Chukchansi Documentation and Revitalization Project

A Chukchansi Woman
Edward Curtis, 1924
Chukchansisi is a dialect of *Yokuts* one of the major Penutian languages of California.
Amerind (superfamily)  
|  
Penutian (family)  
|  
Yokuts (language)  
|  
Chukchansi (dialect)
North Valley, Foothills, and South Valley Yokuts are the main divisions of the language.
Archaeological evidence places Yokuts people in the valley by at least 8,000 years ago.

A Chukchansi woman
Edward Curtis, 1924
Precontact population ≈ 70,000—one of the densest populations in native N. America.

This declined to about 600 by 1910, part of the 90% genocide of native peoples.

A Chukchansi man
Edward Curtis, 1924
Current Yokuts population (entire valley and foothills) now about 2500.

Jack Rowan
Chukchansi Yokuts
Edward Curtis, 1924
Major Works on Yokuts

- *Wikchamne Grammar* (1978) by Geoff Gamble
- *Yokuts Language of California* (1944) by Stanley Newman
- *Yokuts Grammar: Chukchansi* (1968) by Thomas Collord
- *The Yokuts language of south central California* (1907) by Alfred Kroeber
- *Yokuts Dialect Survey* (1963) by Alfred Kroeber
- Audio Archives, UC Berkeley
  - Sydney Lamb (1953-57)
  - Sylvia Broadbent (1955-57)
  - Thomas Collord (1965)
How endangered is Chukchansi?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Degree of endangerment</th>
<th>Intergenerational Language Transmission</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>safe</td>
<td>language is spoken by all generations; intergenerational transmission is uninterrupted &gt;&gt; not included in the Atlas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vulnerable</td>
<td>most children speak the language, but it may be restricted to certain domains (e.g., home)</td>
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<tr>
<td>definitely endangered</td>
<td>children no longer learn the language as mother tongue in the home</td>
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<tr>
<td>severely endangered</td>
<td>language is spoken by grandparents and older generations; while the parent generation may understand it, they do not speak it to children or among themselves</td>
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<tr>
<td>critically endangered</td>
<td>the youngest speakers are grandparents and older, and they speak the language partially and infrequently</td>
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<tr>
<td>extinct</td>
<td>there are no speakers left &gt;&gt; included in the Atlas if presumably extinct since the 1950s</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The interactive online edition of the UNESCO Atlas of the World’s Languages in Danger is complementary to the print edition and may be cited as:

We need to bring the language back while there are still speakers left to learn from (ten?).

Nancy Wyatt, 1961
Yokuts (and Chukchansi in particular) is unique, with extremely rare features in three areas:

Syntax,
Morphology,
Phonetics/Phonology

As linguists we want to find out more about Chukchansi and Yokuts generally to better understand the diversity of human language.
The endangered part and the unique part are related:

the very things that make Chukchansi unique often make it harder for second language learners.

This makes the language even more endangered.
The Project

Begun
Summer 2009

Fall 2012
$1,000,000 grant
over 5 years
from the Picayune Rancheria of the Chukchansi Indians
to document and revitalize Chukchansi
Picayune Rancheria Team
Holly Wyatt, elder
Jane Wyatt, elder
Kim Lawhon, teacher
Tribal Teaching Staff

CSU Fresno Team
Niken Adisasmito-Smith, Ling
Brian Agbayani, Ling
Charles Ettner, Anthro/Ling
Chris Golston, Ling
Cheryl Chan, AEI

A Chukchansi woman
Edward Curtis, 1924
Language Documentation

Reference Grammar

Material gathered in Field Methods in Linguistics course at Fresno State (Spring Semester) and in weekly meetings with Jane and Holly Wyatt

Audience for the reference grammar

For the speakers of the language,

a Community Grammar

For the linguistics community,

a Technical Grammar
Pursuit of a dead wife

This material is from pages 3-12 in book 6 of Newman’s texts where it is titled "The Man Who Followed His Wife". In this text, Newman differentiated the plain and aspirated stops by using capital letters for the plain stops and lower case letters for aspirated stops. In a several places Newman makes a check below the word which seems to indicate that a glottal stop should be inserted1. This story is most certainly the version of a story, titled "Pursuit of a dead wife", which is included in Gayton and Newman 1940:102 [Abstract 150]. Harrington’s version of this story follows.

