Diegueño: How Many Languages?

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Many years ago, I read a paper at a meeting in which I argued against dividing what is considered Diegueño territory in a number of separate languages. My reasons for doing so remain in fact cogent, but I have now come to the conclusion that there are other reasons, equally cogent, to make a case for the opposite view. What happened? The facts have not changed, except that we know a lot more now than we did then, and I feel there are linguistic and non-linguistic reasons for recognizing at least three Diegueño languages.

First of all, it is necessary to restate that most of the reasons for identifying related speech varieties as separate languages, except in the most obvious cases, are non-linguistic, but are rather political and sociological. It is the force of the non-linguistic arguments (supported in this case by linguistic facts) that has led me to change my mind.

When I first undertook to study Diegueño, I was a new graduate student with no feeling at all for the nature of Native American communities and the place of language in people's lives. The literature (e.g. Kroeber 1925:710) had led me to believe that there were basically two major dialects, Northern and Southern. This division, recently renamed Ipai (=Northern) / Tipai (=Southern), has been institutionalized in volume 8 of the Handbook of North American Indians (Heizer, ed. 1978:592ff), where it is illustrated by the map reproduced below.

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1 Diegueño is a member of the California-Delta subgroup of Yuman languages and varieties of it are spoken over a large portion of San Diego County and Northern Baja California, Mexico.
What I did expect when I first started fieldwork in 1963 were differences somewhat like those between, say, educated dialects of New York City vs California and I was totally unprepared for the complexity of the situation I found, which to my dismay seemed to indicate that each speaker had his own language. Furthermore, any criterion I might choose to draw boundaries would promptly dissolve into more problems. Over the years, I came to accept all this as quite normal and I deliberately avoided the issue of how many languages or even how many dialects, preferring to think of the Diegueño area as a continuum of speech varieties, which of course it still is.

The problem with this situation is the perception it creates of a single language with some dialect differences and, since there is a fair literature about Diegueño, it creates the impression that we know all there is to know about it. So when Amy Miller proposed to write a grammar of Jamul Diegueño for her Ph. D. dissertation at UCSD, the question was raised whether this was an appropriate subject for a dissertation on the assumption that little new would be learned. I realized then that I had unwittingly contributed to this perception by continuing to talk about Diegueño as a single language. Now that the dissertation is completed (Miller 1990), it is quite evident that Mesa Grande and Jamul (the two Diegueño varieties with the most detailed descriptions) show remarkable differences and certainly, by anybody’s standards, should be considered separate languages.²

Had I taken that position twenty years ago, the fact of language diversity would now have been institutionalized and I would not have to justify it. It seems to me that what is recognized as a language is essentially done by proclamation and usage in the literature. Things are a lot easier if political boundaries encourage the division, as in such cases as German/Dutch/Flemish and many others. English, on the other hand, is something like a mega-Diegueño where everybody assumes that there is one language and such proposals as recognizing Black English as a distinct language have had mixed reception. Nor are criteria of mutual intelligibility a particularly good guide to language identity since it may not be reciprocal and furthermore, ascertaining the degree of mutual intelligibility is no easy task (see e.g. Olmsted 1954; Biggs 1957).

What I decided to do is to take Yuman-internal evidence for my demonstration. Starting with the Pai languages, it is recognized by all investigators that Hualapai, Havasupai, and Yavapai are very close and are in fact dialects of a single language, though it not prevented each of the named varieties from being studied intensively by a variety of linguists, giving us a rich record of their structures. This is due not only to the availability of different names but also to the fact that, particularly for Hualapai and Havasupai, there are unique, clearly defined, and closely knit communities with strong identification as distinct. Similarly, in the River subgroup, Mojave, Yuma, and Maricopa are treated as separate languages though it is known that Maricopa was at one time a variant form of Yuma. Since it is now spoken in a non-contiguous area, the identification of Maricopa as a separate language is fully accepted. In these cases, clearly identifiable geographical residence centers can be pointed to and this encourages separate investigation.

In Diegueño territory, there are today at least 16 localities (reservations in San Diego County and Indian villages in Mexico) where language varieties to which the term Diegueño has been applied are spoken, though be it by very few people in each. There is also the fact that, as is probably the case in other Yuman communities as well, the population of any of these localities is not homogeneous and the personal linguistic histories of people are complex.

