

Proto Miwok Kinship System¹

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Miwok is a family of Penutian languages formerly spoken in Central California. Aboriginally, it consisted of at least seven languages roughly at the time depth of the Germanic family. On the basis of lexical items, structural similarity, and sound correspondences, these can be grouped as follows:

- I. Eastern Miwok (Mie)
 - A. Sierra Miwok (Mis)
 - 1. Northern Sierra Miwok (Mins)
 - 2. Central Sierra Miwok (Mics)
 - 3. Southern Sierra Miwok (Miss)
 - B. Plains Miwok (Mip)
 - C. Saclan (Misac)
- II. Western Miwok (Miw)
 - A. Coast Miwok (Mic). Coast Miwok may have been a single language with divergent dialects.
 - 1. Bodega Miwok (Mib)
 - 2. Marin Miwok (Mim)
 - B. Lake Miwok (Mil)

Modern recordings exist for six Miwok languages; Southern Sierra Miwok, Central Sierra Miwok, Northern Sierra Miwok, Plains Miwok (Ione dialect), Lake Miwok and Bodega Miwok. Saclan is represented by a short word list collected in 1821 by Fray Felipe Arroyo de la Cuesta. Fortunately, it included several kinship terms, which I have cited according to my interpretation of his orthography (Callaghan 1971). The Marin Miwok data was taken from several sources. The Miwok family is in turn closely related to the Costanoan languages, once spoken from San Francisco south to Monterey.

The basic Miwok kinship terms are presented in the table along with Costanoan equivalents. Proto Miwok reconstructions have been attempted where reflexes are found in both Eastern and Western Miwok or in Costanoan and a Miwok language. In the latter case, the reconstruction reflects a projection of sound developments back to the Proto Miwok level.

The vocative case is regularly formed in Sierra Miwok and Lake Miwok by lengthening the final stem vowel. There is no change for the vocative of stems ending in a consonant. In Lake Miwok, the vocative is restricted to stems of the canon CVCV. Lake Miwok kinship terms of canon CVC.V undergo a prior rule shortening the medial consonant, as in ?atá. "Older Brother!" from ?át.a "older brother". The vocative reconstructs to Proto Miwok, although its canonical restrictions are uncertain. It was lost in Coast Miwok and in Plains Miwok except for ?ykah "Mom!" Only aberrant and suppletive vocatives will be cited in this article.

Proto Miwok forms can be reconstructed for "person" and "man" but not "woman". Words for "husband" and "wife" are recurrently derived from or identified with those for "man" and "woman" respectively, but this pattern cannot be reconstructed for Proto Miwok in view of the existence of separate words for "husband" and "wife" in Costanoan. The word "Miwok" comes from Sierra Miwok *mi·y·k* "people".

Plains Miwok *na·na-*, a reflex of Proto Eastern Miwok **nan·a-* "man, husband", retains only the meaning "husband". Lake Miwok *mí·w* "husband" is the lone reflex of Proto Miwok **mi·w* "person" and argues for a pre-Lake Miwok stage when **mi·w* "man generic" was extended to include "man male". Similar semantic extensions occurred in the Romance, Germanic, and Slavic families. The connection, if any, between Proto Miwok **mi·w* and Bodega Miwok *míc·a* is uncertain.

Proto Miwok **tališ* "man" was obtained by backward projection from the Western Miwok in light of the Costanoan cognate with intervocalic /r/. Proto Western Miwok **l* normally becomes Coast Miwok /j/ between /a/ and a high vowel. Lake Miwok *tájh* "man" is totally aberrant, since it contains a final consonant cluster. Bodega Miwok *kul(·)éj·ih* "woman" may have been derived from **kúl·eh* "wife, woman?" by analogy with *tájih* "man".

Reconstructions posited for "father" and "mother" pose several problems. If **?ap(·)y* "father" is correct, Sierra Miwok *?ypy-* is an instance of regressive assimilation, aided perhaps by the fact that the accent automatically fell on the second syllable in utterance forms, which always occurred with a case suffix. Plains Miwok *?ap·a-* could represent reverse assimilation, or it might be a borrowing from Chocheño.

Proto Miwok **?yny-* "mother" is a tentative reconstruction based on Western Miwok and Costanoan. *?unu* is the expected Western Miwok reflex, and Costanoan cognates sometimes show /a/ for Proto Miwok **y* (conditioning factors uncertain). There is no satisfactory etymology for the Eastern Miwok forms.

The set for "grandfather" shows relatively few complications. Bodega Miwok *pap?ój·ih* represents a recent coalescence of **pápa ?ój·ih* "grandfather old man", and one of the Marin Miwok forms has undergone a similar development. The Proto Miwok reconstruction **pá(·)pa* is substantiated by Chocheño *pápa*. There is no differentiation by linking parent.

