1.0 Genetic Affiliation and prehistory

Cupeño is a member of the Cupan group (Bright and Hill 1967) of the Takic subfamily of Uto-Aztecan. Uto-Aztecan is divided by most scholars into two large sub-groups: a southern group of languages ranging from Aztecan (which extends into Central America as far south as El Salvador and Nicaragua) to the Piman languages in Arizona, and a northern group in the U.S. Southwest, the Great Basin, and California. The northern languages probably share a single common ancestor, as has been shown by Heath (1977, 1985), and Manaster Ramer (1992). Northern Uto-Aztecan includes Hopi, spoken in northeastern Arizona, the Numic languages of the Great Basin and adjacent regions of California, the Columbia Plateau, and the Colorado Plateau regions, Tübatulabal, spoken in the foothills of the Tehachapi Mountains in south-central California, and Takic.

The Takic communities were all located in southern California. Archaeologists (e.g. Moratto 1984) have speculated that ancestral Takic groups were probably in their present range by 3500 years ago. The Takic languages include in addition to Cupan the following languages: Gabrielino-Fernandeño, spoken in the Los Angeles Basin, Serrano, spoken from Morongo north and east to the Twenty-Nine Palms area in the southern Mojave Desert and the closely-related Kitanemuk, spoken further east in the Mojave Desert, Tataviam, northeast of Gabrielino-Fernandeño, and Nicoleño, a language spoken on the Channel Islands. The latter two languages are documented by only a few words, and their affiliation with Takic, while probable, can never be secure.

The Cupan languages share a single common ancestor (Bright and Hill 1967). They include the closely-related sister languages Cahuilla and Cupeño, and the more distant Luiseño. Luiseño was spoken from the Pacific Coast inland to the foothills of the Coast Ranges in the drainages of the Santa Margarita and San Luis Rey Rivers; according to Jacobs (1975:7), the language is "more uniform in character" than are the other Cupan languages. Juaneño or Acjachemen, spoken around San Juan Capistrano, is often distinguished from Luiseño, but is closely related to it (Harrington 1933, Lobo 2002). Cahuilla is spoken
in the Colorado Desert, the northern part of the Imperial Valley, and the mountain ranges south from Mount San Jacinto to Mount Palomar. A geographic and ethnographic distinction between Pass, Desert, and Mountain communities of the Cahuilla was made by Strong (1929); Jacobs (1975) distinguishes Wanikik, Desert and Mountain Cahuilla dialects associated with respectively with the three geographically-differentiated communities. Cupeño, the language of the present study, is the smallest language of the Cupan group. Speakers of the language lived until 1903 in several villages in the coast ranges southeast of Mount Palomar in what is today north-eastern San Diego County. The various communities and their dialects are discussed below.

I have argued (Hill 2001, 2002) that Uto-Aztecan presence in the U.S. Southwest and in California results from population movements by maize horticulturalists originating in the northwestern quadrant of Mesoamerica that took place between about 4500 and about 3500 years ago. However, there is no linguistic or archaeological evidence that speakers of the California Uto-Aztecan languages, Tübatulabal and Takic, were maize cultivators in the prehistoric period (although of course all groups of Takic speakers were cultivators by the nineteenth century). Unlike the other languages in Northern Uto-Aztecan (Numic and Hopi; see Hill 2003c), the California languages present no trace of the Uto-Aztecan vocabulary for maize cultivation. Cultivation at least of cucurbits may date to the precontact period among the Cahuilla (Bean and Lawson 1976), but Cahuilla cultivation vocabulary is not Uto-Aztecan (nor is it obviously derived from the neighboring Yuman languages, a possible source of influence). It is possible that the sub-communities within Proto-Northern Uto-Aztecan that gave rise to the California languages never emphasized cultivation, but were mainly or entirely hunters and gatherers throughout their history. Variation in emphasis on cultivation is known for other Uto-Aztecan-speaking communities such as the Tohono O'odham (Hill 2001, 2003c), so the ancestral Northern Uto-Aztecan group probably included bands that emphasized hunting and gathering as well as groups focussed on maize cultivation. Archaeological, ethnographic and linguistic evidence suggests that all of the Takic-speaking communities, as well as the Tübatulabal, were thoroughly integrated into the acorn-collection subsistence complex so characteristic of aboriginal California. The comparative linguistic evidence shows that the California Uto-Aztecans shared cognate vocabularies for the use and management of acorns and oak trees that clearly date to a very ancient period in the development of these languages.
1.1. A linguistic profile of Cupeño.

