

# THE CONSTRUCTION AND USAGE OF KIOWA PERSONAL NAMES<sup>1</sup>

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## ABSTRACT

This article provides the first detailed study of Kiowa personal names. Building from a corpus of over 2,400 names dating from the 1700s to the present, published lists (Mooney 1898, Parsons 1929), archival texts, and field interviews, this paper analyzes the morphosyntax upon which Kiowas have built names from words, phrases, and sentences. It situates the use of names within the grammar of Kiowa, demonstrates their referential qualities, and details the ways that Kiowas routinely abbreviate longer names.

This paper also discusses the meaning behind personal names. In contrast to generalizations about Native naming practices (Exner 2007), many traditional Kiowa names tend to be commemorative of significant events, rather than just personal descriptions. Some events correlated with the named person's birth; others to glorious war deeds by the name-giver or an ancestor. However, exceptions occur for specific kinds of notoriety. In any case, the meaning of Kiowa names is typically rooted in a story, rather than a simple phrase.

Kiowa names also hold particular value in both indigenous and assimilated aspects of life. Names are uniquely held at any one time, and passed down within families. Many names and abbreviations became last names for BIA record-keeping, and reflect the imperfect efforts to transcribe or translate those names.

Overall, the goals of this paper are twofold. First, we aim to help researchers draw comparative conclusions about Native naming practices, and to exemplify the value of tying grammatical and cultural studies of onomastics. Second, we aim to help community members gain a clearer sense of avenues to pursue in finding out about names in their own families.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The Kiowa [*k<sup>h</sup>ai.o.wə*] are a Plains Indian culture that has resided in the Southern Plains since the early 1800s. The language (ISO code: *kio*) and culture of the Kiowa have been well documented over the years. However, no work has focused on the construction of personal names. Meadows (1999, 2008, 2010, 2013, 2015, 2021) writes extensively about Kiowa toponyms and ethnonyms, and about many Kiowa by their Kiowa names, but

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not the structure or use of personal names. Smaller lists of Kiowa personal names are published in Mooney (1898) and Parsons (1929). However, these works focus primarily on their cultural and historical associations. Indeed, numerous anthropological works emphasize the contrastive cultural aspects of Native naming practices (French and French 1997), and some ethnographies contain brief descriptions of naming practices (e.g., Kroeber 1925). However, none delve into the linguistic details of name composition, and few even try to decompose names, much less succeed. This leaves an important gap in our understanding, because Native names are generally misunderstood regarding composition, content, and basis, and are frequently mistranslated.

This article offers a fuller understanding of Kiowa onomastics by combining cultural and linguistic investigation. Personal names occupy an interesting place in languages, and in Kiowa they are no exception. On the surface they often have clear linguistic construction and meaning, sometimes even consisting of finite sentences. Other times they involve morphemes, compositions, forms, or tone-behaviors not seen elsewhere in the grammar. The synchronic use of a name is purely referential, but its full semantic import usually includes a story that commemorates a significant moment of personal history. This story is the true ‘meaning’ behind the name, though it can be obscured by a number of linguistic and cultural forces, such as clipping or anglicization.

It also seeks to change the way we look at indigenous American names. The way that Native names are typically presented belie their intricate complexity, both in structure and meaning. Native names are typically offered in what seems to be a monomorphemic lump, akin to the European style, with a translation that tries to be brief, exotic, and poetic. However, Kiowa names are carefully constructed out of real expressions, with conventional suffixes and stems to add flavors of meaning that are not always translated. Their derivation is also complex, and what poetry they bear comes not so much from the literal words but more from the story they commemorate.

## 2. METHODOLOGY

The key data for this paper consists of over 2,400 Kiowa personal names, collected from three types of sources. First are names collected during fieldwork conducted by the authors in Oklahoma, between 1989 and 2023. Second are lists of names in archival and documentary sources, collected by U.S. government officials, anthropologists, and Kiowa tribal members. Third are of names from published works, from Mooney (1898)'s ethnography to a recently published collection of stories (A. McKenzie *et al.* 2022).

