

Tonto Apache and its position within Apachean

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1. Introduction

Tonto Apache is a variety or dialect of the Western Apache language (henceforth WA), the westernmost language in the Southern or Apachean division of Athabaskan. There are four major dialects or varieties of WA: Tonto, Cibecue, San Carlos, and White Mountain, all spoken in Arizona. Within the Tonto variety it has been customary, since Goodwin (1935, 1942), to further distinguish between Northern Tonto, spoken by the Apache of the Yavapai-Apache Nation in and around Camp Verde, and by the Apache on the Yavapai-Prescott reservation near Prescott, and Southern Tonto, spoken on the Tonto Apache reservation in Payson. All these places are in central Arizona. There are also speakers of Tonto (presumably Southern Tonto) on the Ft. McDowell reservation, northeast of Phoenix, and a few Tonto speakers on the San Carlos and White Mountain reservations in eastern Arizona.

It is not at all clear that the terms Northern Tonto and Southern Tonto correspond to an original political distinction. Schroeder suggests (referred to in Basso 1983:488) that this classification does not reflect the prereservation situation of the mid-nineteenth century.¹

Goodwin (1942:41, 47) states that his consultants emphasized the difference in speech between Southern and Northern Tonto, but my own consultants, both Tontos and non-Tontos, say that there isn't any. I have to go study the potential linguistic differences between Northern and Southern Tonto. There certainly exists "intraTonto" variation, but I have not yet found any evidence for considering Northern and Southern Tonto different dialects, as different from each other as San Carlos and White Mountain are, for example.

This paper will focus on the Tonto dialect as spoken by the Yavapai-Apache Nation. This nation has territory (or discontinuous reservations) in Camp Verde, Middle Verde, and Clarkdale. This is the area my Tonto consultants come from. There are about 42 speakers of Tonto Apache at Yavapai-Apache; the average age of speakers is 60, all being older than 50, except for one speaker who is in his 30ties. There are also about 13 speakers of Yavapai (an unrelated Yuman language) at Yavapai-Apache (the average age of speakers is 72, the youngest fluent speaker is 58).² The total Yavapai-Apache population is over 650. I do not have precise numbers of speakers for the other Tonto reservations, but they are even smaller than at Yavapai-Apache, and at Prescott and Ft. McDowell they are a small minority among Yavapai speakers. Tonto is the most endangered variety of WA. Each of the three other dialects of WA has at least two or three thousands of

¹On a lighter note, Vincent Randall, the present chairman of the Yavapai-Apache Nation, told me that there is no Mason-Dixon line between the Tontos, i.e. there is no such thing as a division between Northern and Southern Tontos.

²I thank Rebekah Smith (deceased) and Patrick Gorlick for information on numbers of speakers. I am very grateful to the following Tonto speakers for their help and patience: Tennyson Victor from Bylas, and Thelma Dawdy (deceased), Vincent Randall, Elizabeth Rocha, Rebekah Smith (deceased), and Victor Smith from Camp Verde. The research leading to this article was funded by a grant from the National Science Foundation to the University of Arizona (Nr. SBR-9408543), and to the University of North Texas (Nr. SBR-9896227). I also thank the Apache Culture office of the Yavapai-Apache Nation for their support and hospitality.

speakers.

A note about the somewhat unusual term Tonto is in order. It has been used in the past to refer to all Western Apaches, and even to Yavapais. According to Goodwin (1942:6) the derogatory origin of this name, Spanish tonto 'fool', can be explained by the fact that Chiricahua Apaches called the Western Apaches *bíni' édiné* 'people without minds', i.e. 'foolish people'. It is possible that the Spaniards translated this as tonto. In any event, the Tonto Apaches know that this is Spanish and they do not object to the name.

