

Language Documentation and Revitalization: A Collaborative Approach

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Special thanks to my many collaborators:

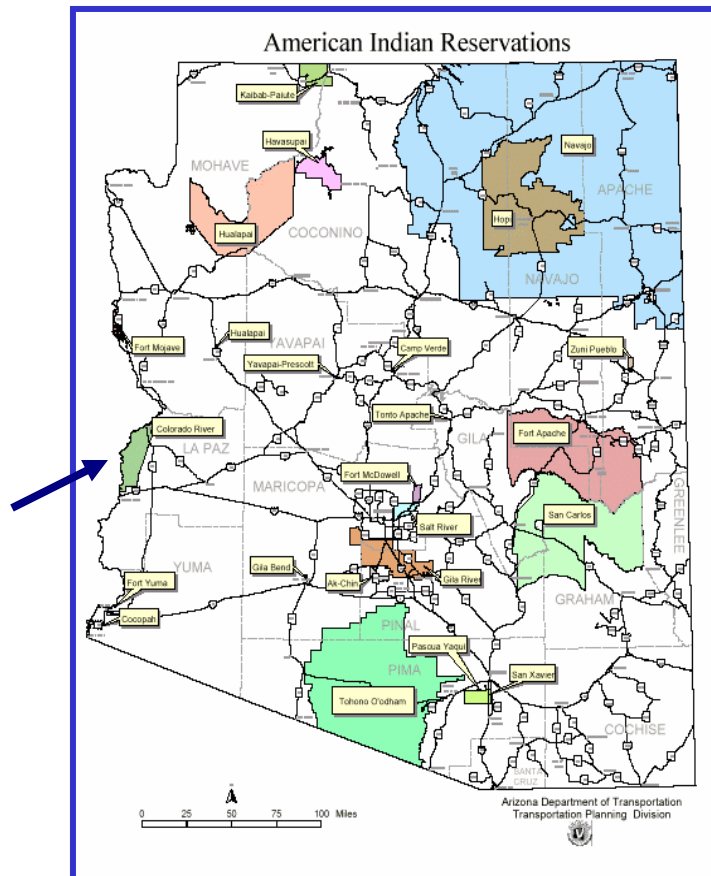
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Amelia Flores, Gilford Harper, Johnny Hill, Jr., *Colorado
River Indian Tribes*

Dirk Elzinga, *Brigham Young University*

Mohave and Chemehuevi Language Documentation

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Amelia Flores, Mohave
Johnny Hill, Jr., Chemehuevi,
UA training, 2003

- **Chemehuevi**, Chemehuevi is a southern Numic language of the Shoshonean branch of Uto-Aztecan: Fewer than 5 fully fluent speakers at CRIT.
- **Mohave**, a member of the Yuman language family: Approximately 30 speakers today at CRIT [Colorado River Indian Tribes].
- Our project builds on previous work at CRIT which involved training tribal members in the use of technology related to language learning.

Colorado River Indian Reservation



What is the relationship between revitalization and documentation?

- Language documentation and revitalization have often been treated as separate enterprises.
 - National Science Foundation: Documenting Endangered Languages grants
 - Administration for Native American's grants
- For communities, revitalization and documentation are inseparable - they energize each other.
- What is documentary adequacy from a community perspective?
All things that support the revitalization/pedagogical goals: grammars, dictionaries, pragmatics, conversation, and discourse.
- Documentation feeds revitalization.
- Indigenous communities are increasingly taking charge of their own language documentation and revitalization projects.
- This presentation focuses on collaboration and training related specifically to language documentation and how they can feed revitalization.

Language Collaboration

- Collaboration: united labor, co-operation (OED)
- Collaboration brings together a group of people with different experience and skills to accomplish a common goal.
- The notion of collaboration between Indigenous communities and linguists has been recently emphasized as a means to better accomplish language work.
- A collaborative model for preparing language curators with a focus on language revitalization has been discussed by Furbee & Stanley (2002).