The names are presented in this article in up to three ways, to make them legible to researchers and community members alike. These methods are all exemplified in the name in (1), and will be explained in detail below.<sup>2</sup>

(1) Bélâuájèà [bé:lô:á.tê:à:] ‘Caught By the Bridle’

bél-ô:            á\*=tê:-á:  
 bridle-in        3EMPA:3SGO=catch.PFV-ALL.DISTR  
 ‘They’ve been catching it by the bridle’

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<sup>2</sup> Morpheme marking generally follows the Leipzig conventions, except that portmanteaux are marked with ‘:’ rather than ‘.’, which is used for multi-word glosses. Stem combining is marked with ‘+’. A tone-lowering effect is signaled by \*, and applies low tone rightward for the rest of the word. Glossing abbreviations: A: agent, ADV: adverbial marker, ALL.DISTR: allative distributive aspect, BAS: basic number, c: combining form of the stem, D: ‘dative’ oblique, DEF: definite, DETR: detransitive, DF: different subject switch-reference, EMP: empathic animate plural, HSY: hearsay evidential, IMPER: imperative, INCL: dual/plural inclusive, INV: inverse number, IPFV: imperfective aspect, NAME: name-making suffix, NEG: negative (unmarked aspect), NPL: non-plural, O: object, PFV: perfective aspect, REFL: reflexive, S: subject, SA: same-subject switch-reference, SBRD: subordinating particle, SG: singular.

The first line entry is in the Kiowa orthography created by Parker McKenzie (1897–1999), a self-trained Kiowa linguist who worked on his own and aided scholars for seven decades. His orthography intricately captures the phonology of the language in a way that matches the intuitions of first-language Kiowa speakers (McKenzie & Meadows 2001, Watkins & Harbour 2010). Although the Kiowa Tribe of Oklahoma has no official orthography, the McKenzie orthography is esteemed, and has been used in courses at the University of Oklahoma since the early 1990s (Neely & Palmer 2009). The Kiowa Language and Culture Revitalization Program currently uses a form of McKenzie’s orthography that is easier for casual typing and second-language learners. We use his unmodified orthography here to honor his tireless contributions and his wishes to see his writing in print. Conversions of this orthography to IPA can be ascertained from examples, or found in the previously cited works.

The second representation, also on the first line, is the pronunciation of the name in IPA in square brackets [ ], with syllable boundaries marked by a period (.). We amended the phonetic transcriptions in published sources slightly, to fit our IPA conventions, but the sounds represented are the same as in the original text. Non-name lexical items will be cited with their phonemic form in angled brackets as they occur. The third way of representing names is morpheme-by-morpheme glossing for those names that benefit from having their structure laid out. The first line of these glosses shows the underlying tones and structure of the morphemes, since the spoken form is already listed. The conventions here are standard, with one key exception: Many morphemes lexically trigger tone-lowering for the rest of the word, which in turn affects a lot of names. This lowering effect is marked in the glosses with \*.

Names are translated on the first line next to the phonetic string with their typical English use in single quotes. However, these translations are affected by English conventions, poetic license, and lack the context of the name’s basis. The translation accompanying glosses is a more exact translation of the locution on its own, but still lacks the full context.

### 3 THE LINGUISTIC STRUCTURE OF KIOWA NAMES

Kiowa does not contain any proper names as a lexical class; any expression can be used as a name. Names like *George*, *Mary*, or *Katelyn* exist in the lexicon of their language as names and, now used only as names, have no independent or decomposable meaning whatsoever. Also, they are generally used to name many different people, and their popularity as names can be indicative of various social trends. Kiowa names, on the other hand, are onomastically unique, held only by one person at any given time. Apart from foreign names, they do derive from lexical or grammatical expressions.

#### 3.1 FOREIGN NAMES

Kiowas did adapt several foreign proper names into Kiowa use (Table 1). These came from Spanish, Comanche, or English, and offer a glimpse into loanword adaptation. The Kiowa also developed the pronunciations Qá-bîn [kʰá.bîŋ] for the English *Carbine*, and Béchép [bé.tsép] for Big Tree, the English translation of a Kiowa name. In one name, the Kiowa word for ‘black’ and the Kiowa pronunciation of *Charley* combined to form the name Kóchǎlè [kʰó.tsá.lè] ‘Black Charley’. These names also did not form a lexical class whose members could be reused. They were used uniquely like Kiowa names. For instance, the name C’ǎlásé did not mean ‘Carlos’ generally, but only referred to the particular man with that name.

**Table 1:** Kiowa proper names from foreign languages

Source Language	Kiowa	pronunciation	original
<i>Spanish</i>	C'álasé	[ká:.là.sè]	Carlos
	C'álotè	[ká.ló:.dè]	Carlotta
	Màucîn	[mò.kîm]	Joachim
	Péilô	[pé:.lò:]	Pedro
	Sèlbilmã	[sè <sup>d</sup> l.bí <sup>d</sup> l+mà:]	Sevilla
<i>Comanche</i>	Nócòn	[nó.kòn]	Nokoni
	Wéjàn	[wé.tàn]	Kwitan
<i>English</i>	Débèt	[dé:.bèt]	David
	Jízàsá(dè)	[dʒí:.zà.sá:-dè]	Jesus
	Mélè	[mè:.lè]	Mary
	Mózet	[mò:.zèt]	Moses

### 3.2 FAMILY NAMES

Traditionally, Kiowas bore no family surnames. Family names came with assimilation starting in the 1870s, via boarding schools or allotment. Usually these derived from the personal name of the male head of household being turned into a family surname. Kiowa personal names are often associated with particular lineages, became family possessions, and were sometimes passed on to others, including relatives and non-relatives. Family genealogies demonstrate one to eight individuals bearing a single Kiowa name over time.

