



The History of the Cahuilla Sound System

William Bright

International Journal of American Linguistics, Vol. 31, No. 3. (Jul., 1965), pp. 241-244.

Stable URL:

<http://links.jstor.org/sici?sici=0020-7071%28196507%2931%3A3%3C241%3ATHOTCS%3E2.0.CO%3B2-6>

International Journal of American Linguistics is currently published by The University of Chicago Press.

Your use of the JSTOR archive indicates your acceptance of JSTOR's Terms and Conditions of Use, available at <http://www.jstor.org/about/terms.html>. JSTOR's Terms and Conditions of Use provides, in part, that unless you have obtained prior permission, you may not download an entire issue of a journal or multiple copies of articles, and you may use content in the JSTOR archive only for your personal, non-commercial use.

Please contact the publisher regarding any further use of this work. Publisher contact information may be obtained at <http://www.jstor.org/journals/ucpress.html>.

Each copy of any part of a JSTOR transmission must contain the same copyright notice that appears on the screen or printed page of such transmission.

JSTOR is an independent not-for-profit organization dedicated to and preserving a digital archive of scholarly journals. For more information regarding JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

THE HISTORY OF THE CAHUILLA SOUND SYSTEM

WILLIAM BRIGHT

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, LOS ANGELES

0. Scope

1. Inventory

2. Cahuilla reflexes of Proto-Aztecan

3. Cahuilla terms with Uto-Aztecan etymologies

4. References cited

0. A major step was taken in the comparative study of the Uto-Aztecan languages in the recently published typological and comparative phonology of Voegelin, Voegelin, and Hale (1962). However, detailed data on the Cahuilla language of southern California were not available for that work, although many statements made for the neighboring Luiseño language hold equally true for Cahuilla. The aim of the present paper is to state as fully as possible the relations between the Cahuilla sound system and that which has been reconstructed for Proto-Uto-Aztecan, and to list Cahuilla vocabulary items which show these relationships. Most of the Cahuilla data used for this purpose were obtained from Mrs. Katherine Saubel, who was born at Los Coyotes Reservation and now lives at Banning. Supplementary items were given by Mariano Saubel, who also speaks a form of 'Mountain' Cahuilla. It appears that the historical statements made here will also hold for the Desert form of Cahuilla which has been described by Seiler (1957, 1958).

1. The sounds of Cahuilla may be charted as follows (see also Bright, 1965):

Consonants:

p	t	č	k	q	qw	ʔ
v	d		g			
	s	š	x	xw	h	
w	r	y				
	l	ly				
m	n	ñ	ŋ			

Short vowels:

i	u
e	
a	

Long vowels:

ii	uu
ee	oo
	aa

2. In what follows, each of the Cahuilla sounds (marked by enclosing diagonals) is first described in phonetic terms, and then traced to Proto-Uto-Aztecan if possible.

/p/, a voiceless bilabial stop, represents Uto-Aztecan *p in initial and medial positions (except that *p after *V_s becomes Cahuilla /v/). E.g., páh *three* < *pahi, páx- *enter* < *pa_ski, kúp- *sleep* < *ku_spi.

/t/, a voiceless dental stop, represents initial *t in such examples as téw- *see*, *find* < *tiwa, tá-t *sinew* < *ta-. (The suffixes set off by a hyphen in the Cahuilla words mark the absolutive forms of nouns, which are those most commonly given by informants.) Cahuilla /t/ also occurs medially, but the history of such cases is not known; examples are sétax *sour*, kúytuk *black widow spider*, tétinat *butcher bird*.

/č/, a voiceless alveo-palatal affricate, has been traced historically in only one example, where it represents *s: púč-ily *eye* < *pu_ssi. No Cahuilla forms have been found in which Proto-Uto-Aztecan *c is represented.

/k/, a voiceless velar stop, represents initial or medial *k before original high vowels—that is, *i, *i, or *u—in such forms as kí-š *house* < *ki, ke- *bite* < *ki-, kú-t *fire* < *ku, múk- *die* < *mu_ski, and túk- *spend the night* < *tu_ski *night*.

/q/, a voiceless back-velar stop, represents initial *k before *a (and presumably before low vowels in general, though examples with *o are lacking). E.g., qál *be* < *ka_sti *sit*, hé-qaʔ *his paternal grandparent* < *ka_sku *father's mother*. (Some Cahuilla nouns, such as this last one, have no absolutive form;

they are cited with the prefix *he-* or *hi-* *his*, *her*, *its*.) Cahuilla /q/ also represents medial *k after *V_n in náqa-l *ear* < *na_nka.

/qw/, a voiceless labio-postvelar stop, represents *k^w in such examples as qwá- *eat* < *k^wa, qwás-iš *cooked* < *k^wa_usi.

