

Henry-Rodriguez_#TH20204FLW

1/12 “Fragmented languages: Reconstructing the Purisimeño fricative”

Purisimeño (PUY) is a Chumash language previously spoken along the central California coast. It was documented by John Peabody Harrington (JPH) in the early 1900’s.

@wioldorg

#FragmentedLanguageWorkshop2020

Image 1a: Map of Chumashan languages

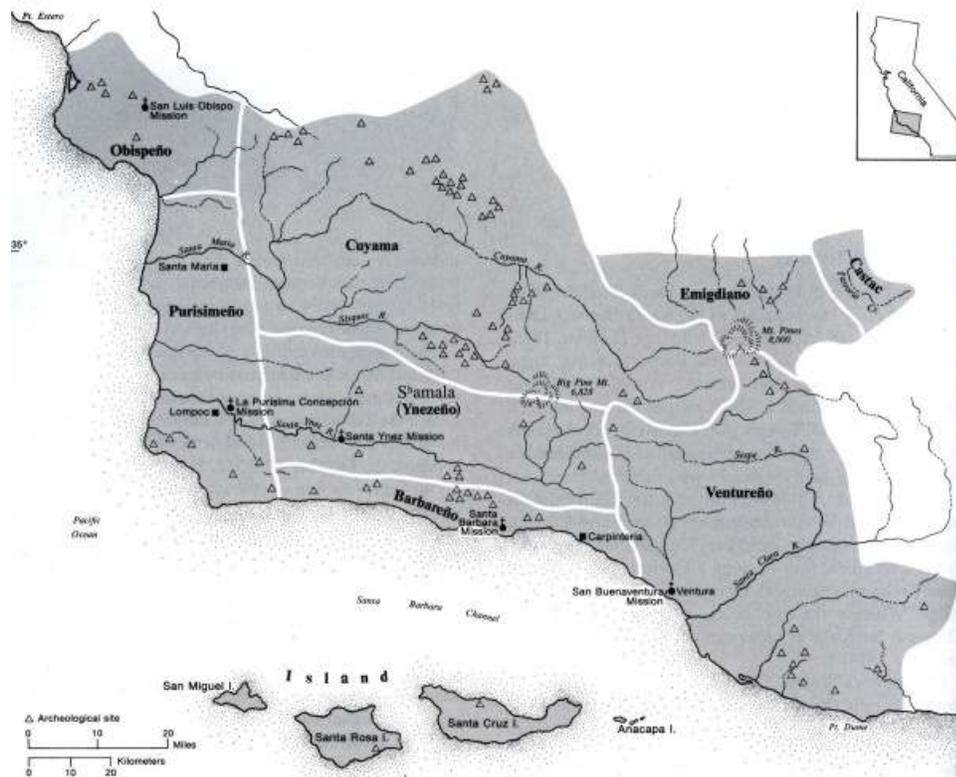


Image 1b: Overriding Harrington's transcription practice

Harrington's idiomatic use of a lowercase kappa <κ> for a uvular plosive [q] and <q> or <ç> for a uvular fricative [χ] has been adjusted to a standard more similar to the Americanist system of WIELD. Harrington's <κ> is written as <q> and his <q> as <x>. The symbol <x> can be taken to refer to a voiceless dorsal fricative; the precise place of articulation is the topic of this paper.

2/12 Other C. Chumash languages have 2 dorsal fricatives: <x> [χ] and <x̣> [χ̣]. PUY has the first, but it seems to have been in the process of changing location. In words where it occurs, it invariably corresponds to uvular fricatives or plosives in other C. Chumash languages.