² This problem is not unique to the Diegueño situation, and extends even to situations where the language differentiation leaves no doubt but the names of the languages encourage the perception of lack of diversity. I think in particular about the situation with the Pomoan languages, where all but one of the seven languages are called Pomo with a geographical designation. I am in complete sympathy with Sally Mendon who has for many years insisted that the family be always identified as Pomoan and that the term Pomo be used only with the appropriate geographical designation to speak of individual languages.
Lexical differences

In my first demonstration, I have taken advantage of the ever-useful Yuman 100-word lists gathered by Munro several years ago, to ascertain the comparability of Yuman subgroups with respect to lexical diversity. This list is essentially a Swadesh 100-word list with a few changes particularly appropriate for Yuman languages as well as some semantic refinements, e.g. there are two entries for EAT, one meaning 'eat soft things', the other 'eat meat', and some ambiguous English items are clarified, i.e. BURN is to be understood as the intransitive notion in 'it's burning', etc. As a result, the entries for each Yuman language are more reliable and more comparable than those for less specific word lists. Since Yuman languages are obviously closely related, high percentiles of cognate forms are expected.

For Diegueño, the Munro wordlists include data from four localities: Mesa Grande (MG), Campo (CA), San José (SJ), and La Huerta (LH). To these, I have added more recent data from Barona (BA), and Amy Miller has provided parallel wordlists for two speakers of Jamul, Gennie Walker (JAw) and Jane Dumas (JAd). For further details on the differences between the speech of these two people, see Miller's paper in this volume.

When comparing the sets of words corresponding to an English gloss on these lists, various categories emerge which are illustrated below. Only stems are compared, so for example, if a word appears on the list with a possessive marker in one language and without it in the other, the possessive marker is ignored. The types of lexical sets attested are as follows:

1a. Identical, as in the following examples:

BLACK
GIVE
MOUTH
TOOTH

n\textsuperscript{ip}\textsuperscript{7}
in\textsuperscript{7}
a:
yaw

1b. Fully cognate but with commonly attested phonological differences:

SAY
BONE
DRY
EAR

i: (MG, BA), i\textsuperscript{2}i: (CA, SJ, LH), i\textsuperscript{2}i: (JAw), i (JAd)
aq (MG, BA), ak (others)
s\textsuperscript{a}y (MG, BA), sa\textsuperscript{3}a\textsuperscript{y} (CA), sa\textsuperscript{3}a\textsuperscript{y} (JAw, JAd, LH), sa\textsuperscript{3}a\textsuperscript{y} (SJ)
\textsuperscript{3}\textsuperscript{3}x\textsuperscript{3}am\textsuperscript{3}a\textsuperscript{3}l (MG, BA), \$\textsuperscript{3}am\textsuperscript{3}l (JAw, JAd), \$\textsuperscript{3}am\textsuperscript{3}l (others)

These sets illustrate a common peculiarity for MG to loose root-initial glottal stops in verbs as in SAY and DRY, a tendency for losing the phoneme q (as contrastive with k) in the southern area, as in BONE, another tendency for s to be realized as $ in that same area, as in DRY, a soundshift from *s to x in some odd environments in MG and BA, as in EAR, lack of total correspondence between voiceless laterals as in EAR, and lack of agreement in vowel length as in SAY and DRY.

These sets can be combined with those of type 1a under the label 'full cognates'. The reason distinctions are made at this point between 1a and 1b is that the differences found in 1b, while common, are not of the unexceptional kind usually required for absolute cognate status.

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3 San José is an Indian village east of Tecate just below the International boundary not to be confused with San José de la Zorra further to the southwest. The word list was taken from a person who resides also in Jamul. Since other Jamul data are now available, the data in this list are identified as San José (SJ).
2. Cognates with irregular phonological correspondences:

WOOD  ʔiʔ (MG, BA), ʔi:i: (CA, SJ), ʔi: (JAw, JAd, LH)
HAND  saʔ (MG, BA), saʔ (others)
LIVER  čipsi: (MG, BA, CA), čipsi (JAd, SJ), tapis (JAw, LH)

WOOD in MG and BA has a final segment ʔ whose origin is obscure; it occurs finally in a few
other lexical items with root high front vowels; HAND is deviant in MG and BA, probably a case
of sound symbolism, and LIVER is odd in JAw and LH, since there is no regular ʔ/t correspon-
dence in this environment.

3. Words with cognate roots but with differences in affixes:

PERSON  ʔi:pay (MG, BA), mata:pay (CA, SJ), ti:pay (JAw, JAd, LH)
BIRD  ʔa:ša: (MG, BA), ʔi:ša: (CA), ʔa:ša: (SJ), a:ša (JAw, JAd), ša (LH)
TO FLY  man (MG, CA, JAd), pu:man (JAw, SJ, LH)

The next sets are those where true lexical differences are found, with at least one of the
language varieties having a non-matching lexical item.