In this paper, I will focus on a few phonological and phonetic characteristics of Tonto that seem fairly old, and therefore are of interest to historical linguistics and comparative Athabaskan. I will not have time to go into the most noticeable phonological characteristic of Tonto, that is, a series of coronal fricative and affricate mergers (the merger of pre-WA <s, sh> to <s>, the merger of pre-WA <z, zh> to <z>, the merger of <dz, j> to <j>, and the merger of <ts, ch>, to <ch>). This merger is striking to speakers of other WA varieties, who often point it out, and even parody it. I have linguistic and external historical evidence that this change is relatively recent and related to Tonto and Yavapai bilingualism. Yavapai has been in contact with some varieties of Tonto for some time. I will have to present this evidence in another paper. There are a few examples of these mergers in table (1), items 2-3, 11, table (4), item 21, table (5), item 26, table (6), items 29-30, table (7), items 38-39, and table (14) below.

There are of course also morphological, lexical, and syntactic differences between Tonto and other Apachean languages. I will briefly present some of these in sections 2.3. and 3.3.

2. Phonological/phonetic similarities with Navajo

2.1. Tone

Certain features of Tonto tonal development are shared with Navajo rather than with the other WA dialects. As I show in de Reuse (2002), Proto-Athabaskan (henceforth PA) unconstricted full vowels normally result in phonetic mid toned long vowels in the Cibecue, San Carlos and White Mountain dialects of WA. This mid tone is a lowered allophone of the high tone. In Tonto as well as in Navajo the result is a high tone, not perceivably lower than the other high tones of the language.

Since there are plenty of examples and discussion in de Reuse (2002) I will not give them here. (There are examples of tone contrasts between Navajo, Tonto, and other WA below, in tables illustrating other things: table (1), items 7-11, table (2), item (14), table (4), and table (5), items 23-24).³

2.2. Stem final Proto-Athabaskan coronal stops and velars

I will now consider the WA and Navajo reflexes of certain stem final PA coronal stops and velars. This is an area where Tonto evolves in ways separate from the rest of WA, which tend to be similar to the ways Navajo treats these sounds.

I will start with presenting the data. As seen in the table under (1), PA stem-final coronal stops (either /d/ or /t'/) become Navajo and Tonto -d-, and either -d or -g in other WA (i.e. the Cibecue, San Carlos, and White Mountain dialects). I will draw conclusions about the significance of this -d and -g variation in other WA at the end of my discussion.

³The vowels in parentheses mean that many open syllable stems vary between a short high toned and a long high toned vowel; I believe the difference is either free variation, or conditioned by prosodic position of some kind.

(1) Apachean non-velar initials, first with PA /d/ finals, then with PA /t'/ finals:

PA	Navajo	Tonto	Other WA	Gloss
1. -ləd ⁴	-lid ⁵	-lid ⁶	-lid/g	burn v. ⁷
2. -ca'd	-tsaad	-chaad	-tsaad/g	scoot v.
3. -ce'd	-tseed	-cheed	-tseed/g	pound v.
4. -ɣ ^y u'd	-yood	-yood	-yood/g	herd v.
5. -zəd	-zid	-zid	-zid/g	wake v.
6. -zi'd	-ziid	-ziid	-ziid/g	pour v.
7. λat'	dláád	dláád	dlāād/g	algae, moss
8. -λat'	-dláád	-dláád	-dlāād/g	crack v.
9. ʔut'	ʔóód	ʔóód	ʔōōd/g	sore, scab
10. -t'ut'	-t'óód	-t'óód	-t'ōōd/g	suck, wet v.
11. cit'	tsíid	chíid	tsīid/g	live coals

If the stem starts with a velar and the Apachean vowel is long (i.e. comes from a PA Full vowel), the variant -g is much less common, mostly restricted to younger speakers of White

⁴Proto-Athabaskan forms are written in the spelling used in Krauss (1979), with the following modification: constricted vowels are written with an apostrophe following the vowel, rather than with a glottal stop above the vowel.

⁵Navajo forms are written in the standard spelling (Young and Morgan 1992).

