

# Good research paper about mojave language

[Sociology](#), [Community](#)



California is the most populated U. S state, located on the West Coast of the United States of America. It ranks as the third largest state after Alaska and Texas and is home to one eighth's of Americans that is approximately thirty eight million people. California is the home to the country's most populous census and fifty of the country's most populated cities, San Diego, San Jose, Los Angeles, Long Beach, Sacramento, Oakland, and Fresno. Sacramento is the capital city. A variety of Native American tribes settled in what is now California (Grant, 54). This was before the many European expeditions in the 16th and the 17th century explored it. The Spanish Empire claimed it as part of Alta California, which was the largest territory of New Spain. The California gold rush starting which began in 1848 led to a dramatic demographical and social change due to a large- scale immigration from various states inside the U. S. as well as abroad.

Embedded in this diverse pattern of people and their traditions, are the states original people, who are the many communities of the Mojave Indians, who spoke the Mojave languages. Approximately only seventy-five people spoke the language in 1994 (Leanne et al., 32). Much of the Mojave Indians history remains unwritten because the language was unwritten in pre-colonial times. They relied on verbal communication to pass on their culture to the next generation mostly through narratives and songs. The Mojave Indians led a simple lifestyle. They fished for their food using canoes and used baskets and nets to catch fish. They lived in a dry region, but they developed irrigation systems allowing them to grow corn, beans, pumpkins, and squash. The Mojave Indians did not put on much clothing. The men adorned a simple loincloth and the women wore clothes made from animal

skin from animals such as rabbits. Tattoos were popular among the Mojave people. They would use ink from a blue cactus plant and apply it on their bodies for beauty purposes. The Mojave was also very religious and spiritual people. They believed that there was an afterlife. Members were buried along with their earthly belongings and gifts from those grieving (Leanne et al., 43)

Embedded in this different pattern of people and their traditions, are the states original people, who are the many communities of the Californian Indians. Before the existence of the rest of the world, native California was already one of the world's various places on earth with over a hundred spoken languages (Redden, 33). These languages represented up to five or six of the major language family, and linguistics isolates languages. Ways of living did vary greatly, but due to geographical closeness, people interacted often and, therefore, developed ceremonial ties and close trading relationships. Resulting from this interaction, people were often multilingual; however, each community was independent enough to retain its own variety of speech (Leanne et al.; 13) Today there are approximately fifty different Californian Indian languages that are still spoken.

Californian Indian languages are for sure indeed in the risk of difference, which is the ultimate crisis. This is due to decades of attempts by the authorities to eradicate the use of native language and social change. The natives do not speak their language in the homes and, therefore, the children do not get to learn it. Only a few of the elders speak the native language. Some tribes have only one remaining fluent speaker while some have none (Leanne et al., 14)

The Pintuan family group is a language group that includes several Native American languages, which the natives predominantly spoke in California, Oregon, and Washington. The Petunia's existence has been a debate subject by specialists. They have even disputed the unit of some of its family groups. These problems have occurred due to minimal documentation in the past as well as early extinction of its people (Leanne et al., 71) the "Petunia" language group is the largest linguistic group living in West North America involving sixteen families. The main language families include "Yokutasan" languages, "Maiduan" languages, "Wintuan" language and "Miwok," and "Catanoan" languages. They based the grouping the groups on shared characteristics instead of the standard methods, used to determine genetic relations. The Penutian hypothesis is a controversy to date

The natives are determined to save their language with elders, for example, Ray Baldy teaching the languages local schools and Katherine Saubel working together with linguistics to make sure there are records to be read in the future. Young adults not left aside, for example, Loren Bommeltn, is making an effort to learn the languages, which are their heritage, and to keep it alive for yet another generation. Individuals such as L. Frank Manriuez, whose ancestral language ceased to be spoken completely a generation or more ago participate in gathering all written materials and records they can find in order to study, treasure them, and pass them on to their children (Leanne et al., 222)

This paper specifically focuses on the Wintuan language group (Wintu). This is due to its origin from the largest language group among the Native American population. Resources used in the research of the Wintu were,

Flutes of fire written by Leanne Hilton, Californian Indian languages written by Victor Golla, and Penutian languages by Anthony Grant among other useful websites (Golla, 140). These resources turned out to be extremely helpful because they have detailed information about the native Indian tribes existing in California.