Points of consideration when collaborating

- Who
 - Community team members
 - Linguist team members
 - Language speakers
- When
 - As often as possible
 - Language vs. other responsibilities
- Where
 - Onsite
 - Offsite
- How
 - Meetings (group and individual)
 - Electronic communication (OLE board & e-mail)
- Equipment
- Collaborator/Team member and Community education

The Research Team

- Community team members
 - Motivated to work with the language
 - Knowledge of the language or of fluent speakers
 - Familiarity with the community and social factors
 - Experience and skills
- Linguist team members
 - Motivated to work with the language
 - Trained in linguistic, language learning, and documentary methods
 - Experience and skills
- “The Captain/Coach” (Linguist or Community team member)
 - Motivator
 - Follow-up
 - Responsible
- Language speakers

Some Sample Teams

- Chemehuevi/Mohave team
 - Coach
 - Community members
 - Linguists
- Mutsun team
 - Coach
 - Community members
 - Linguists
 - Graduate RA
 - Undergraduates
- Koasati Team
 - Coaches
 - Advisory board
 - Consultants
 - Speaker consultants
 - Linguist consultants
- Southern Ute Team
 - Coaches
 - Language technicians
 - Consultants
 - Speaker consultants
 - Linguist consultants

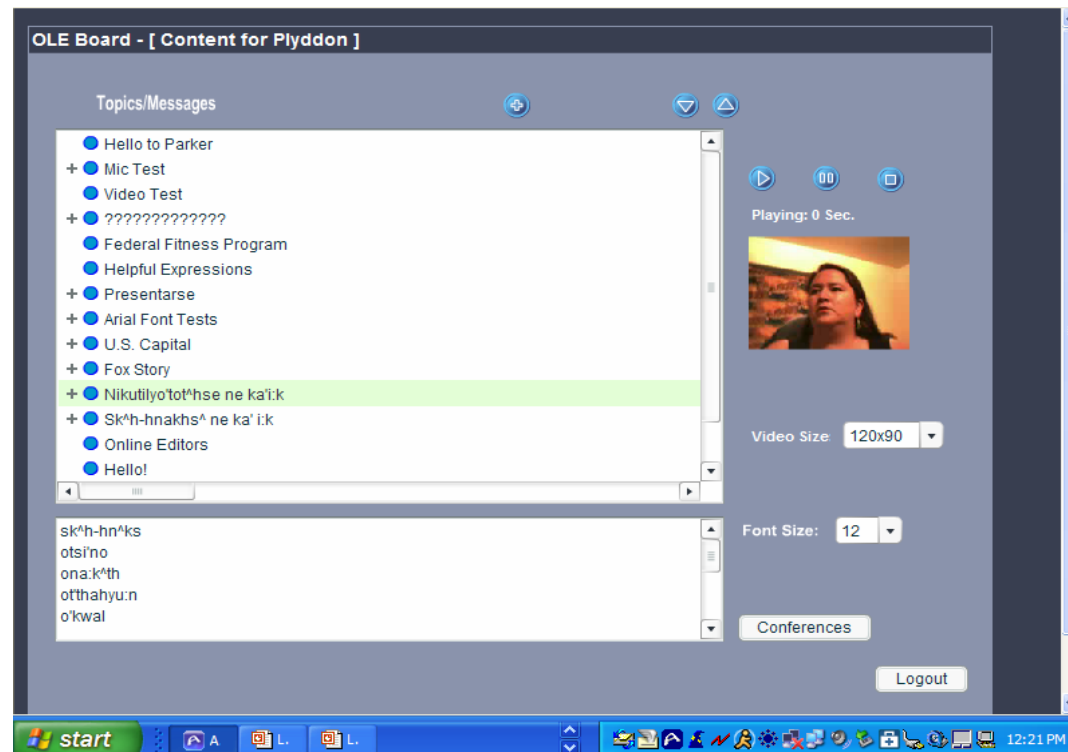
Meeting Types (Training Sessions)

- Group Meeting
 - Opportunity to meet together as a group
 - Discuss and establish group goals
 - Conduct training on material relevant for the group
 - E.g. equipment, local cultural practices, basic linguistics
- Individual Meeting
 - Team members can work one on one
 - More comfortable setting
 - Establish individual goals
 - Work together on projects
- Community Meetings
 - Presentation of products
 - Training sessions

Contact Time

- Frequent contact is central - both onsite and offsite
 - Onsite contact is always the best
 - E-mail
 - **The OLE board** technology (OLE) –a voice, video and text environment for asynchronous communication