Image 2a: Chumashan language family

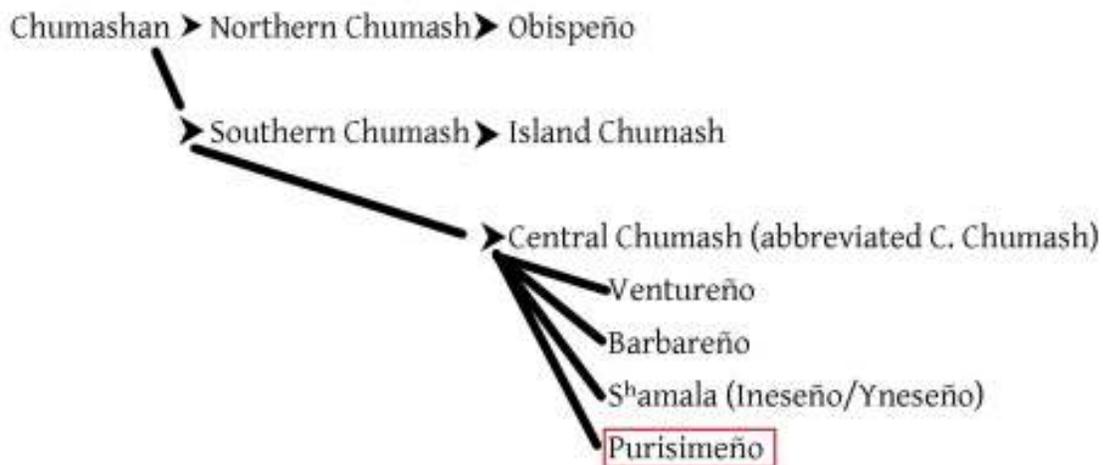


Image 2b: Uvular consonants in Central Chumash languages

	Purisimeño	Barbareño	Sʰamala	Ventureño
nettles	χwapš	χwapš	χwapš	χwapš
jaw	χanaxaŋ	χanaxaŋ	χanaxaŋ	χanaxan
penis	χət	χət	χət	χət
thumb	išwatinoχ	--	išwatinoχ	--
intestines	'aχšə	'aqšəw	'aqšəw	'aχšəw
basket	χim	χim	χim	χim

3/12 Uvular place for the fricative seems to have been in the process of undergoing retraction. When produced with this alternate pronunciation, the sound is transcribed several ways: w/ an <x> or <h> and combining diacritic above: tilde, macron, circumflex, or hacek.

Image 3: Different ways of transcribing PUY's fricative

Description	Symbol	Purisimeño	Translation
<x> with a combining tilde above	<x̃>	saḡi'j	'night'
		masaḡ	'three'
<x> with a combining macron above	<x̄>	'ayoḡ	'snake sp.'
<x> with a combining circumflex	<x̂>	lawaḡ	'north'
		'aḡ'imj	'demon'
		toḡi	'basket'
<x> with a combining hacek	<x̣>	masaḡ	'three'
		saḡi'j	'night'
		'aḡ'im	'basket'
<h> with a combining circumflex	<ĥ>	aḡawišaḡ	deer
<h> with a combining hacek	<ḥ>	lawaḥ	'north'
		taḥ	'eye/face'
<x> with no ejectivity	<x>	sixwa'ḡ	'hip'
<x> with clear ejectivity	<x̣̣>	ḡim	'big basket'

4/12 New place of articulation is written as <χ̂> here. In JPH's own description of the fricative: "[sound] is not [h] at all – deep reverberation." "[it's] very dry." "χ̂ is not very deep or wheezing – merely open." (Note, /h/ is already a phoneme in the language.)

5/12 In the words of a native speaker: "[sound] was produced way down in the throat." This rules out a palatal pronunciation, which JPH transcribes as <ç> anyway. Would also rule out a velar pronunciation, as this sound is further forward of the otherwise uvular production.

6/12 <χ̂> does have application outside Chumashan lgs, although its use is rare. It's possible JPH was inspired by the Aleut use of Cyrillic <χ̂> for [χ] (Saint Innokentii 1893). But note: 1) this is a weak connection at best, 2) the sound in PUY would already have been uvular, &

7/12 3) Surely, Harrington with his keen ear and vast experience with other languages of California could clearly articulate the distinction in place of articulation between a velar and uvular fricative.

8/12 It is proposed that the mystery fricative in PUY was a voiceless pharyngeal fricative [ħ], and that, at the time of recording, a sound change in progress was being documented. There is a strong preference for <χ̂> over <x̂> though no conditioning of <χ̂> is apparent.

9/12 Indirect support for the pharyngeal hypothesis. The ejective fricative <x> [χ], though rare per word in C. Chumash, is in common words, like the word for ‘big,’ ‘woman,’ and ‘basket.’ Examples of this phoneme have been given in Image 4.