/ʔ/, a glottal stop, represents *ʔ, in examples such as ʔáʔas- *bathe* < *ʔasi (the Cahuilla form is reduplicated), hí-yeʔ *his mother* < *yiʔi.

/v/ is a voiced labiodental spirant, except when it is next to /u/, in which case it is a bilabial spirant. Initially it occurs mainly in loans from Spanish, such as váakaʔ *cow* (from 'vaca') and varéewaʔ *sheep* (from 'borrega'). Medially, Cahuilla /v/ regularly represents *p after *V_s, as in píva-t *tobacco* < *pi_spa, yul-séve-l *eyebrow* < *si_s-po.

/d/ is a voiced interdental spirant, except after /n/, where it is a dental stop. It occurs only in words borrowed from Spanish, such as méedis *stockings* < 'medias', sandfiyaʔ *watermelon* < 'sandía'.

/g/ is a voiced velar spirant, except after /ŋ/, where it is a velar stop. It occurs only in loans from Spanish, such as gáatuʔ *cat* < 'gato', čáaŋgu *monkey* < 'chango'.

/s/, a voiceless alveolar sibilant, represents *s, as in sél-ek *red* < *sita, híkus- *breathe* < *hik^wisi.

/š/ is a voiceless alveo-palatal sibilant. It is closely related to /č/ in Cahuilla, in that /č/ regularly occurs before vowels and /š/ elsewhere. We thus find alternation between the two sounds in forms like mélkiš *white man*, plural mélkič-em *white men*; qíŋiš *squirrel*, plural qíŋč-em *squirrels*; púč-ily *eye*, hé-puš *his eye*. The last example reflects Proto-Uto-Aztec *s of *pu_nsi. There are also a few cases of /š/ before vowels, the history of which is not known; examples are ʔíŋišily *little*, šelyšmima *cute*, číkišily *nettle*.

/x/, a voiceless velar spirant, represents medial *k after *a (except after *a_n, when *k becomes /q/). E.g., páx- *enter* < *pa_ski, táx *self* < *taka *man*. Initial /x/ also occurs in Cahuilla, but its history is not known;

examples are xélya-t *clothing*, xáwet *mountain quail*.

/xw/, a voiceless labiovelar spirant, is relatively uncommon in Cahuilla, and has not yet been traced historically. Examples are xwálxwal *spider*, čáxwal *chuckwalla* (probably the only word which English has borrowed from Cahuilla), náwxwaʔ *middle*, náxwaʔa *his in-law*.

/h/, a voiceless glottal spirant, represents *h, as in múh- *to shoot* < *muhu, híkus- *to breathe* < *hik^wisi.

/w/, a voiced bilabial glide, represents *w, as in wáx-iš *dry* < *waki, -ʔáwa *horn* < *ʔawa, téw-al *name* < *ti_nwa.

/r/, a voiced alveolar flap, occurs mostly in Spanish loanwords, such as tóoruʔ *bull* < 'toro', líivruʔ *book* < 'libro'. A few other words containing it, e.g. wíru- *to blow a whistle*, may be loans from neighboring Indian languages. The *r of Proto-Uto-Aztec is not represented in the Cahuilla data.

/y/, a voiced palatal glide, represents *y, as in hí-yeʔ *his mother* < *yiʔi, yíyim- *copulate* < *yoma (with reduplication).

/l/, a voiced dental lateral, represents medial *t, as in sél-ek *red* < *sita, qál *be* < *ka_sti *sit*. Initial /l/ is rare in Cahuilla, occurring in words borrowed from Spanish and, perhaps, from neighboring Indian languages; e.g. laméesaʔ *table* < 'la mesa', lávalvanat *cottonwood tree*, lúmuʔily *measles*, lámi- *fold*.

/ly/ is a voiced palatal lateral. Only one occurrence of it has been traced to Proto-Uto-Aztec: mályuʔa *woman's son* < *mala *child (with female reference)*. Other examples of the sound are in xélya-t *clothing*, kílyiw *companion*, súplyiʔ *one*, múlyak *lizard*, it is also common in the absolutive noun suffix, as in wí-ly *grease*, kún-ily *sack*, táxaw-ily *body*.

/m/, a voiced bilabial nasal, represents *m, as in múh- *shoot* < *muhu, táma-l *mouth* < *ta_sma *tooth*.

/n/, a voiced dental nasal, represents *n

in words like ná- *burn* < *na_u?a, náve-t *nopal cactus* < *na_spi. It also represents initial and medial *l, as in hé-naŋ *his tongue* < *liŋi, sáana-t *gum* < *sala.

/ñ/ is a voiced palatal nasal, which cannot yet be traced historically. Examples of its occurrence are ?ñiñšily *little*, qwíñšily *a kind of acorn*, téviñmaly *cup basket*, hééñu- *fight*, háñal *saliva*.