⁶The spelling of Tonto and other WA is the system used and described in White Mountain Apache Culture Center (1972:vii-xii, 107-110) and in Bray (1998:xii-xviii). This system only distinguishes high tone (acute accent) and low tone (no accent); the mid tone is usually marked as a low tone, but occasionally it is marked as high tone (acute accent), particularly on a short *i* or a long *ii*, or on a long *oo* (often written *ú*). Because of the unsatisfactory marking of the mid tone in the standard system, the following addition to the system is used in this article: Low tones are unmarked *V*, *VV*, mid tones are marked \bar{V} , $\bar{V}\bar{V}$, and high tones are marked \acute{V} , $\acute{V}\acute{V}$. Underlined \underline{n} stands for a sound varying between [n] (Tonto and most San Carlos subdialects) and prenasalized voiced [n̥d] (some San Carlos subdialects). See de Reuse, Goode, et al. (2001) for a grammar consistently using these additional conventions.

⁷Glosses followed by v. refer to verb stems in the Perfective mode, unless they are followed by (Imp), in which case the verb stem is in the Imperfective mode. Glosses not followed by v. refer to noun stems.

Mountain Apache. I show this less common variation as -d/(g) in table (2) below:

(2) Apachean velar initials, and PA Full vowels, first with PA /d/ finals, then with PA /t'/

finals:

PA	Navajo	Tonto	Other WA	Gloss
12. -ge'd	-geed	-geed	-geed/(g)	dig v.
13. -qa't'	-kaad	-kaad	-kaad/(g)	propel v.
14. -q'et'	-k'ééd	-k'ééd	-k'ēēd/(g)	copul. v.

But if the stem starts with a velar and the Apachean vowel is short (i.e. comes from a PA Reduced vowel, then the -g variant is impossible, and -d is the only possibility in other WA as well, as seen in table (3). Note that the stem-initial <w> in item (19) in table (3) is the orthographic convention for a strongly labialized voiced velar fricative. There is thus, in all WA, a constraint against stems containing an initial velar and a final -g if separated only by a short vowel.

(3) Apachean velar initials, and PA Reduced vowels, first with PA /d/ finals, then with PA

/t'/ finals:

PA	Navajo	Tonto	Other WA	Gloss
15. -qəd	-kid	-kid	-kid	ask v.
16. -q'əd	-k'id	-k'id	-k'id	bump v.
17. -qa't'	-kad	-kad	-kad	sew v.
18. -qə't'	-kid	-kid	-kid	slip v.
19. -γu't'	-wod	-wod	-wod	bend v.

Let me turn to the situation with PA stem-final velars. The situation is more complicated here, and I will only discuss cases of stem-final velars where Navajo, Tonto, and other WA differ in interesting ways. There are other cases with stem-final velars where Navajo, Tonto and other WA evolve in the same way, and I will not discuss those here. I will also ignore vowel-quality differences for now.

Let us first consider the special case of PA /e/ followed by PA /g^y/, shown in table (4) (20-21). The velar disappears in Navajo and all WA. It should be noted that the resulting Tonto diphthong is phonetically intermediate between the resulting Navajo monophthong éé and the resulting other WA monophthong īī. Incidentally, the PA sequence /ey/ seems to behave similarly to /eg^y/, as shown in (22) in table (4).

(4) The special case of PA /egʸ/ and parallel PA /ey/:

PA	Navajo	Tonto	Other WA	Gloss
20. 'egʸ	éé'	éí	īī	shirt
21. -žegʸ	-zhéé'	*-z(h)éí	*-zhīī ⁸	shave v.
22. -ž ^w ey-ə'	-jéí	-jéí	-jīī(')	heart

I now turn to more general cases. PA stems with nonconstricted Full vowels and ending in /q'/, develop as shown in table (5). In Navajo, the reflex of the velar turns into a glottal stop; in Tonto it is -g, and in other WA, one can have -g and -d variation.

