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Northern Paiute

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NORTHERN PAIUTE

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Northern Paiute (ISO 639-3, *pao*) is a Numic language of the Western branch and represents the northwestern-most extent of the Uto-Aztecan family. The language is described as consisting of two major dialects and numerous subdialects. Nichols (1974) refers to the southern Northern Paiute dialect as Nevada Northern Paiute (NNP, historically also called Paviotso) and the northern variety represented here as Oregon Northern Paiute (ONP, which includes Bannock). Speaker estimates are somewhat anecdotal but generally fall within the 400–700 range. Speakers are unevenly distributed across various reservation communities of the northern Great Basin region of the western United States. Speakers of ONP outnumber speakers of NNP groups, and the majority of all fluent first-language speakers live on the Fort McDermitt reservation on the Oregon-Nevada border.

The texts included here come from two very distinct speech genres (a legend and a voicemail phone message) and two distinct generations of speakers hailing from different reservation communities (Burns, in southeastern Oregon, and Owyhee [Duck Valley], on the Idaho-Nevada border). Both speak varieties of ONP.

FIRST WHITES IN OUR TERRITORY (HARNEY VALLEY)¹

†MARIAN (JIM) LOUIE, NARRATOR

RECORDED BY

†JUSTINE (LOUIE) BROWN

MARCH 7, 1979, BURNS PAIUTE RESERVATION

The Burns Paiute, referred to as the Wadateka'a [wa'datikaʔa] (seepweed seed eater) Band,² consider the vast expanse of territory that includes Harney Valley and what is now the Malheur National Wildlife Refuge their *tibiwa*, or home territory. The refuge contains a remnant of what was once a vast wetland rich in fish, game, bird, and plant life, resources that the *nimi* 'people' of the region have subsisted on for millennia.

¹ We would like to recognize the skilled assistance of †Myrtle (Louie) Peck and †Rena (Adams) Beers in the production of this important and challenging narrative.

² Band names are typically derived from a characteristic local food source, in this case, the common seepweed (var. *Suaeda intermedia*).

The first major cattle operations in the area of Harney Valley appeared sometime in the 1860s, although the impact of cattle on life in the northern Great Basin may have been felt well before that time. Tensions in the area gave rise to the Bannock War of 1878 and resulted in the forced exodus from the region and the total loss of territory. The impact of large cattle herds upon scant supplies of fresh water is well documented, and water remains a source of tension in the region, as does the management of federal land generally—including the allocation of grazing rights. The occupation of the headquarters of the Malheur National Wildlife Refuge by an armed militia in January 2016 drew both national media attention and swift condemnation by the region’s original occupants, whose cultural sites had been violated by the takeover.

This recording was made at the home of the narrator, Marian (Jim) Louie, by the eldest of her ten children, Justine (Louie) Brown, herself a fluent speaker of the language. She shared the recording with us so that it could be digitized and made easily available for others to enjoy. The narrative is unique in several ways. Louie begins her narration with a vocal quality that suggests actual performance—lengthy, drawn-out vowels delivered at a higher pitch through the first few utterances. The narrative also includes a performance of a song. Since the narrative is not “mythical” in the typical sense but rather ethno-historical in nature, the character and context of the song does not fit into either myth-song category described in Sapir (1910). The song recorded here, according to the narrator, was created by young women of the Wadateka’a as a means of recounting this unusual circumstance—the arrival of settlers passing into and through Harney Valley.

The text carries numerous additional features of linguistic interest, including a rich vocabulary of geospatial reference and remarkable visual detail. The narrator describes the path taken by the ox team and the dust raised by them as they passed along the edge of the valley. The speaker makes ample use of prosodic vowel devoicing and complex predicate structures, as well as nominalized clauses and other derivational processes to describe nonnative items exchanged with the new arrivals to their territory.

In the first tier of each line of text below, orthographic {e} represents the high central vowel /i/, and the glottal stop /ʔ/ is represented with an apostrophe {’}. The second, morphological breakdown, tier employs a phonemicized Americanist transcription system. Primary stress is highly regular, with very few marked exceptions (cf. *mú’asu* ‘already’ in line 1), and appears on the second mora of the phonological word (not including proclitics). Prefixes trigger a leftward shift in primary stress, while proclitics do not.