Cupeño is an agglutinative language, displaying nearly all of the properties proposed by Skalička (1979) for that type. As summarized by Plank (1995:36), these are as follows:

a. Predominantly non-cumulative morphological markers

b. Loose ties between stems or roots and affixes, manifest in easily recognizable word-internal morpheme boundaries

c. Few morphologically conditioned word-internal alternations

d. Syllabic autonomy of affixes

e. Little word-internal bonding other than by vowel harmony

f. Large inflectional paradigms, relatively few function words (e.g. adpositions, articles, possessives and personal pronouns, conjunctions, auxiliaries)

g. Potentially long strings of affixes, especially suffixes, with possible combining of markers of the same paradigmatic category.

h. Uniform declension due to absence of synonymous inflections and conjugations

i. Little homophony of inflection

j. Systematic zero-expression of basic paradigmatic categories (such as nominative, absolutive, singular)

k. Blurring of distinction between derivation and inflection

l. No rigid lexical discrimination of word classes

m. An abundance of morphological modifiers of verbs

n. No nominal classes (especially, no gender)

o. Phrasal marking rather than word marking, with each category marked once per phrase, precluding agreement

p. Coexistence of different kinds of clause construction, especially verbal and nominal

q. Predominance of nominalizations over finite subordinate clauses

r. Relatively rigid word order.
Cupeño departs from this characterization in regard to properties (o) and (r). In the matter of agreement, characterized in (o), Cupeño nouns, as well as demonstratives, determiners, quantifiers, and adjectives are marked for case and number and display case and number concord in complex nominal constructions. As for word order, property (r), Cupeño is clearly dominantly head-final, with quite rigid word order for some constituents such as Genitive Noun constructions. However, pragmatically-driven departures from the SOV order, including movement of verbs to sentence-initial position and right-shifting of arguments to follow verbs, are fairly common.

Plank (1995) argued that Suffixaufnahme, the appearance of a case marker on the genitive noun as well as the possessed noun in possessive expressions, should be added to this list of properties (Planck redefined the term to include all instances where case-marking affixes spread from lower to higher syntactic categories, as with "case stacking" (Nordlinger 1998)). Examples of Suffixaufnahme are in fact found in Cupeño, although they are seen only when genitive-noun expressions appear as objects of transitive verbs.

Cupeño displays a number of interesting typological properties. First, it exhibits dual agreement marking. Head-marking (Nichols 1986) appears in past-tense verbs, which require prefixes encoding the person and number of the subject. Proclitics encoding the person and number of the object can appear on verbs of all types. In non-past-tense verbs, enclitics in the second-position auxiliary complex encode the person and number of subjects. With imperative verbs, these enclitics encode the object. However, the language also has dependent marking for case, with a generalized object case marked with a suffix on quantifiers, demonstratives, adjectives, and nouns and pronouns. Case marking is of the "direct-marking" type (Dixon 1994), with object case markers constituting a flexible resource that can be used to heighten transitivity contrasts in discourse.

In argument type (Jelinek 1987) Cupeño has mixed pronominal and independent nominal marking for subject and object. Pronominal arguments encoding subject person and number are required on past tense verbs, but occur only there. For other types of verbs, null subjects are rare but possible, although either an independent noun or pronoun and/or a person-number clitic cross-referencing the subject in the second-position auxiliary complex usually appears.
In case alignment type the language is mixed, with nouns and pronouns being marked (optionally) for a generalized object case, and the subject markers on past-tense verbs being nominative (S,A) in contrast to the accusative (IO, DO) object proclitics. However, the person-number clitics in the second-position auxiliary complex distinguish ergative (A) and absolutive (S,O) cases.

Cupeño shares with other languages in its region a robust second-position auxiliary complex that includes clitics that mark person, number, and case of the subject, modality, and evidential status. These usually follow the first word in the sentence, although occasionally they follow the first sentence constituent, for instance a complex nominal construction. A striking property of the language is extensive discontinuous constituency in all types of nominal constructions. Discontinuous constituents are very common, and there is great freedom in the types of element that can interrupt a nominal construction in discontinuous constituency.