(5) PA nonconstricted Full vowels and PA /q'/ finals:

PA	Navajo	Tonto	Other WA	Gloss
23. -žeq'	-jéé'	-jéég	-jēēg/d	lie (pl.) v.
24. -ǰeq'	-tǰéé'	-tǰéég	-tǰēēg/d	handle (MM) v.
25. ǰuq'-e	ǰóó'	ǰóg	ǰóg/d	fish
26. š ^w eq'-?	-zhéé'	-z(h)ég	-zhíg/d	saliva

The same situation results, by and large, with PA stems with Reduced vowels and back velar stops /G/ and /q'/, as shown in table (6). Unexplained developments are the Navajo final in (28) and the Tonto and other WA finals in (31).

(6) PA Reduced vowels and back velar stop finals, first with PA /G/, then with PA /q'/:

PA	Navajo	Tonto	Other WA	Gloss
27. -t'aG	-t'a'	-t'ag	-t'ag/d	fly, run v.
28. -t'uG	-t'oh	*-t'og ⁹	-t'og/d	shoot v.
29. -caG	-tsa'	-chag	-tsag/d	bite v.
30. -c'aG	-ts'a'	-ts'eg, -ch'eg	-ts'ag/d	hear v. (Imp.)
31. -λu'q'	-dlo'	-dlo'	-dlo'	laugh v.
32. -nə'q'	-na'	-nag, -neg	- <u>n</u> ag/d	swallow v.

⁸The asterisks on this line indicate that I do not have these forms in my data, but I am confident that they exist.

⁹The asterisk indicates that I do not have this form in my data, but the form can be predicted to exist.

33. -ta'q' -ta' -tag -tag/d count v.

PA stems with Reduced vowels and ending in the back velar fricative /ɣ/, develop as shown in table (7). There are interesting differences here. The Navajo stems end in a vowel, or diphthong (35) (for Navajo (36) in table (7) one would expect the existence of a *-tʃa). The Tonto stems end in a vowel (39) or a diphthong (34, 36), or in -g (37, 40), or there is variation between a vowel-final stem and a -g-final stem (35, 38). The stems in other WA develop as in tables (5) and (6) above, with the exception of (39) where all three columns show essentially the same development. Tonto has several idiosyncratic developments, but it is clear that on the whole, the Tonto developments are more similar to the Navajo ones than to the other WA ones.

(7) PA Reduced vowels and PA back velar fricative finals:

PA	Navajo	Tonto	Other WA	Gloss
34. -čwəɣ	-cha	-chei	-chag/d	cry v.
35. -duɣ	-do, -doi	-doo, -dog	-dog/d	hot v.
36. -ħaɣ	-tʃah ¹⁰	-tʃei	-tʃag/d	oil v.
37. -ħ'uɣ ?	-tʃ'o	-tʃ'og	-tʃ'og/d	hairy v.
38. -cuɣ	-tso	-choo, -chog	-tsog/d	yellow v.(Imp.)
39. -cəɣ	-tsi	-chii	-tsii, -tsjii	poke v.
40. -zuɣ	-zo	-zog	-zog/d	mark v.

I will now draw some conclusions. I will depart from the non-Tonto WA forms, focusing on the -d/-g variation (tables (1) and (2)) or -g/-d variation (tables (5), (6) and (7)). It appears that the ancestor of these non-Tonto varieties of WA had *-d at the end of coronal stop-final stems, and *-g at the end of most back velar-final stems. Nowadays, there is a sound change in progress. There is neutralization of original *-d and *-g from two different directions, in a consistent pattern. Indeed, in some varieties of WA (mostly Cibecue and White Mountain), original stem-final *-d is being replaced by -g, the original stem final *-g remaining, while in other varieties of WA (mostly San Carlos) stem-final *-g is being replaced by -d, the original stem-final *-d remaining. The result is thus merger of *-d and *-g into -g for some varieties, and merger of *-d and *-g into -d for other varieties.

This merger is in progress because, as far as I can tell, no speaker of WA has replaced all the

¹⁰Here one would expect the existence of a Navajo form *-tʃa.

stem-final *-d by -g, and no speaker has replaced all the stem-final *-g by -d (Hill 1963:150). For example, even in areas where stem-final -d now predominates, łóg 'fish' is more common than łód, and łitsog 'it is yellow', is more common than łitsod.