- (1) ka mú’asu su taibo kadu’uku.
 ka=múʔasu su=taibo kaduʔu-ku
 ACC=already NOM=white.person gone-PROSP
 ‘Long ago, the white people didn’t exist (around here).’

- (2) ka neme se'me yaa iwiu wada yipekwaiku.
 ka=nimi=si?mi yaa iwi-u
 ACC=person=only here DEM-FOC
 wada-yipi-kwai-ku
 seepweed.seed-valley-LOC-PROSP
 'There were only Indians here (living) in Harney Valley.'
- (3) ume inakwana,
 umi i-nakwa-na
 they PROX-side-PTCP
 'Those (coming) this direction,'
- (4) tabatsibuinakwana kimade kutsu tedenuiyuiketi kimadapi(na);
 taba-tsibui-nakwa-na kima-di kutsu
 sun-emerge-side-PTCP come-NMLZ cattle
 ti-di-nuiyui-ki-ti kima-dapi-na
 DISTR~ANTIP-move-APPL-TNS come-CONT-PTCP
 'from the East who came driving cattle as they came along,'
- (5) ina: ka cha . . . cha . . . tukweha'ni kemai kimadabina ibi;
 ina ka=i-ča tukwiha?ni kimai kima-dabi-na ibi
 DEM ACC=PROX-ACC Castle.Rock beside come-CONT-PTCP DEM
 'this way, by this—along beside Castle Rock (they) kept coming this way,'
- (6) kimadabina yaisi
 kima-dabi-na yaisi
 come-CONT-PTCP then
 'kept coming and'
- (7) ya'ato monaidekesi yaisi,
 ya?a-to monaidiki-si yaisi
 here-to appear-SEQ then
 'to here having appeared (into the open) then,'³
- (8) me neme ka kai me sutabuina iwiu.
 mi=nimi ka=kai mi=sutabui-na iwi-u
 PL=person ACC=NEG PL=expect-PTCP DEM-FOC
 'the Indians didn't expect such things to be coming here.'
- (9) ka saa'a yaisi ya'atu me, me tsibuikisi yaa manakwai manipunide.
 ka=saa?a yaisi ya?a-tu mi=tsibui-ki-si yaa
 ACC=later then here-to PL=emerge-hither-SEQ here

³ The meaning of the form is not entirely clear but has to do with becoming visible from across the valley, having turned out into it from among the hills.

mana-kwai mani-puni-dī
there-LOC do-CONT-NMLZ

‘Later on then they came out from (a draw) this way across from those that were there.’

- (10) manakwai manipunide, neme yaisi me bunni.
mana-kwai mani-puni-dī nīmi yaisi mī=bunni
there-LOC do-CONT-NMLZ person then PL=see
‘Those that were across there, the Indians, saw them.’
- (11) hīi muuni’yu kimadapi mii.
hīi muu-ni-?yu kima-dapi mii
Thing that.way-SIMIL-NOM come-CONT QUOT
‘That kind of thing (wagon train) just kept a-coming, (they) say.’
- (12) kutsu tedeenuiyuiketi muuniku yaisi
kutsu ti-dī-nuiyui-ki-ti muu-ni-ku yaisi
cattle DISTR~ANTIP-move-APPL-TNS that.way-SIMIL-ACC then
‘(They were) driving cattle of that sort (oxen) this way, then,’
- (13) kimadabina ibi (i)cha—
kima-dabi-na ibi i-ča
come-CONT-PTCP DEM PROX-ACC
‘while coming along this way,’
- (14) paneena(de)—paama kemai pobokwa,
panīnadi paama kimai pobokwa
lake hot.springs beside hills
‘beside that lake—hot springs (near) the hills,’
- (15) minadekwai miadapi.
minadi-kwai mia-dapi
this.side-LOC go-CONT
‘on this side (they) kept going.’
- (16) ibi wadabaa minadekwai miana.
Ibi wada-paa minadi-kwai mia-na
DEM seepweed.seed-water this.side-LOC go-PTCP
‘There going along on this side of Harney Lake.’
- (17) ibi taba—taba ijatami miadapina yaisi icha,
ibi taba-iĵa-tami mia dapi-na yaisi i-ča
DEM sun-enter:SG-toward go-CONT-PTCP then PROX-ACC
‘(They) kept heading west then,’