Separate terms for "mother's mother" and "father's mother" exist only in Bodega Miwok. There is an unexpected /[?]-; h-/ alternation between the Sierra and Western Miwok terms, and the Plains Miwok and Saclan forms are unexplained.

One can reconstruct Proto Miwok **?ansi-* "son" from Sierra Miwok and the presumed Costanoan cognate, Ceb *?in·iš* "son". Another Proto Miwok form, **koč·o-*, can be reconstructed from Southern Sierra Miwok *koco-* and Chocheño *koč·o*. Presumably, it meant "young man" in view of the differentiation in Chocheño. If so, we have an instance of semantic specialization in Southern Sierra Miwok.

Miwok Kinship Terms

English	Miss	Mics	Mins
man	naŋ·a-	naŋ·a-	naŋ·a-
woman	ʔoh·a-	ʔoŋ·a-	ʔos·a-
person	miw·y-	miw·y-	miw·y-
husband	naŋ·a-	naŋ·a-	naŋ·a-
wife	ʔoh·a-	ʔoŋ·a-	ʔos·a-
father	ʔypy-	ʔypy-	ʔyp(·)y-
mother	ʔyfa- Y ʔami- mus·e-	ʔyfa-	ʔyf(·)a-
grandfather	pa·pa-	pa·pa-	pa·pa-
grandmother	ʔama-	ʔama-	ʔam(·)a-
son	ʔaŋsi- koco-	ʔaŋsi-	ʔaŋsi-
daughter	tune-	tu·ne-	tu·ne-
child	ʔesel·y-	ʔesel·y-	ʔehe·ly-
child!			ʔesa·
older brother	ta·ci-	ta·ci-	ta·ci-
older sister	te·te-	te·te-	te·te-
younger brother	ʔiti-	cale-	cali-t·i-
younger brother!			cale·
younger sister	ʔyfa- M	kole-	koli-t·i-
younger sister!			kole·
younger sibling	ʔate-	ʔate- "younger half-sibling"	--
grandchild	ʔace-	ʔace-	ʔace-
father's brother	ʔypy-	ʔypy-	ʔyp(·)y- hajʔi- Cam ka·ka-
stepfather	hajʔi-	hajʔi-	hajʔi-
mother's brother	ka·ka-	ka·ka-	ka·ka-
father's sister	ʔene-	ʔene-	ʔene-
mother's sister	ʔan·is- ʔyfa- ʔami- ʔami·mi- ?	ʔan·is- "mother's younger sister"	ʔan·is- "mother's younger sister"
mother's older sister	--	to·mu-	to·mu-
stepmother	ʔamjipu-		to·mu-
nephew-	ʔypsa-	ʔypsa-	ʔypsa-
niece	"cross nephew- niece"	"cross nephew"	
sister's husband	ka·w- "brother-in-law"	ka·w-	ka·w-
in-law (generational)	me·m-		

Miwok Kinship Terms (continued)

English	Mip	Misac	Mil
man	saw·eh	sali	tájh
woman	ʔysy·ʔyh	ʔysy·ʔysy	ᵑóc·i
person	mi·w		kó·ca
husband	na·na-	mela	mí·w
wife	ʔysy-	mela	kúl·e
	ʔysy·ʔyh		
father	ʔap·a-	ʔəp·é-s	ʔáp·i
mother	ʔyk·a-	ʔət·é	ʔúnu
	ʔykah		
	/ʔyka·/?		
grandfather	pa·pa-	papa	pápa
grandmother	ʔəc·ə-	ʔəs·ə	háma
son	sasti-ʔ	ʔati-s	--
daughter	tu·ne-	tune	--
child	tu·ne-		ʔélaJ
child!			ʔé·ᵑ
older brother	ʔata·c·i-		ʔát·a
older sister	ti·ka-		wóko
younger brother	--		--
younger brother!	--		--
younger sister	--		kó·la
younger sister!	--		"girl"
younger sibling	ʔa·ti-		ʔelám·u
younger sibling!			ʔelá·
grandchild	ca·co-	čočó-kos	các·o
	sasti-ʔ	"grandson"	
	"Grandson!, Sonny!"		
father's brother	ka·ka-		ʔáp·i
			tá·ta
father's older brother			ʔóla
stepfather	ta·ta-		tá·ta
			ʔóla
mother's brother	ka·ka-		ká·ka
father's sister	ʔen(·)e-		ʔené·ni
	"aunt"	"parent's yr. sister" ?	ʔolá·ci
mother's sister		"mother's older sister" ?	ʔámko
mother's older sister	to·mu-	"parent's older sister" ?	ʔolá·ci
	"aunt"		tów·e
stepmother	ʔykaʔpu-		(man speaking)
nephew	wo·J		ʔelám·u
niece			(woman speaking)
sister's husband	nana·ja		kaw-ko
in-law			mé·m
(generational)			