One can also see that this merger is in progress because there exist speakers, at least in the Bylas area of San Carlos, and also in the White Mountain variety (Greenfeld 1972:96), for which the product of the merger varies freely between -d and -g.

As a result of this situation, it is nowadays impossible to tell which non-Tonto WA stems had originally *-d, and which stems had originally *-g, without resorting to comparisons to Tonto or Navajo.

Now, if one looks at Tonto, it appears that with the exception of the treatment of back velar fricatives (table (7)), Tonto has kept the original pre-WA final *-d and *-g, and has no mergers. It is interesting that one can find a phonetic reason for the absence of mergers in Tonto. The Cibecue, San Carlos, and White Mountain -d and -g finals tend to be very unreleased, and therefore it is not always easy to perceive their differences. On the other hand, Tonto -d and -g are more often and more clearly released, Tonto -g even being pronounced with some aspiration, as was first pointed out to me by the late Phillip Goode, a San Carlos native expert and writer with a great ear for such things. I have little doubt that the lack of release of -d and -g in the non-Tonto varieties of WA is the phonetic motivation for their merger. This does not explain, of course, why the merger can go into opposite directions, depending on the variety.

Let me now summarize the final consonant developments discussed in section 2. in table (8), adding the very regular results from Chiricahua, the related Apachean language in contact with WA to the southeast (Hoijer (ca. 1930, 1938)).

(8) Summary of Tables (1), (5), (6), and (7)

PA stem V and final consonant:	Navajo:	Tonto:	Other WA:	Chiricahua:
Reduced V, coronal stop (Table (1)):	-d	-d	-d or -g	-'
Reduced V, back velar stop (Table (6)):	-'	-g	-d or -g	-'
Reduced V, back velar fricative (Table (7)):	-∅	-∅ or -g	-d or -g	-'
Full V, coronal stop (Table (1)):	-d	-d	-d or -g	-∅
Full nonconstricted V, back velar stop (Table (5)):	-'	-g	-d or -g	-∅

Table (8) shows that the main difference in developments in Tonto and Navajo is that Navajo has glottal stops as reflexes of the back velar finals, whereas Tonto has -g. When comparing Tonto-Navajo against other WA, it is clear that Tonto is more like Navajo, because of the lack of coronal and velar mergers.

When one looks to the east, to Chiricahua in table (8), one notes this continued trend towards mergers, in that Chiricahua has no stem final -d or -g at all, having as reflexes a glottal stop or complete consonant loss. I would not venture to say that other WA is intermediate between Tonto and Chiricahua in degree of merging. Indeed, the results of the mergers in Chiricahua depend on whether the PA vowel is reduced, in which case one has a glottal stop, or whether the PA vowel is full, in which case there is no consonant. This is not the case in Navajo, Tonto, and other WA, where the results of mergers are not conditioned by the full/reduced distinction.

The developments discussed so far show that the Tonto dialect of WA is often more like that of Navajo than like that of the other WA dialects. This makes sense considering that Tonto is geographically intermediate between Navajo and the other Western Apache dialects. Tonto can be considered a link (or rather a remnant of a link) in an original dialect chain between Navajo and the other WA dialects.

2.3. Other similarities with Navajo

There are also a few morphological, syntactic and lexical features through which Tonto lines up with Navajo rather than with the remainder of WA.¹¹ I give three examples here.

In the other varieties of present-day WA, the second person dual subject pronoun prefix

¹¹Both Navajos and Western Apaches also comment on a stylistic similarity between Tonto and Navajo. They agree that Navajo and Tonto Apache are spoken at a slower speed than the other varieties of WA. This impression seems correct, and deserves further research.

-oh- has largely been replaced by the form -oʰ-, under analogical pressure from the allomorph -oʰ-. This has not happened in Tonto, where the distribution of -oh- and -oʰ- is the original one, as in Navajo.

Tonto has, like Navajo, an sentence initial yes-no question particle da', whereas the rest of Western Apache has ya'. An example is (9):

(9) The interrogative sentence initial particle:

Navajo:	Tonto:	Other WA:	Translation:
Da' díníyá?	Da' díníyá(á)?	Ya' díníyāā?	Are you going?