<http://www.ole.arizona.edu/>



Collaborator Education

- Community team members
 - Descriptive linguistics, language acquisition, dialectal difference, language attitudes, bilingual education, training them to be researchers, explain linguists' motivation...
 - Equipment education, documentary “best practices”
 - AILDI (and other native language institutes) as a resource
- Linguist team members
 - Social structure, cultural issues, political environment
 - Equipment education, documentary “best practices”
 - AILDI (and other native language institutes) as a resource
- Community meetings

Examples of collaboration: Chemehuevi

Some projects we are currently working on:

- Audio and video documentation of everyday language use
- An Online Chemehuevi Lexicon and Database
- Video lessons
- Language Attrition
 - Comparison of Harrington notes to current language
- Phonetic description
 - Articulatory
 - Acoustic
- Additional description
 - Syntax
 - Morphology
 - Semantics


Online Chemehuevi Dictionary

As a group it was established that [An Online Dictionary of Chemehuevi](#) (Tucker *et al.*, 2006, Nelson *et al.*, 2004) containing sound files for individual items would be useful documentation and useful for to the tribe.

The dictionary combines previous written documentation with audio documentation in a way that is available to the community.



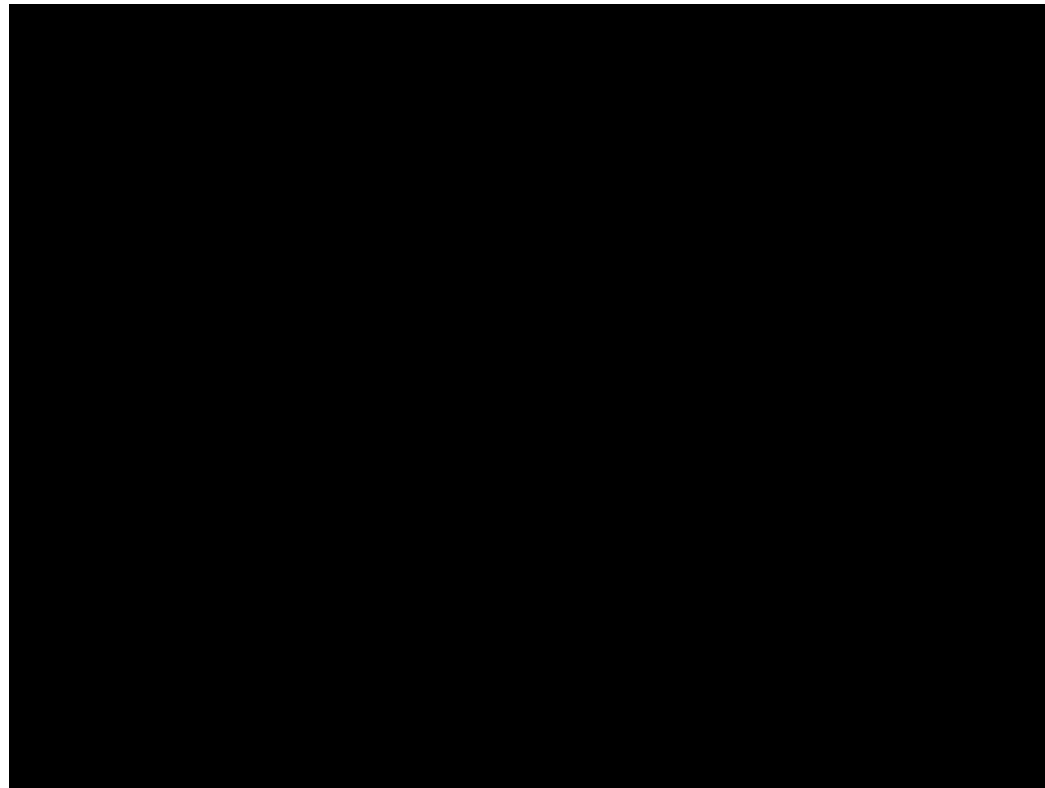
The screenshot shows a web browser window titled "Chemehuevi - English - Mozilla Firefox". The address bar displays the URL "http://www.u.arizona.edu/~bvt/dictionary/chemehuevi.php?". The page content includes a header "Nüwü ampagapü po'okatü/An Online Chemehuevi Dictionary", a link "How to write Chemehuevi", and two bidirectional links: "Nüwü ampagapü - Haiku amagapü (Chemehuevi - English)" and "Haiku amagapü - Nüwü ampagapü (English - Chemehuevi)". Below these are navigation links for letters: "A C H I K Kw L M N O P R S T Tc Ts U Ü V W Y PREFIX SUFFIX". Three dictionary entries are visible:

