and Sample Texts. *International Journal of American Linguistics*, XIV.213-25.
- Hopper, Paul. 1979a. Aspect and Foregrounding in Discourse. *Discourse and Syntax*, ed. by Talmy Givón, 213-41. New York: Academic Press.
- . 1979b. Some observations on the typology of focus and aspect in narrative language. *Studies in Language*, 3.37-64.
- Hopper, Paul J. and Sandra A. Thompson. 1980. Transitivity in Grammar and Discourse. *Language*, 56.251-99.
- Labov, W. and J. Waletzky. 1967. Narrative analysis. *Essays on the Verbal and Visual Arts*, ed. by J. Helm, 12-44. Seattle: University of Washington Press.
- Labov, William. 1972. *Language in the Inner City: Studies in the Black English Vernacular*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.
- Longacre, Robert. 1985. Sentences as combinations of clauses. *Language typology and syntactic description*, ed. by Timothy Shopen, 235-86. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Plato. 1968. *The Republic*. New York: Basic Books.
- Sanders, José and Gisela Redeker. 1996. *Speech and Thought in Narrative Discourse. Spaces, Worlds, and Grammar*, ed. by E. Sweetser. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
- Valentine, J. Randolph. 2001. *Nishnaabemwin Reference Grammar*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.