The many unusual typological properties of Cupeño, especially when it is compared to other Uto-Aztecan languages, suggest that the language has undergone what Thurston (1987, 1989, 1992) called "esoterogeny", a process whereby a language accumulates strategies for distinction from its neighboring languages. Especially the presence of the split-ergative case system is unique among Uto-Aztecan languages and unique in southern California more generally (indeed, the nearest languages for which ergativity have been reported are Alsea in southwestern Oregon and Zuni in western New Mexico, the latter being a very minimal system). The exuberant development of discontinuous constituency also exceeds what is attested for other Uto-Aztecan languages, and the Suffixaufnahme found in possessive expressions in questions is also unattested elsewhere. Cupeño is probably more complex in many areas of grammar and phonology than either Cahuilla or Luiseño. Jacobs (1975:5) observes that "Cahuilla appears more accessible to Cupeño speakers than Cupeño is to Cahuilla speakers", and I concur with this assessment. Esoterogeny, under Thurston's characterization, is exactly what would be predicted in a language with very few speakers -- probably never more than 1,000 -- that had been incorporated into the linguistic ecology of aboriginal California, a classic example of what Nichols (1992) called an "accretion" or "residual" zone. Golla (2000) has observed similar processes of accumulated distinctiveness in the California Athabaskan languages, the other major case where a language family wide-spread outside aboriginal California has a few members within that zone.
1.2. The Geographical Setting

Cupeño was spoken in three villages in northeastern San Diego County: Kupa (Warner's Hot Springs), Wilaqlapla, and Puluqla. According to Kroeber (1925), the Cupeño, with a population of about 500 at contact, were always the smallest linguistic community in aboriginal California. Aboriginal life centered especially on the complex of springs, both cool and hot, around the village of Kupa. This area exhibited a high density of named sites, including sites of ritual and mythological significance as well as sites that offered important subsistence resources (Strong 1929). Especially important were oak groves for collecting acorns, of which the most valuable were stands of *kwinily* "Black Oak" (*Quercus kelloggii*). Other oak species were exploited as well, including *wi'at* "Live Oak" (*Q. chrysolepis*), *wi'awlet* (*Q. agrifolia*), *teve$hily* "White Oak" (*Q. engelmannii*) and *pawish* "Blue Oak" (*Q. dumosa*). The most favored oak groves were near water, since acorns are poisonous before they are ground and thoroughly leached. Nearby rock outcroppings were modified to serve as *ilyapal* "bedrock mortars" for grinding. Much of Cupeño territory consisted of uplands covered with the mixed shrubby vegetation known in California as "chaparral", which included plants used for food and medicine like *kelel* "Manzanita" (*Arctostaphylos* spp.) and *chamish* "Chokecherry" (*Prunus* spp.). Chaparral supports a rich crop of game including especially deer and rabbits, with a predator population that in aboriginal times included not only *atax'am* "human beings", *isily* "Coyote", *temgwet* "Mountain lion" and *tukut* "Wildcat", but also *iswet* "wolf" and *hunwet* "bear", which included the rare grizzly as well as more common brown bears. Bear were greatly respected and called *ngqa* "my father's father." A form of shamanistic practice where the shaman could turn into a bear was held in special awe.

Among the chaparral-covered hills lie grassy plains and cienegas or marshes, which provided game, edible plants, and of special importance, plants used for basketry -- the major art of women -- including the three major basketry plants, *sual* "Deergrass" (*Muhlenbergia* sp.), *se'evish* (*Rhus trilobata*), and *seyily* (*Juncus* sp.)

While hills, plains, and oak groves at the middle elevations between 1000 and 3000 feet in altitude were most important for the Cupeño, other areas that they exploited at least occasionally included
conifer forests, found above about 5,000 feet on Mt. Palomar to the south, as well as the low desert of the Anza-Borrego region to the east. Plant and animal species from these vegetation types such as "pine" and "Creosote Bush" are attested in the lexicon. A thorough review of the geography, ecology, and ethnobotany of the Cupeño landscape is presented by Gaughen (2001).

Cupeño territory was not only rich, it was strikingly beautiful. In 1846 Dr. John S. Griffin, accompanying General Kearney and his American troops in their first expedition into California, wrote the following description of the Valle de San Jose, just below the hot springs at what was then "Warner's Ranch": "We … continued down the valley, which we found to be beautiful -- some of the most lovely scenes presented themselves that I have ever looked at -- the live oak scattered about in the most beautiful clumps -- stones of large size -- and luxuriant grass…” (quoted in Lummis 1902:472).