- aipatsi** 
POS: *noun*
GLOSS: **little boy**
TRANSLATION: young boy
PLURAL: aipatsiwü, a'aipatsiwü
- angaavi**
POS: *noun*
GLOSS: **ant**
TRANSLATION: small red ant species
- angavi** 
POS: *noun*
GLOSS: **arm**

The status bar at the bottom of the browser window shows "Done".

Video Lessons: A trial

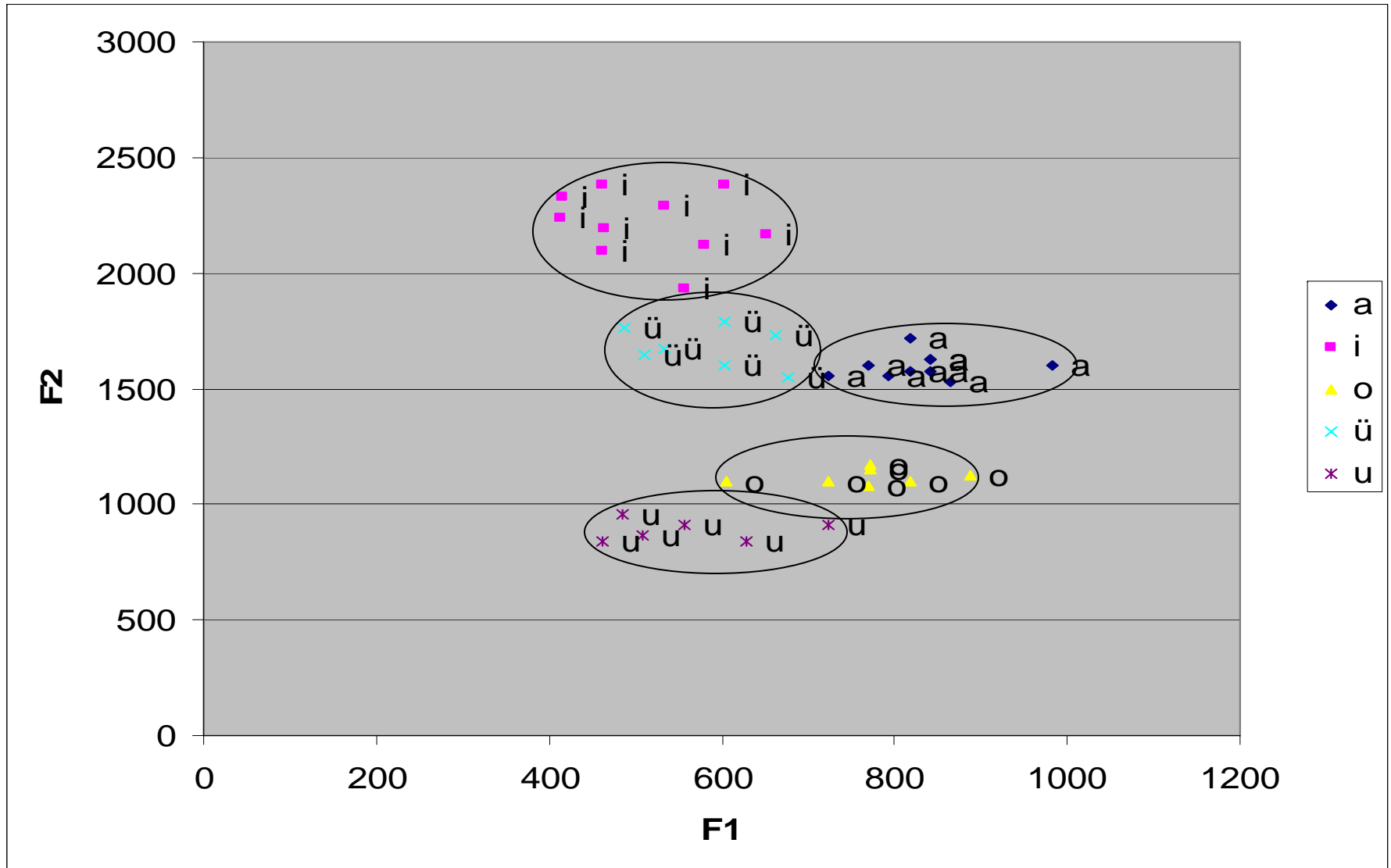
- During an individual meeting we created a trial video on animals which led to more in depth planning of a longer video on the morning routine.