Image 4: Ejective uvular fricative in Central Chumash languages

	Barbareño	S ^h amala	Ventureño
‘woman’	—	—	χanwa
‘storage basket’	—	χim̃	χim
‘narrow-mouthed basket’	—	—	χomho
‘testicles’	iχos	—	iχos
‘to have a hallow’	—	χomoho	
‘bird species’	χox~xoχ	χox	χox
‘big, great’	xaχ	—	—

10/12 What would be an ejective uvular fricative reflex is absent in all but one word in the available PUY data, however: <χ̣’im̃> ‘small mouthed basket.’ The phone [χ̣’] is an impossible segment, of course, and this is no doubt why PUY no longer clearly has a <x> phoneme.

11/12 It is proposed instead that, in a limited number of circumstances (perhaps only 1), <x> has, in PUY, changed to a sequence [hʔ] where [h] is either a coda in a preceding syllable as in <’aχ̣’im̃> [ʔaḥʔim̃] ‘(a) small mouthed basket’ or [h] may be simply presyllabic.

Image 5: Sole example of <χ̣’> in use in PUY

Chumashan nouns do not typically appear in isolation. They are usually preceded by one of two articles and/or possessive marking (marking on the possessed for possessor). PUY’s two articles are (ʔ)a- and ka-. The word <χ̣’im̃> is never given in isolation in the data, and it is given once with the first article: <’aχ̣’im̃>. Thus, if <χ̣’> was indeed [hʔ], the initial fricative could have been essentially preserved as a coda of the article’s vowel.

12/12 Data: Applegate 1972, 1974, Beeler 1976, Beeler & Klar 1977, Harrington 1986, Henry 2012, King 1975, WIELD 2018. On symbols: WIELD, 2017a, b; Bloch & Trager 1942, Lespius 1863, Pickering 1820, Pullum & Ladusaw 1996, Saint Innokentii 1893.

References (last image)

- APPLEGATE, RICHARD BRIAN. 1974. Chumash placenames. *Journal of California Anthropology*, 1(2): 188-205.
- APPLEGATE, RICHARD BRIAN. 1972. *Ineseño Chumash grammar*. Doctoral dissertation, University of California, Berkeley.
- BEELER, MADISON S. 1976. *Barbareño Chumash grammar: A farrago*.
- BEELER, MADISON S. & KATHRYN KLAR. 1977. *Cruzeño Chumash: Introduction — Grammar — Lexicon*.
- Bloch, Bernard & George L. Trager. 1942. Outline of linguistic analysis. *Special publications of the Linguistic Society of America*. Baltimore, MD: Linguistic Society of America.
- HARRINGTON, JOHN PEABODY. 1986. Volume three: A guide to the field notes: Native American history, language, and culture of Southern California/Basin. The Papers of John Peabody Harrington in the Smithsonian Institution 1907–1957, eds. Elaine L. Mills & Ann J. Brickfield. Millwood, NY: Kraus International Publications.
- HENRY, TIMOTHY PAUL. 2012. *A pedagogical grammar of Ventureño Chumash: Implementing grammatical theory in grammar writing*. Ph.D. dissertation, University of California, Santa Barbara.
- INTERNATIONAL PHONETIC ASSOCIATION. 1999. *Handbook of the International Phonetic Association: A guide to the use of the International Phonetic Alphabet*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- KING, CHESTER. 1975. The names and locations of historical Chumash villages.
- LEPSIUS, C. R. 1863. Standard alphabet for reducing unwritten languages and foreign graphic systems to a uniform orthography in European letters, 2nd edition. London: Williams & Northgate.
- PICKERING, JOHN. 1820. An essay on a uniform orthography for the Indian languages of North America. *The Memoirs of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences*, 1-32. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- PULLUM, GEOFFREY K. & WILLIAM A. LADUSAW. 1996. *Phonetic symbol guide, 2nd edition*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
- SAINT INNOKENTII. 1893. *Nachatki khristianskago ucheniia, ili, Kratkaiã sviashchennaia istoriia i Kratkii khristianskii katikhizis*. Sinodal'naia tip.
- Western Institute for Endangered Language Documentation. 2017a. http://wieldoc.org/?page_id=344
- Western Institute for Endangered Language Documentation. 2017b. http://wieldoc.org/?page_id=316
- Western Institute for Endangered Language Documentation. 2018. Purisimeño English lexicon, 1st edition. ms.