- (18) ibi: yuutu a natsakwakapenitu miadabina,
 ibi yuu-tu a=natsakwaka-pini-tu mia-dabi-na
 DEM this.way-to INDF=turn.out.upon-CONT-to go-CONT-PTCP
 ‘this way (they) turned out into the open (upon a flat) and went on,’
- (19) me neme yaisi ka: me ibi: yuu manipenide, yuutu.
 mi=nimi yaisi ka mi=ibi yuu mani-pini-di
 PL=person then PTC PL=DEM this.way do-CONT-NMLZ
 yuu-tu
 hither-to
 ‘while the Indians remained over here.’
- (20) manipenide yaisi ka me bunina,
 mani-pini-di yaisi ka=mi=buni-na
 do-CONT-NMLZ then ACC=PL=see-PTCP
 ‘Those (that remained) from here saw them’
- (21) yu’u me takwaina yaisi emeba semenna.
 yu?u mi=ta-kwai-na yaisi imi-ba siminna
 like.this PL=IP/FOOT-follow-PTCP then they-by together
 ‘and followed along beside them (on either side) together.’
- (22) emeba semenna yaisi kai tia’a me kesichapaana emeba semenna.
 imi-ba siminna yaisi kai=tia?a mi=kisiča=paana
 they-by together then NEG=thusly PL=angry.at=DISJUNCT
 imi-ba siminna
 they-by together
 ‘(They) were together with them, not angry toward them, but together by them.’
- (23) yu’u me te maima me matsakwa’ya.
 yu?u mi=ti=mai-ma mi=matsakwa?ya
 like.this PL=LOGO=hand-INSTR PL=wave
 ‘And they waved to them.’
- (24) ume yaisi, taibo tia’a obida umeba manisi,
 umi yaisi taibo=tia?a obida umi-ba mani-si
 they then white.person=thusly slowly they-by do-SEQ
 ‘And those white folks were passing by them slowly,’
- (25) me neme yaisi miu me natebangana, “Hadipo waihate!”
 mi=nimi yaisi mi-u mi=natibana-na
 PL=person then QUOT-FOC PL=fam.greet-PTCP

Hadipo_waihati!

[greeting]

‘and then the Indians called out to them (as relatives), “Greetings!”’⁴













- (26) mii me nattebangana yaisi,
 mii mi=nattibaja-na yaisi
 quot PL=familiar.greet-PTCP then
 ‘So (they) called to them (in friendship).’
- (27) me taibo yaisi ka nattakwatina
 mi=taibo yaisi ka=nattakwati-na
 PL=white.person then ACC=get.down-PTCP
 ‘Then the whites got down’
- (28) icha te kwegenawaitu.
 i-ča ti=kwigina-wai-tu
 PROX-ACC LOGO=wagon-LOC-to
 ‘from their wagons.’
- (29) wegenawaitu yaatu tsasawikena ka ezekwi,
 wigina-wai-tu yaa-tu tsasawi-ki-na ka=izikwi
 wagon-LOC-to here-to unload-APPL-PTCP ACC=blanket
 ‘(They) unloaded from their wagons a blanket,’
- (30) tiipema wepadana owitu (i)cha,
 tiipi-ma wi-pada-na owi-tu i-ča
 earth-upon IP/LONG-spread-PTCP DEM-to PROX-ACC
 ‘which (they) spread out upon the ground,’
- (31) poksawaitu totsakwatina,
 poksa-wai-tu totsakwati-na
 box-LOC-to bring.down-PTCP
 ‘taking it down from a box,’
- (32) oo ka icha nageewa’yade pahmu
 oo ka=i-ča na-ki-wa?ya-di pahmu
 DEM ACC=PROX-ACC MID-IP/BITE-chew-NMLZ tobacco
 ‘like so, this chewing tobacco,’
- (33) tuupahmu mii me neme ni’a ka oo’nosu
 tuu-pahmu mii mi=nimi ni?a ka=oo?nosu
 black-tobacco QUOT PL=person call ACC=long.ago
 ‘“black tobacco,” the Indians called it back then.’

⁴ The source and literal meaning of this greeting is currently unknown.