4a. Sets with two lexical items:

BIG  ʔi:ku: (MG), ʔi:šay (CA, SJ, LH), k*šay (JAw, JAd)
COLD  xə:šuː (MG, BA, CA), su:kat (SJ, LH), su:kat (JAw, JAd)
TO DIE  malay (MG, BA), maspa (CA, JAw, JAd, SJ, LH)

4b. Sets with three lexical items:

ALL  n:a:mat (MG, BA), a:šaw (CA), šamš (JAw, JAd, SJ, LH)
FISH  xə:šuːpiː (BA), ʔa:ši (CA), ʔa:ši (LH)
LEAF  ʔi:ya (BA), samay lamis (CA), wa: (JAd, LH)

Note that MG and JA forms are absent for FISH because they use a Spanish loan. The word for
LEAF is not attested in MG.

4c. Sets with more than three lexical items:

SMALL  ʔə:stik (MG), tə:mas (BA), stum (CA), ʔə:piɛ (JAd, SJ), lpiš (LH), lpiš (JAw)
SAND  mešxaruy (MG), ma:šxesay (BA), ma:šay (CA), ma:ša: (JAw),
       ma:ša: (JAd), miːʔaː (SJ), miːʔaː (LH)

Using the categories exemplified above, it is now possible to make reasonably accurate
counts for the whole wordlists across Yuman languages. Counts have been made by subgroup for
Pai and River, the two major subgroups to which Diegueño does not belong. To be absolutely
rigorous, Diegueño should have been grouped with Cocopa into the California-Delta subgroup,
but it was decided to focus on the varieties of Diegueño only in order not to require additional
calculations. Diegueño is thus treated here as if it were a subgroup in its own right. If anything,
this should produce results favoring less rather than more differentiation. In view of the above,
the results of these calculations are indeed dramatic. The table below gives a count of word sets
in the various categories in Pai, River and Diegueño.
Lexical comparison with other Yuman subgroups:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Set Type</th>
<th>Pai</th>
<th>River</th>
<th>Diegueño</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
<td>Cognates (1a,b)</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>58</td>
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<tr>
<td>Odd phonology (2)</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Morphological differences (3)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lexical differences (4a,b,c)</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This table reveals that Pai and River have somewhat comparable diversity in lexicon, and that Diegueño far exceeds the other subgroups in diversity, in that it has a startlingly small number of true cognates and a correspondingly large number of true lexical differences. If figures were the only criterion, one would have to conclude that, if River in fact consists of three languages, then Diegueño might in fact consist of more than that. The issue, however, and in spite of the title of this paper, is not so much exactly how many languages Diegueño consists of, but rather the extent of the diversity within its territory. I would not, however, preclude the possibility of additional languages being recognized by further research. I would like to point out, for example, that San José de la Zorra which is not represented in the sample used in this paper, is known to have peculiar phonological characteristics, i.e. the existence of voiceless nasals and semivowels, and may well be a candidate for language status. I hope to have demonstrated unambiguously that, at least from a lexical perspective, the linguistic facts support the hypothesis of more rather than less lexical diversity in Diegueño territory than in other Yuman subgroups.

In a further effort to come closer to identifying the number of entities or languages, I offer the following observations. In the lexical sets provided by the worldlists used in this paper, some Diegueño varieties cluster together. So, Mesa Grande and Barona almost always pattern together. Similarly, Jamul, San José, and La Huerta almost always pattern together. As to Campo, it sometimes is closer to MG-BA, and sometimes closer to JA-SJ-LH, while being unique in a few other cases. The resulting picture, not too surprisingly, fits reasonably well the three dialect areas I proposed in 1970 (Langdon 1970: map facing page 1). Translated into the point of view I am arguing for in this paper, this would mean that Diegueño should be considered to consist of at least three languages, although the boundaries between them are not necessarily clearcut. The state of our knowledge is graphically reflected in the map below which is a slight revision of the map in Langdon 1970. It identifies three core areas encircled by solid lines which include within them localities which contain speakers who clearly belong to that language as defined by the lexical criteria above. Thus the northern area, which I will call 'Tipay, comprises surely speakers at Mesa Grande, Santa Ysabel, and Barona, on the basis of good data from all three locations. The central/eastern area focuses on Campo, with Cuyapaque and Manzanita belonging to the same cluster, which I will refer to as Kumeyaay, and the southern area includes Jamul, San José, and La Huerta, to be called Tiipay. The areas in broken lines which extend beyond the focal areas above are assumed to belong to the focal area they enclose, but more work is needed to place them accurately. The major difference between this map and the 1970 one is first of all that it defines the areas only in terms of the communities contained therein and leaves large portions of the surrounding territory unassigned. In addition, it makes the claim that Tiipay territory extends quite a bit further north than the area I previously (and erroneously) labeled Mexican Diegueño.
Structural differences