Cupeño territory was, however, very small. Narrowly defined (as by Strong 1929) it included about 10 square miles, with important gathering sites distributed throughout the region. This area was bordered on the north by the lands of the Mountain Cahuilla, on the west by lands exploited by the Luiseño, and on the south and east by Diegueño territory. The Cupeño had regular relationships with these groups including trade, political alliance, and intermarriage. Hinton (1991) has shown the presence of a "linguistic area" in Southern California including all these groups, that attests to a long period of contact and mutual bilingualism.

1.3. Social organization and Ritual Life

Cupeño social organization included a division of the community into two exogamous moieties, Islyam "Coyotes" and Tuktam "Wildcats." Six patrilineal lineages at Kupa included the three founding lineages, descended from the sons of the culture hero Kisily Pewish, all affiliated with the Coyote moiety: Kavaly, Pegtam'a Tulnikish ("Blacktooths") and Temgxawetim ("Northerners"). The "commoner" (humahymana'at) lineages, associated with the Wildcat moiety, included two thought to be of Diegueño origin: the Sivimu'atim ("Peeling Skins"), and the Awlinve'achim ("Something tied over the head"). A third lineage, the Taka'atim ("Sharp Ones"), was said to be originally Luiseño. Other minor lineages included the Sawvelyim ("Unripe ones"), a Mountain Cahuilla lineage affiliated with the Kavalyim. At Wilaqalpa were
found two other Wildcat lineages, the Chutnikut, said to be Diegueño, and the Tushvekinve’etim, said to be Cahuilla. The "commoner" lineages owned less property than the three "founder" lineages, and were ritually subordinate to them, as indicated by secondary meanings of the adverb humahyam'a'an "in the manner of a commoner": "not saying things right, saying inappropriate things for lack of knowledge, false."

Some activities were organized by the paxish "party", a group made up of a major lineage core and additional members from affiliated small lineages. The Kavalyim-Sawvelyim combination was such a "party." The founder lineages held corporate property, including a sacred bundle, maasivet, in the possession of the lineage head or net and kept in the kish ay'anish "big house" (also called wamkish, which Strong (1929:249) says is a Luiseño word), used for lineage ceremonies and as the dwelling house of the net, the lineage head or "chief". Strong (1929:234) reports that while each Coyote lineage held a maasivet, all the Wildcat lineages shared a single bundle, which was held by the Sivimu'at net. Clans also owned collecting sites with important resources such as oak groves. The Kavaly lineage had the largest holdings, followed by the other Coyote lineages. The Wildcat lineages owned relatively few resource sites. Land not specifically owned was "commons" available to all.

Religious life was organized by several types of ceremonial leaders, of which the most important was the lineage head or net. He was assisted by a tekway'ge'ash or "firetender". The pax'a "Red Racer Snake" was appointed by the net to assist at ceremonies where men drank manit "toloache", a brew prepared from the hallucinogenic plant Datura meteloides. Shamans, puvalim (the singular is puul) officiated in curing and were thought to have diverse additional powers.

The major ceremonies included initiation ceremonies for girls (ewlu'nily, literally "the occasion of causing to bleed") and boys (manit pa'ninily "the occasion of causing to drink toloache"), the annual ceremonial killing of an eagle, and three types of mortuary ceremonies or "burnings." The first, pisa'tu'ily "rotting", was the cremation ceremony, held the night after a death. The second, SheShexminily "burning", involved burning goods and possessions associated with the dead and was usually held for many dead at once. The last, nang'awily "burning images" (also called by the Spanish term aniversario), was held a year after the death, again usually for many dead at once. All of these ceremonies involved communal hunts and the redistribution of food and gifts. All except the boy's initiation ceremony, which could be held at any time of year, occurred in the autumn when resources from the acorn harvest made large feasts possible.
"Movable feasts" which might be celebrated more often included various dances at which both men and women danced and sang, often lineage against lineage in the performance of isaxwily "enemy songs" that repeated the tastiest gossip and were so insulting, to the point of precipitating fights, that they were banned by order of the U.S. government in 1910 (Hyer 2001:138). Catholic ceremonies such as Christmas and Easter were added to this repertoire in the 19th century and were enthusiastically celebrated with feasts and the performance of ritual dramas such as the burning of the "Judas" at Easter.