Phonetics, documentation and revitalization

- Phonetics?
 - Physical and quantitative description of the sounds of a language
 - Becomes a record of the articulatory and acoustic properties of sound
- How does phonetics contribute to revitalization efforts?
 - Mutsun (Warner, pc)

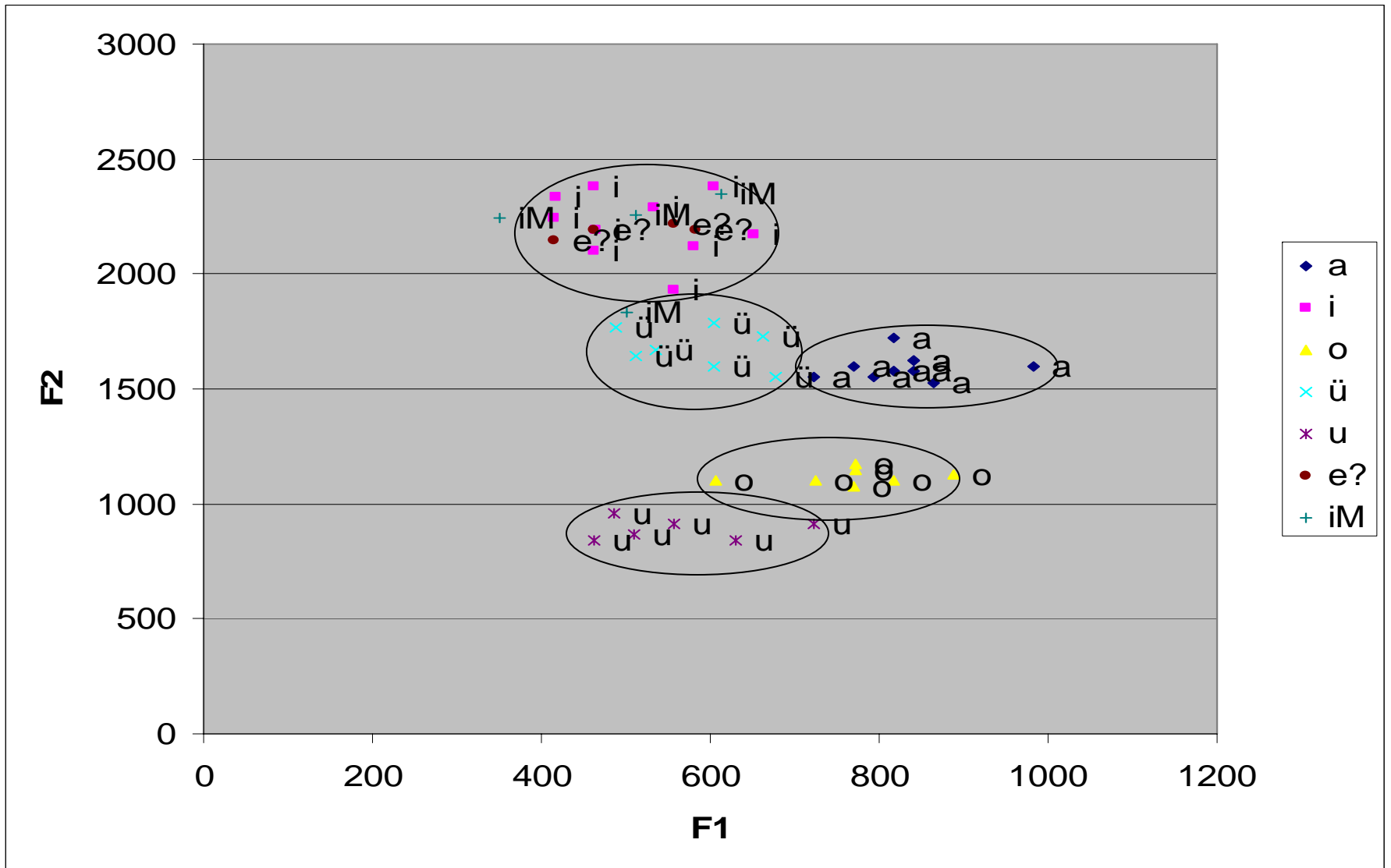
Vowel Chart: BW



Phoneme /e/?

- Major (2005) claimed that in his data the phoneme /e/ occurred.
- Press (1975, 1979) and (Laird 1976, 1984) do not indicate such a phoneme in their work on Chemehuevi.
- An analysis of BW a speaker recorded by Major (1969) shows that the examples of the phoneme /e/ indicated by Major (2005) fall well into BW's /i/ phoneme.
- To an American English speaker the phonemes may sound like an /e/, based on this phonetic analysis they are indeed /i/.