Miwok Kinship Terms (continued)

English	Mib	Mim	PMi
man	tájih	tájis HWH	*tališ
woman	kul(·)éj·ih	póčis HWH "old woman"	
person	míc·a	miča-ko SB	*mi·w
husband	ʔámʔa	amʔa HWH	
wife	kúl·eh	kúles HWH	
father	ʔáp(·)i	ápí HWH	*ʔap(·)y-?
mother	ʔúnu	unu HWH	*ʔyny-?
grandfather		papa SB	*pa · pa-
grandmother	papʔó·j·ih hám(·)a "father's mother"	hama SB	* (h)am(·)a-
	hapúc·i "mother's mother"		
son	--		*ʔansi-
daughter	--	tune SB	*tu·ne-
child	ʔá·j	aj HH, éjaj HWH	
child!			
older brother	ʔát(·)a	ata HWH	*ʔat(·)a-
older sister	wóko	woko HWH	ʔte·-
younger brother	--	--	*čale-?
younger brother!			"younger sibling"
younger sister	ko·ja "little girl"	koja SB "girl"	
younger sister!			
younger sibling	ʔá·mo	ejamu SB	
younger sibling!			
grandchild	các·o "daughter-in- law"	čačo SB	*čač·o-
father's brother	ká·ka	ola SB tata SB	*ka·ka- *ʔap(·)y-
stepfather			*ta·ta-
mother's brother	ká·ka	kaka SB	*ka·ka-
father's sister	ʔen(·)é·ni	enení SB	*ʔene-
mother's sister	ʔoj(·)á·ci	olači SB	*ʔan·is *ʔyny-?
mother's older sister	ʔamó·ko "aunt"?		
stepmother	ʔamooko Ko		
nephew, niece	towi Ko		?
sister's husband	ká·w		*ka·w
in-law	mé·m		*me·m
(generational)			

Miwok Kinship Terms (continued)

English	
man	Ceb tá·riš
woman	Ceb ʔajtá·kiš
person	Ceb muwe-
husband	Ceb mak·o
wife	Ceb háw·a
father	Ceb ʔáp·a
mother	Ceb ʔán·a-n
grandfather	Csjb uṭa "parents"
grandmother	Ceb pá·pa
son	Ceb mél·e
	Ceb ʔin·iš
daughter	Ceb koč·ó "young man"
	Ceb ʔimín
child	Csl sinin "daughter, child"
child!	Pe esh
older brother	Pe esha
older sister	Ceb ták·a
	Ceb tá·-nan
younger brother	Csjb tá, taha
younger brother!	Ceb tál·e "younger sibling"
younger sister	
younger sister!	Csjb tcorsi "maiden"
younger sibling	
younger sibling!	
grandchild	
father's brother	Ceb čóč·o
father's older brother	Ceb ʔét·e
stepfather	
mother's brother	Ceb ʔét·e
father's sister	Ceb ʔanši
mother's sister	Ceb ʔanši
Mother's older sister	
stepmother	
nephew-niece	Cscr meres
sister's husband	
in-law (generational)	

Proto Miwok *tu·ne- may have meant both "daughter" and "child" like its Plains Miwok reflex. San Lorenzo Costanoan šinín shows a similar semantic range (Mason 1916:471), as does Yaudanchi Yokuts ahid (Kroeber 1917:353).

No Proto Miwok form can be reconstructed with the unique meaning of "child". Proto Western Miwok *ʔé|aj "child" may be an early loan from Patwin ʔila·y "child" (Elizabeth H. Bright, Patwin field notes). The word is probably old in the Wintun family since there is an apparent Wintu cognate e|et "infant" (Barrett 1908:81). Lake Miwok ʔé·š "child" is phonologically aberrant, since final *š normally becomes j or ø. ʔé·š is probably a loan word from Eastern Pomo esh "son or daughter" presumably also "grandchild, nephew, or niece. A term of endearment or ceremonial usage." (Kroeber 1917:370).

Surprisingly, the Eastern Pomo address form is esha, which could be the origin of Northern Sierra Miwok esa· "child". Borrowing into Miwok is more probable here than the reverse, since the Eastern Pomo vocative is regularly formed by adding {-a} to the stem, which is not a Miwok pattern.