The Wintu is a group of Native Americans who lived in present day North California. The Wintu language traditionally was spoken at the upper end of Sacramento Valley, at the North of Cottonwood Creek, the upper Trinity North on the West, and the upper Sacramento River including its tributaries to the north. In pre-recorded times, there existed twelve thousand five hundred speakers from Patwin, Wintu and Nomlaki together. There is however no first-language speakers today (Golla, 140)

The Wintu peoples greeting is " Hestam," which means, how are you? The language encourages a particular word view on the part of the one speaking. In English, there is a difference between singular and plural as well as a division of the physical universe into different personal items, the Wintu language instead describes an identified category of living beings into view that unless one is specifically pointing out to an individual member belonging to that category. When using English, one is required to state whether they are expressing more than one of the entities expressed by the noun such as " boy" or " boys." Very few objects are stated as " mass nouns," for example, rice wheat, or maize, which are not pluralized. The wintu language, on the other hand, does not express nouns as singular nor plural. Instead, words have what describes particular and generic forms. " Grizzly bear" in general is referred to as wimay in general not referring to bear. When pointing out to

a small group of bears or an individual bear, one says wimah meaning a bear or those particular bear (Leanne 63)

## **Some words in their generic and particular form. Word Genericparticular**

Mother ne: h, ne: t ne: n

blue grouse nirinirit

In the Wintu language, unrestricted consonants occur initially and finally in words and syllables. They include plain voiceless stops; the voiceless consonants /y/, /s/, and /h/; all voiced consonants include /w/, /l/, /y/; and both nasally voiced /m/ and /n/ (Pitkin, 88)

The pronominal plural inflectional suffix /te/ is for the plural number. The suffix /ba/ marks plural for humans and is almost complementary to {te} plural suffix. {ba} occurs only in third person bases. {pi} and {e} for instance , /puba./ ' those people .' There is a pluralizer which is {wi} for example /ilawi/ ' children' and in singular /ila/ child (Harvey, 350)

Consonants of Numbers are an important and powerful concept. In the native languages, in California, have a rich variety and interesting ways to count. In mathematical operations, expression of words for numbers occurs in part mainly during addition, subtraction, and multiplication. There is a system called decimal counting existing in English. In Wintu, the same system is partially vigesimal (based on 20). Few languages can be easily classified as completely to be in one system or the other. Examples of the Wintu numbering are

1. Taxa6. Yiba taxa' (yiban is the other side')
2. naka'7. Yiban naka'

3. tak'8. Yiban tak'

4. naka'-naka' (' two-two')9. Yiban naka'-naka'

5. la' sane (la' is ' hand')10. La't ba'an

many counting words in the native languages use the word for hand, with ' the other side' referring to the original use of using the other hand to count (Leanne et al., 168)

## Conclusion

Many of the original Native American tribes have succeeded in preserving their cultural heritage, but the same cannot be stated about most of their languages. This has occurred mostly due to changing of cultures, with the world becoming more modern, as well as extinction of unique native language speakers. The language preserved so far is courtesy of the native people who recorded the language in the past. Recording of the language was not exactly useful in the past due to their traditional culture. Times changed, however, when the European culture became dominant for the native Californians were taught how to write. However, they wrote in European languages. Over time, more and more of the native communities developed a writing system in their own language hence preserving their language.

A loss such as people's cultures brings about great despair. As a language is seen as the very root of values and culture, many Native Californians do strongly feel the loss of their language. This is to especially to those who's native language has gone unspoken for a generation or more or those who do not have other people whom they can communicate using their native dialect. Many bear a sense of yearning; loneliness lost values and meanings,

as well (Leanne et al., 328). This sense of yearning has caused the native Indians to take action in their communities and do all they can to save their heritage. This includes, creating tribal committees, evening language classes, video and audio taping elders, researching field and tape notes from university archives. Multi-generational dancing and singing groups are being formed all over the state as well as conduction of cultural ceremonies to honor their culture.

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