While there is ample lexical information to support this proposal, and a good deal of grammatical information is known though not necessarily fully published about a number of varieties, one of the most important recent development is the completion of a descriptive grammar of Jamul (Miller 1990). A few differences between Mesa Grande and Jamul are briefly summarized below.4

a. Phonology

While MG does not allow initial consolant clusters, JA has many complex ones. The contrast between k and q attested in MG (though not many minimal pairs support it) is not phonemic in JA; instead, q occurs in final position after low vowels, k elsewhere. The allophony of stressed vowels is quite distinct across the two languages. In MG, stems ending in a vowel are always long, while in JA they can be either long or short, depending on the lexical item. While MG has two r phonemes, JA only has one. Root initial glottal stops are retained in JA, but are lost in

4 For the sake of brevity, no examples will be given of the differences noted. The facts for each language can be found in Langdon (1970), Couro and Langdon (1973), Miller (1990, and this volume).
MG. A process of lenition affecting in particular the suffixed demonstrative has very different realizations in the two languages (for JA see Achard, this volume; in MG a separate phoneme v had to be postulated to cover the facts.)

b. Morphology

First and second person pronouns have special non-subject forms ending in -p in JA; this segment is absent in MG. JA has a very productive causative prefix aa- which is absent in MG. A verb suffix -k producing mediopassives denoting states induced by an outside agency contrasts with another mediopassive morpheme -p in MG, but is unattested in JA. Plural verb stem formations differ widely across the two languages. A verbal suffix of obligation meaning something like 'supposed to' is present in JA, but absent in MG. A different subject marker -ehm attested in JA is not attested in MG. Considerable differences exist in the reflexive construction in the two languages. Possessive morphemes on kinship terms have difference third person markers in the two languages.

Conclusions

The recognition of three distinct languages, while obviously valid, need not be the final word on this issue. At the very least, it points to the need for a full description of a Kumeyaay variety, probably Campo, for which a good deal of information is already available and which is still spoken by a number of people. As suggested above, another need would be structural information on the speech of San José de la Zorra. Structural information is also needed for Santa Ysabel and hopefully San Pasqual if a speaker can be located, as well as for Manzanita. A grammar of Baron Long (also known as Viejas) would be very useful since it is at the moment considered intermediate between 'lipay and Kumeyaay.

References


Number 15

Occasional Papers On Linguistics

Proceedings of the 1990 Hokan-Penutian Languages Workshop, Held at the University of California, San Diego, June 22-23, 1990.

SIU

Department of Linguistics
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Library of Congress Catalog Number
90-085532
PREFACE

The 1990 meeting was the twentieth anniversary of the First Hokan conference, which met at the University of California, San Diego. From time to time, the conference has met with other groups such as the Penutian conference and the Uto-Aztecan conference. It now regularly meets with the Penutian conference.

The conference is again indebted to Margaret Langdon and the Department of Linguistics at the University of California, San Diego, for hosting the conference. Our thanks are also due to the various graduate students who took care of the numerous details such as supplying the endless coffee.

The papers in this volume appear in the same order as they did on the program at the conference. Unfortunately, a few of the presenters were not able to send in a paper for publication. All of the papers in the volume except the last one were presented at the 1990 meeting.

In 1983, 1984, and 1985, very few of the presenters sent in their papers for publication. In 1986, a few papers from each of these years were assembled into a single volume. Werner Winter sent his 1983 paper in so early that the editor lost it in the files, and Winter's paper was omitted from the 1986 volume. It is now egg-on-the-face time for the editor. Winter's paper is included in this volume as the last paper. Mea culpa.

Arrangements have been made with Coyote Press, P.O.B. 3377, Salinas, CA 93912, 408-422-4912, to reprint the various Hokan and Hokan-Penutian conference volumes. Dr. Gary S. Breschini of Coyote Press has told me that he will try to keep all the volumes in print. I have just sent him part of the original manuscripts and will be sending him the rest of the manuscripts very shortly. Only a very few of the original publications are still available. Please see the list at the end of the volume for details on the few remaining original volumes. I do not know how long it will be until Coyote Press will begin issuing reprints of the backissues.

James E. Redden

Carbondale, December 1990

Historical Note: The proceedings of the First Hokan conference were edited by Margaret Langdon and published by Mouton. I have edited all the other volumes of proceedings except those of 1988 and 1989, when I was in Africa. The 1988 and 1989 volumes of proceedings were edited by Scott Delancey in the series published by the Department of Linguistics at the University of Oregon. Please do not request these two volumes from me. Please address orders for the 1988 and 1989 volumes to: Department of Linguistics, University of Oregon, Eugene, OR 97403. I hope that Scott will be willing to publish the Hokan-Penutian volumes regularly, when I retire in a few years.

JER
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