Miwok and Costanoan languages usually have distinct words for "older brother" and "older sister" and a single term meaning "younger sibling". Proto Miwok *ʔat(·)a- "older brother" can be reconstructed from Miwok evidence alone, and Proto Miwok *te·- was posited with the help of the Costanoan cognate ta·-. Miwok /e(·)/ commonly corresponds to Costanoan /a(·)/ in non-final syllables (Callaghan 1962:97-107).

Only Sierra Miwok has distinct terms for "younger brother" and "younger sister", and in Southern and Central Sierra Miwok, they exist side by side with ʔate- "younger sibling". Southern Sierra Miwok ʔyta- "younger sister, younger female parallel cousin" appears to be a recent extension from ʔyta- "mother". If so, it would be interesting to determine the cultural implications of this fact. Northern and Central Sierra Miwok kole- "younger sister" may be cognate with Western Miwok kó·|a, kó·ja "girl", representing another instance of recent semantic specialization.

The Miwok distribution of terms for "sibling" suggests an undifferentiated Proto Miwok word for "younger sibling". *čale- has been postulated as a possible candidate from Sierra Miwok and resembling Costanoan forms meaning "younger sibling", such as Chocheño tal·e-. This reconstruction is questionable in view of its restricted occurrence in Sierra Miwok and the uncertainty of the correspondence Miwok /č/ = Costanoan /t/. It is interesting that Northern Sierra Miwok retains cognate stems for kole- "younger sister" and cale- "younger brother" in the vocative.

Lake Miwok ʔelám·o ~ ʔelám·u "younger sibling" may derive from *ʔé|aj "child" plus *ʔám·o "younger sibling", to judge from Coast Miwok equivalents. The address form ʔelá· appears to be an old vocative of ʔé|aj "child".

Miwok words for "grandchild" likewise do not exhibit sex differentiation. Plains Miwok shows a long vowel, which is probably an analogical extension of vowel lengthening found in

Plains Miwok nouns and adjectives before medial sonorants (Callaghan 1972:13-14). Since Plains Miwok has practically lost the formal vocative, *sasti?* "Grandchild! Sonny!" is probably not a true vocative of *ca·co-* "grandchild".

The marriage of a man to his wife's sister (either before or after the death of his wife) or to his brother's widow (the levirate) were pan-California customs (Kroeber 1917:384). Words for "aunt", "uncle", "nephew", "niece", and "cousin" cannot be understood apart from these customs. Mrs. Birdie Burris (Northern Sierra Miwok) and Mrs. Alma Grace (Lake Miwok) confirm the optional practice of the levirate for their respective tribes if the husband's brother was unmarried and state that the husband's brother (or the husband's family) was primarily responsible for the sustenance of his widowed sister-in-law and her children until she remarried.

Alternatively, an eligible woman might marry her sister's husband, either before or after her sister's death. Such polygynous unions were recorded by Gifford for the Central Sierra Miwok. Mrs. Burris has heard that they also occurred among the Northern Sierra Miwok. Mrs. Grace denies that the Lake Miwok were ever polygynous, but Kroeber reports the practice among the neighboring Pomo, the co-wives sometimes not being even blood kin to each other (Kroeber 1953:255).

Words for "father" were extended to mean "father's brother" in Southern and Central Sierra Miwok and Lake Miwok. If the levirate was practiced, the father's brother was a potential step-father.

Likewise, the word for "mother" was also applied to "mother's sister" in Southern Sierra Miwok and Lake Miwok. Where a man may marry his wife's eligible sister, the mother's sister is a potential stepmother.

Both these semantic extensions and their underlying customs may be reconstructed to Proto Miwok, since they occur in Eastern and Western Miwok, with the case for "mother's sister" being somewhat weaker than that for "father's brother".

These assumptions are strengthened by the relationship between words for "stepfather" and "father's brother" both within and across different Miwok languages. A similar relationship exists between words for "mother" and "mother's sister". In the Camanche dialect of Northern Sierra Miwok, *haj?i-* means both "stepfather" and "father's brother". Proto Miwok **ta·ta-* "stepfather" is reconstructable from Plains Miwok and Western Miwok. Its reflexes in both Lake and Marin Miwok also mean "father's brother". No Proto Miwok word can be reconstructed for "stepmother," but Bodega Miwok *?amó·ko* may mean both "stepmother" and "mother's sister". Lake Miwok *?olá·ci* likewise has both meanings, as does Northern Sierra Miwok *to·mu-*.