- (34) ukau yaisi ka me naana nanaamo'akena,
 u-ka-u yaisi ka=mi=naana na-naamo?a-ki-na
 3SG-ACC-FOC then ACC=PL=men MID-divide-APPL-PTCP
 'And so it was divided among the men.'
- (35) me pahmu'imanagakena me nama tia'.
 mi=pahmu?i-managa-ki-na mi=nama=tia?
 PL=smoke-demonstrate-APPL-PTCP PL=distribute=thusly
 'who they showed how to smoke, distributing it among them thusly.'
- (36) yaisi ka icha mommoko'nichaku, ichau yaisi tsi-me tsidamaka.
 yaisi ka=i-ča mo~mmoko?ni-ča-ku i-ča-u
 then ACC=PROX-ACC DISTR~woman-have-PROSP PROX-ACC-FOC
 yaisi mi=tsida-maka
 then PL=dish-give
 'And then to their womenfolk they gave dishes.'
- (37) nanatsachakwide kamme pekwaiku me saakwa—(te)kwa'ni
 manipenide uuniku saanu me himmi(na).
 na~na-tsa-čakwi-di kammi pi-kwai-ku
 DISTR~MID-IP/GRASP-carry-NMLZ jackrabbit FOC.PRO-LOC-LOC
 mi=saa-kwa=kwa?ni mani-pini-di uuni-ku
 PL=boil-LOC=SIMIL do-CONT-NMLZ that.kind-ACC
 saa-nu mi=himmi-nna
 boil-INSTR PL=give-PTCP
 '(and) buckets (pots) like they use for boiling jackrabbits in to those
 that did that kind of cooking (they) gave those.'
- (38) yaisi ka namamakwesi tewau miadapikusi,
 yaisi ka=nama-makwi-si tiwa-u mia-dapi-ku-si
 then ACC=distribute-finish-SEQ also-FOC go-CONT-PROSP-SEQ
 'Then when they were done, they went on again.'
- (39) ibii yuutute me tsiteekwi.
 ibi yuu-tu-ti mi=tsi-tiikwi
 DEM this.way-to-LOC PL=IP/SHARP-tell
 'and this way, (they) pointed them the way'
- (40) yuutu me miamanakaketi
 yuu-tu mi=mia-manaka-ki-ti
 this.way-to PL=go-demonstrate-APPL-TNS
 '(and) showed them which way to go.'

- (41) me neme yaisi yuu me matsakwai'ya ka me mi'a.
 mi=nimi yaisi yuu mi=matsakwai?ya ka=mi=mi?a
 PL=person then this.way PL=wave ACC=PL=go.DUR
 'And the Indians waved to them as they left.'
- (42) Ibi chaisi yuutu kussito'no'ipeni, isu
 ibi čaisi yuu-tu kussi-to?no?i-pini i-su
 DEM then this.way-to dust-raising-CONT PROX-NOM
 'And along the way, raising dust.'
- (43) wegena'a ka me gutsu, miadabina,
 wigina?a ka=mi=kutsu mia-dabi-na
 wagon ACC=PL=cattle go-CONT-PTCP
 'the wagon, the cattle, (they) kept going.'
- (44) tedakussijatu mi'a.
 ti-da-kussi-ja-tu mi?a
 ANTIP-IP/FOOT-dust-hence-to go.DUR
 'going through the dust (they) stirred up.'
- (45) Ibi tia' yaisi, me'che'ka.
 ibi=tia? yaisi mi?či?ka
 DEM=thusly then go.out.of.sight
 'So that way then (they) went out of sight.'
- (46) Oonosu ya'aa me muhipunide.
 oono-su ya?aa mi=muhi-puni-di
 at.the.time-ADV Here 3PL=first-see-NMLZ
 'At that time, those that first saw them.'
- (47) Yau su manipenisi me punni.
 yaa u-su mani-pini-si mi=punni
 here 3SG-NOM do-CONT-SEQ 3PL=see
 'the one(s) that belong here saw them.'
- (48) Me punnipenina yaisi,
 mi=punni-pini-na yaisi
 PL=see-CONT-PTCP then
 'Seeing them then.'
- (49) oo chaisi ka saa'a yaisi (i)su yuuni'yu hii yaa'no,
 oo=čaisi ka=saa?a yaisi i-su yuuni-?yu hii
 DEM=then ACC=later then PROX-NOM this.kind-NOM thing
 yaa?no
 ??
 'so it was later on these ones.'