/ŋ/, a voiced velar nasal represents *ŋ, as in ?ŋ-ily *salt* < *?o_sŋa, hé-naŋ *his tongue* < *liŋi.

/i/ is a high front vowel. It regularly represents *i, as in hé-pi? *her breast* < *pi, sɪ?i-ly *urine* < *si_u?i *urinate*, ?i? *this* < *?i. It appears that Proto-Uto-Aztec *o also becomes Cahuilla /i/ (rather than /u/, as stated in Voegelin and Hale, p. 46); examples are pí-t *road* < *po, píhi- *fur* < *po, ?ŋ-ily *salt* < *?o_sŋa, wíh *two* < *wo-, yíyim- *copulate* < *yoma.

/u/ is a high back rounded vowel. It regularly represents *u, as in sú?-wet *star* < *su, kú-t *fire* < *ku, tú-l *charcoal* < *tu *black*.

/e/ is a mid front vowel. It regularly represents *i, as in -wet *big* < *wi-, ké- *bite* < *ki, wéwen- *stand* < *wili (with reduplication).

/a/ is a low central vowel. It represents *a, e.g. in máx- *give* < *ma_ska, pá-l *water* < *pa, píva-t *tobacco* < *pi_spa. One apparent case of /a/ from *i has been noted: hé-naŋ *his tongue* < *liŋi.

The long vowels of Cahuilla are relatively rare and seem to have two principal origins. First, they represent accented vowels of Spanish loans, as in píta? *string* < 'pita', vúuru *donkey* < 'burro', wéevu? *egg* < 'huevo', tóoru? *bull* < 'toro', and káama? *bed* < *cama*. Such loans provide all known instances of Cahuilla long /oo/ except the one in móomat *ocean*, apparently a borrowing from Luiseño. Second, many long vowels in native Cahuilla words are the result of a loss of intervocalic /h/ and a subsequent coalescence of vowels. Thus the stem meaning *fur* is basically píhi-; *its fur*,

with infixed /?/, is píh?i; but the absolutive form, with loss of /h/, is pí-ly. Likewise, the stem for *gopher* is basically méhe-; the absolutive form, with loss of /h/, is méé-t; but when a plural suffix is added, the second vowel of the stem is lost, and the /h/ reappears in méh-t-em *gophers*.

3. The following is a list of the Cahuilla terms for which possible Proto-Uto-Aztec etymologies have been found; the arrangement is alphabetical according to the English translations. The numbers after the starred forms refer to their item numbers in the Appendix to Voegelin and Hale. Verb forms in this section are cited in the present tense, marked by the suffix -qa; transitive verbs also have the prefix pe- *it*.

arrive, to: píš-qa *he's arriving*, perhaps related to *pi_uti (143). *arrow*: húya-l < *hu (78). *ask for, to*: pe-nétaŋ-qa *he's asking for it*; the Voegelins and Hale reconstruct *tani (92), which should perhaps, on the Cahuilla evidence, be corrected to *taŋi.

bathe, to: ?á?as-qa *he's bathing* < *?asi (139), with reduplication. *be, to*: qál *he is* < *ka_sti (42). *big*: -wet, occurring in derivative nouns like túk-wet *mountain lion* (cf. túku-t *wildcat*) and in the free form ?ámna?-wet *big*, < *wi- (100), perhaps plus the absolutive ending -t. *bite, to*: pe-ké-qa *he's biting it* < *ki (43). *black*: tú-l *charcoal*, túl-ek *black* < *tu *black* (23). *breast*: -pi- as in hé-pi-? *her breast*, hé-pi-ly *breast* < *pi (6). *breathe, to*: híkus-qa *he's breathing* < *hik?isi (55); this involves a development of /ku/ < *k?i, not noted elsewhere. *burn, to*: ná-qa, kína-qa *it's burning* < *na_u?a (95b).

cactus, nopal: náve-t < *na_spi (16). *claw (fingernail, toenail)*: sálu- as in sál?u *his nail*, sálu-l *nail*, perhaps from *su_utu (26), but with unexplained vowel change. *cooked*: qwás-iš < *k?a_usi (50). *copulate, to*: pe-yíyim-qa *he's copulating with her* < *yoma (111), with reduplication.

die, to: muk- as in múqa *he's dying* (<

muk- + -qa), < *mu_uki (86). *dry*: wáx-qa *it's drying*, wáx-iš *dry* < *waki (99).