\[\text{t}^{\text{aw}} \text{ xo}^{\text{oxo-hin}} \text{ yok}^{\text{ooc'}} \text{ mani'? yow yet' no-n'o'? there were people many and one man}\]

\[\text{hac'}-\text{a-mi'? mok}^{\text{yihni'? ?ama'? wak}^{\text{k}^{\text{h'i new one who takes a wife and very much}}}}\]

\[\text{?insimxo-hin ?amin t}^{\text{an mok}^{\text{yiyi'? ?ama'? he?c'}-\text{a-wisxo-hin}} he loved his that wife and were playing recipr.2}\]

\[\text{?amak'? ?ama'? t}^{\text{an nek'sit'xo'? ?amin t}^{\text{alap}^{\text{ni'? ?ama'? t}^{\text{an}} they and her he drew at3 his with bow and her}}\]

\[\text{huy'wushun t}^{\text{uyahun t}^{\text{an me-ni't'aw ?ama'? c}^{\text{anum he hurt accidentally he shot her in the breast and immediately}}}}\]

\[\text{t}^{\text{a-wit'hin ?ama'? luk'lut yow taph t}^{\text{a?as' p'axat'an ?ama'? she died and she is buried and continuously he mourned and}}\]

\[\text{he-tam t}^{\text{aw nine-hin luk'oluwsa-law ?amin t}^{\text{a?in mok}^{\text{yinpon'yi' close there he stayed at the grave his of that wife twice}}}}\]

\[\text{t}^{\text{aw nay laka-hin ?ama'? so-phe-naw t}^{\text{oyn'ow there about4 he spent the night and in three in nights}}\]

\[\text{wuk'ooyankhi t}^{\text{awe-t'i? ?ama'? t}^{\text{i'shinin}} \text{ t}^{\text{aw't'a? ?ama'?}} \text{ quakes this grave yard and came out that dead one and}}\]

\[\text{c}^{\text{anum to-luhun k'anal ?ama'? ko-ninhin mi'in immediately she climbed the fir-tree and she alighted now}}\]

\[\text{t}^{\text{ahun xosim ?ama'? t}^{\text{an t}^{\text{a p}^{\text{o-lum ?amin wiya?an ?a-n'i?}} \text{ she will go north and her that husband her says to don't}}\]

\[\text{t}^{\text{ahun} \text{ ohomwiya?an t}^{\text{an hiyam na? taph lakli? yo}^{\text{k'ek' go!5 no she says to him now I different return!}}}}\]

\[\text{wiya?an t}^{\text{an oywixith ma? ohom min wast'oxo?}} \text{ she says to him putiful-one you not your is able}\]
Revitalization

Children’s Classes
Adult Classes
Teacher Education
Literacy in Chukchansi
Chukchansi Visible Ceremonial Language
Goal in language revitalization

The endangered language will once again be spoken by children and adults in their daily activities.
We have just completed the third revision of our Dictionary, the first of its kind.

Language consultants
Holly Wyatt
Jane Wyatt

Compiled by
Niken Adisasmito-Smith

with help from
Brian Agbayani
Chris Golston
accept v. kaabinit. I accept the bread. Kaabinit na' baana'an. [Note: I accepted the bread yesterday. Kaabinhil na' baana'an lagyiw.]

ache (to have one) v. kashkashit.

acorn dumpling, bread n. won.

acorn (generic) n. bayin. I sifted the acorn. Ewinta' na' bayna.

ankle (Lit: joints of foot) n. dadach'in kuyu'.

annoy v. ch'alwinit. My kids got on my nerves. Ch'alwinit na' nim p'aya.

annoying, bothersome adj. ch'alew. annoying mosquitoes k'olapi ch'alew

another n. hidan'.

ant n. k'eenich.
Chukchansi-English

A - a

aalit  n. saltgrass. Alithil na' aalita. I licked the saltgrass. [Note: aalitin kande' saltgrass candy]

aamu  n. boss. Ta mokeela nim aamu'. That woman is my boss.

aamuwash  adj. bossy. Mij xi aamuwash. She's very bossy.

aanat  v. permit. Aanat ama'. He let him be.

aap'at  v. carry (on one's back). Aap'at na' p'ayaa. I carried the baby (on my back).

aasay  n. cane; tool to dig.

ach'it  v. bite. Ach'it na' am. I bit him (just now).

[Note: Ach'ich'hi na' am laqviv I bit him

The North Wind and the Sun

amaamik'  pron. them (object, dual). Jack utyut amaamik'. Jack pushed them (both).

amaamin  pron. them (object, plural). Nancy wanta' amaamin hedesha. Nancy gave them wood.

amak'  pron. they (subject, dual). Hidya' amak' xatit baana'an. They both ate the bread.

amak'in  pron. their (possessive, dual). P'ay amak'in mij kandich'. Their child is a real candy-eater.

aman  pron. they (subject, plural). Hidya' aman
Interactive Digital Resources

• Our plan over the next 5 years:
  - Link the dictionary to the community grammar so that those studying the language can access grammar notes via the dictionary and vice-versa.
  - Link texts to the dictionary and community grammar.
  - Link the dictionary, community grammar and texts to cultural notes, video and audio files.