1.4. The Removal

Unfortunately for the Cupeño, their villages lay directly on the main route across the Coast Ranges from the Imperial Valley to the California coast, and the hot springs and the beauty and fertility of the region soon attracted Mexican, and then American, ranchers. Juan José Warner, a naturalized Mexican citizen from Massachusetts, acquired a Mexican title to the land in 1845, and employed some Cupeño as workers on his ranch. In 1846, when John Griffin saw them, they were still "fine large healthy looking fellows" (quoted in Lummis 1902:472), although Hyer (2003) argues that they were virtual slaves. The Cupeño were successful farmers, growing wheat, corn, and other crops, and were generally described as relatively well-off compared to other Indians in the region. However, by 1851 conditions were bad enough that Antonio Garra, the net of the Kavaly lineage at Kupa and therefore the senior lineage head, organized a military response to the imposition of a new tax on cattle. A brief revolt against the new American government of California inspired by Garra's resistance was joined by allies from several tribes. The revolt was quickly put down, Kupa was burned, and Garra was executed by firing squad in San Diego on January 10, 1852.

While Juan José Warner tolerated (and needed) the Cupeño presence on his ranch, in 1880 his widow sold the ranch to John G. Downey, a former governor of California. Harvey brought suit in 1892 to remove the Cupeño, hoping to make a killing by turning their hot springs, which had long attracted outside visitors and provided some income for the Indians, into a spa. In 1901 the Cupeño lost a long fight to stay on their lands. A decision of the U.S. Supreme Court (Barker et al. v. Harvey, May 13, 1901) found that, because the Cupeño had failed to journey to Sacramento to properly clear their title between 1851 and 1853.
after California statehood, their title was invalid. Downey's heirs (Downey himself had died in 1894, but his descendants, represented by J. Downey Harvey, chose to pursue the litigation) had exclusive claim to their lands. The Cupeño mobilized every possible political and legal resistance to the eviction (Hyer 2001), but the White supremacist climate of the time proved to be an insuperable obstacle. The Indians were removed from their home villages and relocated to Pala in 1903. The site of Kupa is now the Warner Springs Ranch, a resort-spa-conference center and real estate development. Many Cupeño now belong to the Pala Band of the Mission Indians and live at Pala; others live on other reservations such as the Morongo Reservation, in Los Angeles (cf. Bahr 1993), and in other towns and cities in the region.

The last speaker of the language who learned it as a child in a Cupeño-speaking community was the principal consultant for the current grammar, Roscinda Nolasquez of Kupa and Pala, a member of the Sawvel lineage (through her grandmother and mother; her paternal grandfather, Silverio Nolasquez, was a Yaqui nicknamed Pexuchi piita "String-foot", for his distinctive Yaqui-style sandals). Miss Nolasquez died in 1987. She is buried in the Indian cemetery at Kupa. Interest in the language remains strong, and the Cupeño community, through the Cupa Cultural Center under the direction of her great-grandson Leroy Miranda, wishes to develop the language as a cultural heritage. Many tokens of the language are displayed in the Cupa Cultural Center at Pala, and the language is used in song performances held at funerals and other occasions, which include new compositions in the language.

1.5. Sources and Variation

Materials on the language discussed in this grammar come mainly from nine speakers. Paul-Louis Faye, who collected texts and grammatical materials in three brief field trips in 1919-1920, 1920-1921, and 1927, worked with Domingo Moro, Carolina Nolasquez, Salvador Valenzuela, Carolina Welmas, and a "Mrs. Chavez". William Bright collected word lists and elicited sentences from Roscinda Nolasquez in the late 1950's; Bright's materials are in my possession; I re-elicited and checked most of his forms, so they are cited from my own field notes. My field work in 1962 (for 3 months) and 1963 (for a month) was mainly with Roscinda Nolasquez of Pala, California, but I collected a few short personal recollection texts from Frances Bosley of Morongo and songs and some lexical material from James Brittian of Hemet. My text
materials are published in Hill and Nolasquez 1973 (a revision of these texts prepared according to the understanding of the language laid out in the present grammar is in preparation). Roderick Jacobs, working in the late 1960's, studied with Roscinda Nolasquez and Cyrillo Welmas (the latter a speaker of Wilaqalpa Cupeño). In addition to these materials, there are scattered forms published by Kroeber (1907), and in anthropological studies such as those of Strong (1929) and Gifford (1918, 1922). A small body of Cupeño materials, apparently collected mainly from Francisco Laws of Kupa and Pala, was recorded by J. P. Harrington. This material includes a few elicited sentences and a substantial collection of place names (Barragan 2003). Some of this "Agua Caliente" material appears in Harrington's (1933) annotations to Boscana's Chinigchinich. In the late 1970's Roscinda Nolasquez occasionally offered brief courses on the language to groups of young people; Thomas Portillo of Pala took careful notes on these courses. These are held in the Cupa Cultural Center and are cited occasionally in this grammar. The archives of the Cupa Cultural Center include a few other short texts and recordings in the language, which unfortunately contain no new lexicon, made by various scholars (none of them linguists except for Roderick Jacobs) who visited the community briefly during the 1970's and 1980's. In summary, material on the language constitutes a relatively small closed corpus, and many questions that contemporary linguists would ask can never be answered.