ear: náqa-, as in náq'a *his ear*, náqa-l *ear* < *na_nka (47). *eat*, to: pe-qwá-qa *he's eating it* < *k^wa (48). *enter*, to: páx-qa *he's entering* < *pa_ski (2). *extinguish*, to: pe-tútuqwan-qa *he's extinguishing it*, perhaps containing *tu_s- (121), with reduplication. *eye*: hé-puš *his eye*, púč-ily *eye* < *pu_nsi (5). *eyebrow*: yul-séve *his eyebrow*, yul-séve-l *eyebrow* < *si_s-po (14). (The bound element yul- also occurs, e.g., in yul-táma-l *whiskers*; compare also táma-l *mouth*.)

fat (grease): wí-ly < *wi- (102). *find*, to: pe-téw-qa *he sees it, he's finding it* < *tiwa (21). *fire*: kú-t < *ku (137). *flour*: tú'a-t < *tu[?]-i (133). *fur*: pfihi-, as in pfi[?]i *its fur*, pfi-ly *fur* < *po (7).

give, to: pe-máx-qa *he's giving it* < *ma_ska (83). *grandfather, maternal*: hé-qwa[?] *his mother's father* < *k^wa'a (127). *grandmother, maternal*: hé-su[?] *his mother's mother* < *su[?]u (140). *grandparent, paternal*: hé-qa[?] *his father's father or mother* < *ka_sku (170). *gum*: sáana-t < *sala (147). The Cahuilla long /aa/ is unexplained. *guts*: sá'i *his guts*, sá'i-ly *guts*, perhaps related to *si (66).

hail: tévaxa-l, perhaps related to *tiha (80). *hand*: -ma-, as in hé-ma-[?] *his hand*, hé-ma-l *hand* < *ma (128). *hawk, a kind of*: qwá'a-l < *k^wa- *eagle* (49). *heart*: hé-sun *his heart*, sún-ily *heart* < *sula (98). *heavy*: péli[?]ma < *pi_uti (3). *horn*: 'áwa-, as in 'áw'a *its horn*, < *'awa (104). *house*: kí-š < *ki (44).

meat: wá'i-š < *wa_s'i *to roast* (162). *moon*: méni-ly, perhaps related to *miya (158). *mother*: hí-ye[?] *his mother* < *yi[?]i (106). *mouth*: táma-l < *ta_sma *tooth* (29).

name: téw-al < *ti_nwa *to name* (20). *night*: túk-, as in túqa *he's spending the night* (< túk- + -qa), túk-máš *night* < *tu_ski (144). *no*: kíly *not*, kí'i *no* are perhaps related to *ka (136), but with irregular development. *nose*: -mu-, as in hé-mu-[?] *his nose*, hé-mu-l *nose*, < *mu_spi (15).

one: súplyi[?], perhaps containing *si- (65).

person: táx *self*, táxaw-ily *body*, táxlis-wet *person* < *taka *man* (145). *pine*: wéxe-t,

probably from *wo_sko (142), although both the /x/ and the /e/'s are irregular developments.

red: sél-ek < *sita (32). *reed*: páxa-l < *pa_ska (8). *return*, to: ŋíy-qa *he's going home*, perhaps from *ŋola *to return* (152). *road*: pí-t < *po (4).

salt: 'iŋ-ily < *'o_sŋa (63). *shoot*, to: pe-múh-qa *he shoots it* < *mu_hu (81). *sinew*: tá-t < *ta- (125). *sleep*, to: kúp-qa *he's sleeping* < *ku_upi (153). *son, woman's*: mályu'a *her son* < *mala *child (with female reference)* (84). *stand*, to: wéwen-qa *he's standing* < *wili (161), with reduplication. *star*: sú'wet < *su *star* (71) plus -wet *big*.

tail: hé-qwas *its tail*, hé-qwas-ily *tail* < *k^wa_usi (51). *this*: 'i[?] < *'i (116). *three*: páh < *pahi (1). *tobacco*: píva-qa *he's smoking*, píva-t *tobacco* < *pi_spa (12). *tongue*: hé-naŋ *his tongue*, hé-naŋ-ily *tongue* < liŋi (94). *two*: wíh < *wo- (103).

urine: písa-t < *pisa *penis* (73). *urinate*, to: sí'-ily *urine*, sísi-qa *he's urinating* (with reduplication) < *si_u'i (67).

water: pá-l < *pa (123). *who*: háx'i < *haki (138).

4. The references cited in the preceding text now follow:

Bright, William

1965 A field guide to Southern Californian Indian languages. To appear in the UCLA Archaeological Survey Annual Report.

Seiler, Hansjakob

1957 Die phonetischen Grundlagen der Vokalphoneme des Cahuilla. Zeitschrift für Phonetik 10.204-23.

1958 Zur Aufstellung der Wortklassen des Cahuilla. Münchener Studien zur Sprachwissenschaft 12.61-79.
Voegelin, C. F. and F. M., and Kenneth L. Hale

1962 Typological and comparative grammar of Uto-Aztec: I (Phonology). International Journal of American Linguistics, Memoir 17.