Vowel Chart 2: BW

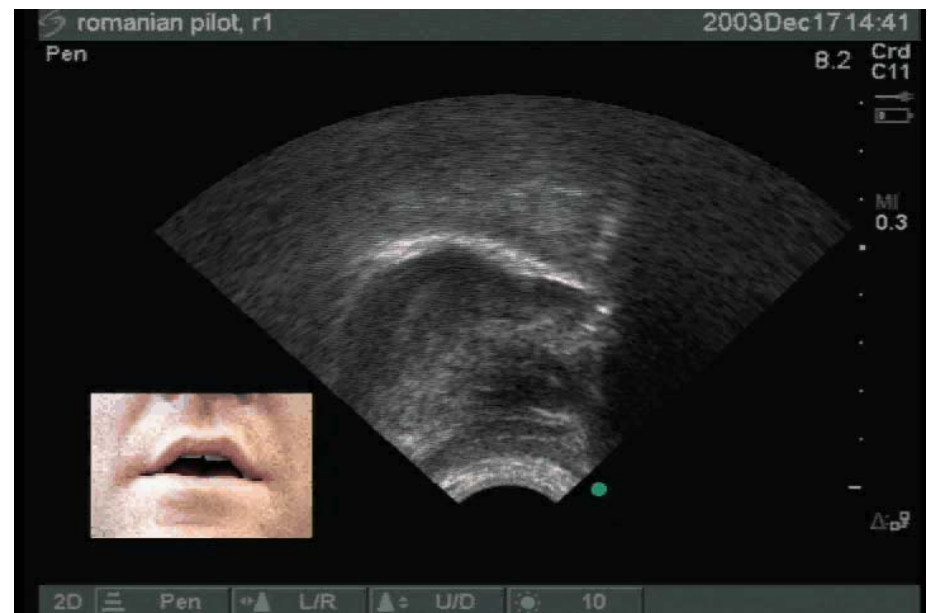


Ultrasound and articulation

Phonetic research can aid in understanding the different articulations in a language.

Ultrasound can be used to create video of the tongue articulations.

This is a sample of Romanian created at the [Arizona Phonological Imaging Lab](#) at the University of Arizona.



Examples of collaboration: Mohave

Work on Mohave is in the initial stages. Listed below are some of our current projects:

- An Online Mohave Lexicon and Database
- Documentation of conversation, everyday language use
- Mohave phrasebook
- Mohave alphabet picture book
- Coyote stories
- Language Description
 - Phonetics, Phonology, Syntax, Morphology, Semantics, etc...