An example of a lexical similarity with Navajo is the following. The kinship term -tsilé 'younger sibling, younger parallel cousin' is Northern Tonto according to Hoijer (1956:328) and Goodwin (1942:198), and corresponds to Navajo -tsilí. This term is unknown in other Western Apache varieties.

3. Some features unique to Tonto

3.1. Vowel qualities in PA velar final stems

In addition to the striking set of coronal fricative and affricate mergers alluded to in the introduction, Tonto has features that it does not share with either Navajo or other WA, or for that matter with any other Apachean language. There is sometimes a more front vowel quality in stems ending in a PA back velar, where Navajo, other WA, and, as far as I know, other Apachean, have the vowel /a/. Examples are given in table (10), taking data already given in tables (6) and (7) above, and in table (11), giving extra examples.

(10) /a/e/a/ vowel correspondences from PA Reduced vowels followed by PA back velar finals, data from tables (6) and (7) above:

PA	Navajo	Tonto	Other WA	Gloss
(30.) -c'ag	-ts'a'	-ts'eg, -ch'eg	-ts'ag/d	hear v. (Imp.)
(32.) -nə'q'	-na'	-nag, -neg	- <u>n</u> ag/d	swallow v.
(34.) -čwəγ	-cha	-chei	-chag/d	cry v.
(36.) -ʎay	-tʎah	-tʎei	-tʎag/d	oil v.

(11) Other /a/e/a/ vowel correspondences from PA Reduced vowels followed by PA back velar fricative finals:

PA	Navajo	Tonto	Other WA	Gloss
41. -nə'x-X ?	-nah	-neh	- <u>n</u> ah	forget v.
42. yəx-X ?	yah ?	yeh	yah	bed

This phenomenon is a bit problematic. It is certainly phonetically unusual for PA back or central reduced vowels to front when followed by a back velar. One can assume that at one point

in pre-Tonto (and only in pre-Tonto) the back velars became fronted enough to cause this. Evidence for this would be that the back velar fricative /ɣ/ in items (34) and (36) in table (10) has the reflex i (phonetically [j]). In most cases, the evidence for such a front pronunciation seems to have disappeared. For example, present-day -g in the forms in (10) does not seem more front phonetically than in other Apachean languages or varieties.

3.2. A few mysterious and unexplained facts

Consider the Tonto partial paradigms in (12):

(12) Two Tonto (partial) paradigms:

hanás(h)woh	I am resting	dis(h)łih	I am going to urinate
hanánlwoh	you are resting	nlih	you are going to urinate
hanálwoh	s/he is resting	dilih	s/he is going to urinate

The verb stems involved in (12) are -woh and -lih respectively, which do not appear to have cognates in any other Apachean language. However, there exists a Tonto stem -wos(h) having to do with sleep, and there exists a Tonto stem -liz(h) 'to urinate', which have good Athabaskan pedigrees, as shown by the correspondences in table (13):

(13)

PA	Navajo	Tonto	Other WA	Gloss
-ɣuš-	-wosh	-wos(h)	-wosh	sleep v. (Imp.)
-ləž ^w	-lizh	-liz(h)	-lizh	urinate v. (Imp.)

I would like to suggest, then, that under certain as yet unexplained circumstances, Tonto -wos(h) turns into -woh, and Tonto -liz(h) turns into -lih. I have not heard the form *hanáswos(h), etc. for 'I am resting', but I have heard disłiz(h), etc. for 'I am going to urinate'. In any case, it seems unlikely that the forms in (12) are not in any way related to the expected stems in (13). But two forms do not seem enough to posit a alveopalatal fricative to /h/ sound change.