- (50) pede mommoko'ni kaa ka me punina yaisi ka pemisu nikwehenna;
 pidi mo~mmoko?ni ka ka=mi=puni-na yaisi
 recent DISTR~woman MOD ACC=PL=see-PTCP then
 ka=pimi-su nikwihi-nna
 ACC=they-EMPH IP/SPEECH.sing-PTCP
 'the young women that saw them made their own song;'
- (51) emema nikwehekvesi yaisi,
 imi-ma nikwihi-kwi-si yaisi
 they-on IP/SPEECH.sing-FUT-SEQ then
 'having made a song about them then,'
- (52) me, oo tia', (me—) umema tenikwehe,
 mi=oo=tia? umi-ma tinikwihi
 PL=DEM=thusly they-on sing
 'so it was, they sang about them'
- (53) ka me miadapi yuutu
 ka=mi=mia-dapi yuu-tu
 ACC=PL=go-CONT this.way-to
 'as they went along the way.'
- (54) ibii me miatapi.
 ibi mi=mia-tapi
 DEM PL=go-CONT
 'This way they continued.'
- (55) Ka saa'a yaisi ka peesu oitu,
 ka=saa?a yaisi ka=pih-su oi-tu
 ACC=later then ACC=FOC.PRO-EMPH DEM-to
 'Later, on their own over there,'
- (56) oitu yuu tenikwehena (i)su yu—yuuni'yu mommoko'ni tenikwehe
 umau tenikwehe ka okka te punnina.
 oi-tu yuu tinikwihi-na i-su yuuni-?yu
 DEM-to this.way sing-PTCP PROX-NOM this-NOM
 mo~mmoko?ni tinikwihi u-ma-u tinikwihi
 DISTR~woman sing 3SG-on-FOC sing
 ka=u-ka ti=punni-na.
 ACC=3SG-ACC LOGO=see-PTCP
 'there singing, these women sang, sang about what it was they had seen.'
- (57) Tenikwehena yaisi ka, ka miu ka e'na'wi,
 tinikwihi-na yaisi ka=mi-u ka=i?na?wi
 sing-PTCP then ACC=QUOT-FOC ACC=say
 'Singing, then, so they said,'

- (58) ka me, me kimanakwana me punina yaisi, miu e'na'wi.
 ka=mi=kima-nakwa-na mi=puni-na yaisi mi-u
 ACC=PL=come-direction-PTCP PL=see-PTCP then QUOT-FOC
 i?na?wi
 say
 'because they saw where they came from, so they said, singing.'
- (59)   Tebidzi yippe kemainakwai, su kutsu kussi monaichaide.  
 t̥ibidzi yippi kimainakwai su=kutsu kussi monaičaidi
 indeed valley along.edge NOM=cattle dust emerging
 '“Along the edge of the true valley, the cattle emerge from the dust.”'
- (60)   Pabahu paa minatekwai, su kutsu kussi monaichaide.  
 paba-hu paa minatikwai su=kutsu kussi monaičaidi
 big-ACC water this.side.LOC NOM=cattle dust emerging
 '“Along this side of the big water, the cattle emerge from the dust.”'
- (61)   Taba igyatami, su kutsu kussi monaichaide.  
 taba igya-tami su=kutsu kussi monaičaidi
 sun enter-toward NOM=cattle dust emerging
 '“Heading ever westward, the cattle emerge from the dust.”'
- (62) mau.
 ma-u
 DEF-FOC
 'That's all.'

FIRST SAVED MESSAGE

YOLANDA KAYE MANNING

RECORDED BY

TIM THORNES

MAY 10, 2010, DUCK VALLEY RESERVATION

This recording of a telephone voicemail message merits interest for several reasons. First, the speaker is relatively young (in her early fifties at the time of the recording). Second, the text genre is a recent phenomenon—one side of a spontaneous (and imaginary) conversation directed to someone not present. The casual register employed here contains greetings, polite imperatives, questions, and idiomatic expressions, some of which are unique to the dialect. The informal nature of the message makes this kind of text an ideal source of material for communicative language learning. I have included it here as a brief sample of

the sort of material often missing from a documentary corpus but frequently requested by language learners wanting access to everyday speech.