There was apparently some dialect variation in the language. A brief discussion is given by Jacobs (1975). Jacobs observes that there were dialect differences between Kupa and the two smaller villages, Wilaqalpa and Palaqla. He was able to work briefly with a speaker of the Wilaqalpa variety, Cyrillo Welmas, before Welmas's death in 1971. He observed that some of Faye's materials came from Carolina Welmas, who was also from Wilaqalpa. Examples of differences between the two dialects include the use of yax in the meaning "do" or "do a little", which Jacobs stated was found only in Wilaqalpa (Jacobs 1975:73). In Kupa it nearly always means "say", but the "do" usage is attested. Another difference is that in Wilaqalpa the treatment of stressless verb roots (see 2.2.2) was apparently variable, with the possibility of stress on the root in environments where this would not be permitted in the Kupa dialect (cf. examples in Jacobs 1975:105).

In addition to the dialect variation, there were register differences. In the quoted speech of the net in narratives recorded by P.-L. Faye from Salvadora Valenzuela’ we can glimpse an elaborated style,
involving complex grammatical subordination (Hill 1979). Songs were often sung in other languages. An example is the song sung in Cahuilla by Coyote's older brother in the story "Coyote and the Flood" (Hill and Nolasquez 1973:59). The preferred language for songs in ceremonies was a piece of evidence used by Strong's informants in the 1920's to argue for the affiliation of the various Cupeño lineages with Diegueño, Luiseño, and Cahuilla founders. Loan words from other Indian languages are evident. Indeed, the word Kupa itself may be a loan word from Mesa Grande Diegueño haa-kupin "water-warm", the name for the hot springs. If the word were native we would expect Ku-t-pa "Fire Place" (perhaps in reference to the steam rising from the spring on cold days), with the non-possessed-noun suffix -t, parallel to Wilaqa-l-pa "Buckwheat Place", with suffix -l, instead of the attested Kupa. Another Mesa Grande Diegueño loan word may be the word for "red", kwatikwati'ish, from ehwattehwaatt "reddish" (Couro and Hutcheson 1973).

NOTES

i  This official was often called kutve'ĕsh, probably a late development to make the association with kut "fire" more transparent; the source of tekw in tekwve'ĕsh is an ancient Uto-Aztecan ceremonial couplet, **ta ku "the wild fire, the domestic fire" (Hill 1985)).

ii Roscinda Nolasquez remembered one of these songs but was always too embarrassed to sing it for me. It begins with the line Lola hiwene "Goodbye, Lola", and has to do with sexual transgressions by a lady named Lola. I was astonished to discover that Roscinda Nolasquez sings a snatch of the song on a video made by (GET REF) held in the Cupa Cultural Center.

iii Antonio Garra's surname is a Spanish translation for the nickname nawily'et "body louse" that was given to the Kavaly lineage. After his death the surname was no longer used; his descendants took on the English-sounding surname "Laws", which Strong (19290) believed was from English "louse".

Hyer (2001:154-55) reports that Salvadora Valenzuela, who was relatively well-educated and literate, was the housekeeper at the Pala Indian School. Her role extended to translating materials from English to help the Cupeño-speaking students. Roscinda Nolasquez remembered Valenzuela as one of the most skilled and expressive speakers of the language. Hyer states that Valenzuela was 30 years old in 1904; she would have been in her late 40's and early 50's when Faye worked with her in the 1920's.