Another interesting unsolved mystery is the word for 'nighthawk', a kind of bird, given in (14). Young and Morgan (1992:68) state that the Navajo equivalent comes from onomatopoeic biizh, in imitation of the sound that this bird makes. Onomatopoeic bird names are not the best candidates for reconstruction to a proto-language, and we don't have a PA etymon for this one. It is interesting, however, that Tonto here has an initial cluster [pł] otherwise unknown in the language, and in Athabaskan as a whole, and that other WA have the very rare aspirated bilabial stop p, not the unaspirated one (written b) of Navajo. Chiricahua Apache also has biishe', piishe' 'species of bird' (Hoiyer ca. 1930:13). One wonders then, if this form is a loanword

from a language allowing word-initial clusters, and if there is a relationship of some sort between the unusual aspiration of the p and the Tonto cluster.

(14)				
PA	Navajo	Tonto	Other WA	Gloss
?	biizhii	płíshí	piishii	nighthawk

3.3. Lexical items unique to Tonto

Quite a few lexical items are unique to Tonto. It seems to have less vocabulary in common with the Cibecue, San Carlos, and White Mountain dialects than these three have in common with each other. More lexicographic work is necessary to confirm this impression. Several Tonto words share a stem with the other WA, but have different morphology. Examples are given under (15), where the other WA is represented by San Carlos.

(15)			
Tonto:	San Carlos:	Meaning:	
chighaasn	chagháshé	children	
-chóótéí or -chóótíyé	-chōō	maternal grandfather	
jogolááni or ch'ogolááni	zagolāāni	mockingbird	
kowah	gowah	home	
noi	non	something stored away	
-zaa'é or -z(h)aaz(h)é	-zhaazhé	child, little one	
-zétł'is(h) or -z(h)ég	-zhíg/d	saliva	

A few stems are unique to Tonto; (16) shows a noun stem -b ag-, and (17) shows a verb stem -b áh. It is possible that they are related to each other

(16)				
Navajo:	Tonto:	San Carlos:	White Mountain:	Meaning:
jooł	nábagé	bool	joołé	ball

(17)	
-b áh as in náyinłbáh	's/he is pounding it (with anything flat)'

More commonly, morphologically complex descriptive expressions are unique to Tonto, although they are made of easily recognizable lexical and morphological material. Examples are under (18), with literal translations given following the forms.

(18)

Tonto:	San Carlos:	Meaning:
nabil bibaąs 'car hoop'	nabil bijád 'car leg'	tire
jiłyú golíni 'lives in mountains'	shash	bear
chil gonchq'é 'smelly v.'	shash	bear
ts'il bighán sitáné 'shell sits on back'	ch'oshteeł 'wide bug'	turtle
ts'il biká' sitáné 'shell sits on top'	ch'oshteeł	turtle

Some of these expressions are not recent and can be diagnostic for demonstrating the "Tontiness" of early wordlists, in which phonological evidence is often ambiguous due to poor transcription. A case in point is a vocabulary of Coyotero or Tonto Apache gathered at Ft. McDowell in 1866 by a military surgeon (Smart 1866, published Hagemann 1970). Now, we can be pretty sure that this vocabulary is indeed Tonto, because its word for 'bear' is written SIL-GOT-SHOÍ, clearly an attempt to render chil gonchq'é.

4. Conclusions.

I hope to have demonstrated the importance and interest, albeit mainly from a comparative linguistic point of view, that Tonto Apache has in the realm of Apachean.

Since I have argued that Tonto Apache is in several ways intermediate between Navajo and the other Western Apache dialects, one might ask whether Tonto could be conceived of as an Apachean variety equidistant between Western Apache and Navajo, or maybe even a variety closer to Navajo, in effect a variety of Navajo. Such a conclusion would be incorrect, since the large majority of phonological, morphological, syntactic and lexical features of Tonto show that it is more like Western Apache than like Navajo. Also, mutual intelligibility between Tonto and the other Western Apache varieties is near perfect, whereas mutual intelligibility between Navajo and any Western Apache variety is always marginal.

Finally, since Tonto has been so long ignored in the linguistic literature, and since there are so few speakers of Tonto, further linguistic work on all Tonto Apache varieties and efforts towards their preservation of Tonto Apache deserve the highest priority.

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