- (1) Ha'u eh i bea'a?
 haʔu i i=piʔa
 how you my=friend
 'How are you, my friend?'
- (2) Hanno eh?
 hanno i
 where you
 'Where are you?'
- (3) Ma'na'wi ne kai himma te nakka.
 maʔnaʔwi ni kai himma ti=nakka.
 long.time I NEG What LOGO=hear:DUR
 'It's been a long time that I haven't heard anything (from you).'
- (4) e ooʔnosu nemate yatua siyapa ne ka . . .
 i ooʔnosu ni-mati Yatua siyapa ni ka
 you long.ago I-PART talk:SG however I MOD
 'I heard from you a long time ago, however . . .'
- (5) i: de—i:—hayu haba pisa?
 hayu haba pisa
 how is.it good
 'my—my—How could I put it (well)?'
- (6) i tetzakangina watsike
 i=ti-tza-kaŋi-na watsi-kki
 my=ANTIP-IP/GRASP-ring-PTCP hide-APPL
 'My phone was lost.'
- (7) ne sa'a kai hauniku me te yadu'a o pinakwa
 ni Isaʔa Ikai Ihauni-ku Imi=ti=yaduʔa
 I Ilater INEG Iwhat.kind-ACC IPL=LOGO=talk:DUR
 Iu=pinakwa
 Iits=following
 'so I had no way to talk with you after that (happened).'
- (8) ne yaisi, uu ka . . .
 ni yaisi uu ka
 I then like.so MOD
 'So then, I guess . . .'

- (9) owi, . . . *Eugenewaitu* yatuasi eme yaisi e ka . . . *email* i gya,
 owi Eugene-wai-tu yatusa-si imi yaisi i=ka=email
 DEM Eugene-LOC-to talk:SG-SEQ they then your=ACC=email
 i=gya
 me=give
 ‘so I called over to Eugene, and (they) . . . gave me (your) email . . .’
- (10) yaisi ne yaano nabeno tewatiya’i, *on the website*
 yaisi ni yaa-no na-bino ti-wati-ya’i
 then I here-TEMP MID-also ANTIP-search-debil
 on the website
 on the website
 ‘So therefore, I’m here (really) searching on the website (knocking myself out).’
- (11) yau chaisi e naniana nabo.
 ya-u čaisi i=na-nia-na na-bo
 here-FOC then your=MID-call-PTCP MID-write
 ‘I see your name here written (on the phone screen).’
- (12) ha pisa tui?
 ha pisa=tui
 QPTC good=thusly
 ‘Isn’t that great!?’
- (13) e sakwa i yattui!
 i=sakwa i=yattui
 you=MOD me=talk.to
 ‘You should call me!’
- (14) hannano tui!
 hannano=tui
 when=any
 ‘Anytime!’
- (15) tuitu ya’a
 tuitu ya’a
 Either here
 ‘either here, . . .’
- (16) ya’a ‘office’wai’yu tuitu i nobikwaitu tiwau.
 ya’a office-wai-?yu tuitu i=nobi-kwai-tu tiwau
 here office-LOC-ABL either my=house-LOC-to also
 ‘either here at the office or at my house.’

- (17) *seven seven five . . .*
- (18) pisa tu'i ne e pedemayeu!
 pisa=tu?i ni i=pidi-mayi-u
 good=any I you=recent-find-PFV
 'I am just so glad I found you!'
- (19) ene!
 ini
 INT
 'Take care!'
- (20) ne yaisi maite nakawaipeniku ne su wene.
 ni yaisi mai-ti naka-wai-pini-ku ni=su wini
 I then DEM-LOC listen-LOC-CONT-PROSP I=EMPH stand:SG
 'So, then, I'm going to be listening in (waiting/expecting to hear).'
- (21) i tzakangitua sa'a.
 i=tza-kaŋi-tua sa?a
 me=IP/GRASP-ring-IRR MOD
 'So, call me.'
- (22) ene eniku.
 ini ini-ku
 INT say-PROSP
 'OK, then (so it is).'