Other products of documentation

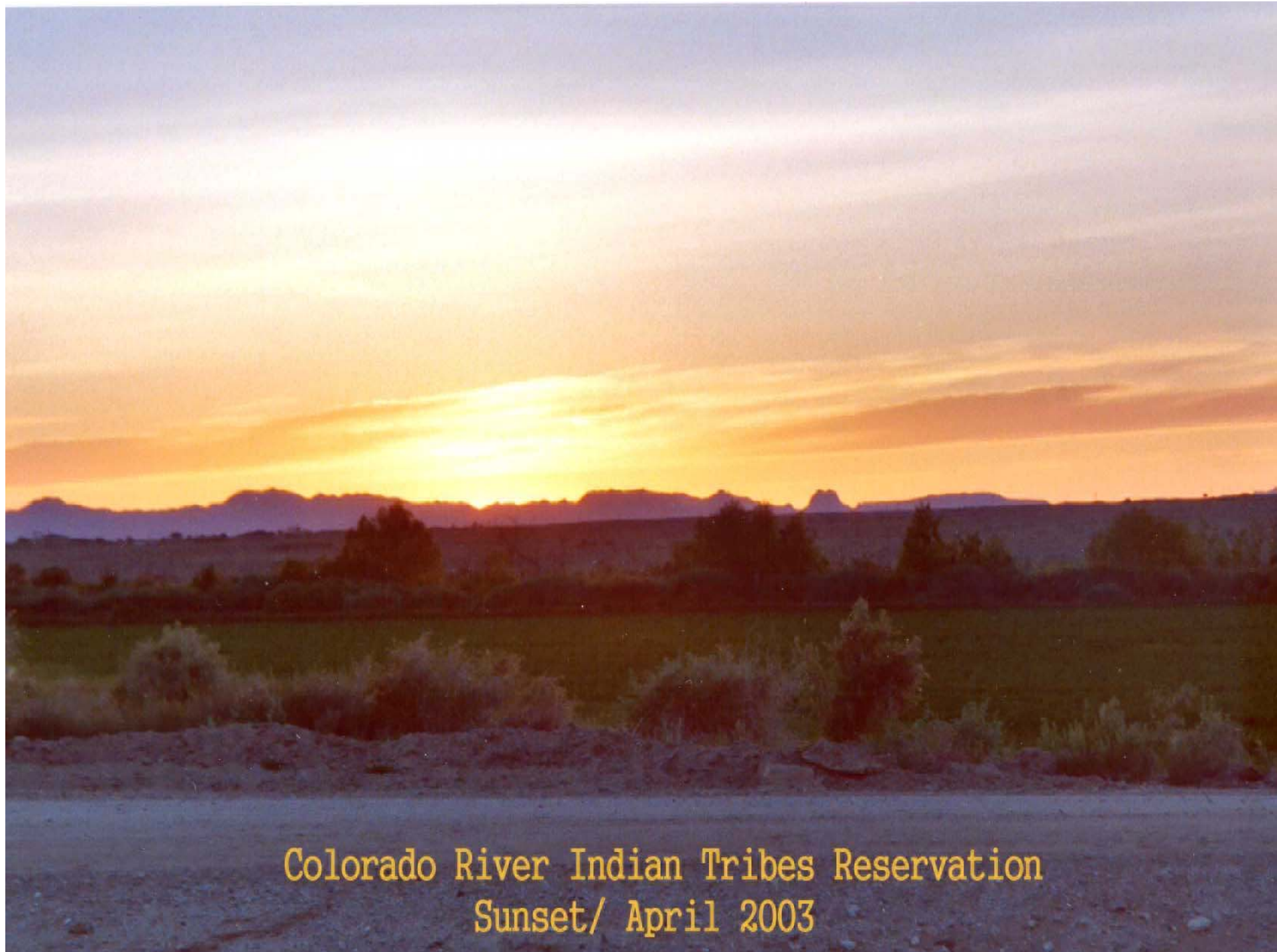
- Children's picture dictionary
- Picture dictionary
- Language lessons (specific curriculum)
 - MaxAuthor
 - ACORNS
- Other materials based on community needs

‘Best practices’ for the construction of Language Teams?

- Good, Better and Best practices... (Aristar-Dry & Simons, 2006)
- ‘Best Practices’ are still being defined in the context of working within a community...
- However, motivation is the most essential characteristic in identifying prospective team members.

A model of language documentation and revitalization for Indigenous Communities

- Collaborative effort
 - Between academics and community members
 - Between community members
- Onsite training/meetings
- Documenting toward revitalizing
- Community based protocols for use of materials



Colorado River Indian Tribes Reservation
Sunset/ April 2003