Proto Miwok **ka·ka-* may have meant "father's brother" as well as "mother's brother", judging by its reflexes in Northern Sierra Miwok, Plains Miwok, and Boedga Miwok, as well as the single Chocheño term for both categories. If so, there was a semantic

overlap between *ʔap(·)y- and *ka·ka- in the proto language. A similar overlap may have existed between *ʔyny- and *ʔan·is. The latter term was reconstructed with the meaning "mother's sister" from Sierra Miwok and Chocheño evidence. Proto Miwok *ʔene- was more probably restricted to "father's sister", although Lake Miwok ʔené·ni has come to mean "younger sister of either parent", but there was much fluctuation in the range of terms for "aunt".

Lake Miwok, Bodega Miwok, Plains Miwok, and Northern Sierra Miwok all show undifferentiated terms for "nephew-niece", as was probable in the proto language, although no form can be reconstructed. Plains and Northern Sierra Miwok applied brother-sister terms to all cousins with no known differentiation by type, as was probably the case in the Proto language. Lake Miwok did likewise with some extension of ʔené·ni and ʔámko to "female parallel cousin" and ká·ka to "male cousin".

Central and Southern Sierra Miwok were unique in their elaboration of terms for "nephew", "niece", and "cousin". E. W. Gifford determined the extended range of each of the Central Sierra Miwok items from numerous geneologies. He concluded that cross-cousin marriage between a man and his mother's brother's daughter was a recent extension of the custom of marrying one's wife's brother's daughter. He reported additional instances of such marriages among the Southern and Northern Sierra Miwok.

None of the geneological information I obtained from Mrs. Burris or Mrs. Grace supported cross-cousin marriages or marriages between a man and his wife's cross-niece among the Northern Sierra Miwok or the Lake Miwok, but negative information at this late date might not be significant. More to the point is the fact that both languages fail to make appropriate differentiations in "nephew-niece" or "cousin" terms.

Further evidence for the optional marriage of a widow to her sister's husband in Proto Miwok times comes from *ka·w "sister's husband", indicating the importance of this kinship term. The fact that Southern Sierra ka·w- also means "parent's sister's husband" and Lake Miwok ká·w also means "father's sister's husband" suggests semantic extension in the proto language, probably to additional eligible marriage partners. Marriage of a widow to her *ka·w would constitute an alternative to the levirate.

*me·m is the only generational in-law term that can be reconstructed. Southern Sierra Miwok me·m- means "parent-in-law", and me·m occurs in Western Miwok phrases for parent-in-law and child-in-law terms. Ceremonial reticence toward a parent-in-law of the opposite sex was another pan-Californian custom which may well have been practiced by the Proto Miwok.

In conclusion, sex distinction was always made for blood ties older than ego but probably not for those younger than ego except in the case of "son" and "daughter". Words for "father" and "mother" may have been extended to include "father's brother" and "mother's sister" respectively. Grandparent terms were not

differentiated for connecting parent. Terms also existed for "stepfather", "cross-aunt", "cross-uncle", and "sister's husband", probably all with semantic extensions. On the death of her husband, a woman might marry her husband's brother or her sister's husband. The latter or his father might have always been a potential marriage partner for any eligible woman.

Footnotes

1. This article is an expansion of a paper read before the XIVth Conference on American Indian Languages, American Anthropological Association meeting in San Francisco, December 4, 1975.

2. The following abbreviations have been used in addition to those listed in the Miwok language classification: PMi, Proto Miwok; Ceb, East Bay Costanoan (Chocheño); Csjb, San Juan Bautista Costanoan (Mutsun); Cscr, Santa Cruz Costanoan; HH, recorded by Horatio Hale; HWH, recorded by H. W. Henshaw; Ko, recorded by Kostromitonow; SB, recorded by S. A. Barrett; Y, Yosemite dialect of Southern Sierra Miwok; M, Mariposa dialect of Southern Sierra Miwok; Cam, Camanche dialect of Northern Sierra Miwok. All Miwok transcriptions have been normalized. The Chocheño forms were recorded by J. P. Harrington, and the Mutsun and San Lorenzo items were taken from Mason. The lone Santa Cruz Costanoan form was cited from Heizer. Lake, Bodega, Plains, and Northern Sierra Miwok were recorded by Catherine A. Callaghan, under the sponsorship of the Survey of California Indian Languages, Department of Linguistics, University of California at Berkeley, American Association of University Women, American Philosophical Society, the National Science Foundation, and the Department of Linguistics at Ohio State University.

Length in parentheses in an attested language shows variant forms. In a reconstruction, it indicates unexplained alternation in length among the daughter languages. Hyphens stand for morpheme boundaries. Stems are morphologically analyzed when such analysis aids in reconstruction. j is [y], and c is [ts] in Lake Miwok and [č] elsewhere.

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