Patronymics occurred only rarely to distinguish a father and son, using *sân* /sân/ 'be small' compounded with a name. One well-known example is Jòhâudè [tò.hô:.dè] 'Recess in a Bluff' and his son, the chief Jòhâusàn [tò.hô:.sàn] 'Son/Offspring of Recess in a Bluff'. Another case is Mâuthàuhâu [mò:.t'ò.hô:] 'Hooked Nose' and his son Mâuthàuhâusàn [mò:.t'ò.hô:.sàn] 'Son of Hooked Nose'. Otherwise, a person's name did not have any linguistic link to that of their parents.

The vast majority of Kiowas had names built out of Kiowa-language expressions, ranging from words to entire sentences. The closest Kiowa forms to proper names are clipped forms of longer names, at least in the lexicons of speakers who are unaware of the longer name. Even these originate in full expressions, many of which include suffixes and stems that are used in conventionalized ways to form names.

### 3.3 NAME-MARKING SUFFIXES

Many names bear a suffix or stem that is used to mark a name made from an expression.

The name-marking suffixes are only used in names, and come in four forms. They can affix to nominal or sentential names. They do not have any clear meaning besides this use, and they vary based on phonology, so we analyze them as variations of a single suffix, glossed NAME. Table 2 lists the suffixes (and one ablaut form) with their phonological conditions, and (2) exemplifies the use of /-dé/.

(2) Séttháidé [séʔ.t'áj.dé] 'White Bear'

sét+t'áj-dé  
 bear+white-NAME  
 'white bear'

**Table 2:** List of name-marking suffixes (NAME)

PMO	IPA	Usage conditions
-dé	-dé	general ‘elsewhere’ form
-jé	-té	after voiceless codas or falling tone, but occasionally for euphony alone
-i	-j	after word-final vowels /a, ə, o, u/, forming a ‘diphthong’
-ô	-ô:	upon word-final vowels in abbreviated names

In (3), the sentence meaning ‘A tree was big’ is suffixed to make a name. The suffix *-/dé/* has low tone because the stem before it triggers tone-lowering in the rest of the word, and is pronounced as [tè] due to the voiceless coda preceding it. The subject is inanimate, so its singular form is number-marked (with ‘inverse number’, INV).

- (3) Ádàuiétjè [á:.dòj.éʔ.tè] ‘Big Tree’  
 á:-dò      è=ét\*-té  
 tree-INV    3INVS=be.big:SG-NAME  
 ‘A tree was big’

Examples (4)–(6) demonstrate the other two suffixes.

- (4) Sétǎgài [sét.á:.gǎj] ‘Sitting Bear’  
 Sét      Ø=á:.gǎ-j  
 Bear    3SGS=be.sitting:NPL-NAME  
 ‘A bear was sitting’

- (5) Tǒcài [tʰó:.kǎj] ‘In the Water’  
 tʰó:.\*-kǎ-j  
 water-in-NAME  
 ‘in the water’

- (6) Àunkô [ʔn.kʰô:] ‘Aunko’ (from Àunkóvǎuigàdédè)  
 ʔn+kóp’ʔj\*-gǎ      Ø=dé:-dè:  
 path(s)+middle-in    3SGS=be.standing-HSY  
 ‘He was standing in the middle of paths.’

The phonological conditions do not fully determine the distribution of the suffixes. Kiowa speakers indicate that many times, the choice was simply one of taste. In (5), for instance, *-/té/* appears despite a final vowel.

- (7) Sétèmqǎjè [sét.èm.k’í:.à:.tè] ‘Stumbling Bear’  
 sét      èm=k’í:.\*=á:-té  
 Bear    3SGA:REFLO=throw=ALL.DISTR-NAME  
 ‘A bear was throwing itself along (this way)’

Speakers do observe that for each name, one form prevails. One Kiowa speaker noted that, “With some names *dé /dé/* sounds right, with others *jé /té/* sounds right. But both mean the same thing.” (anonymous speaker, p.c.) As Parker McKenzie (p.c.) explained, “See, from a Kiowa standpoint, *Séttháidé* [séʔ.t’áj.dé] (White Bear) sounds better than *Séttháijé* [séʔ.t’áj.té], and *Sétédédè* [séʔ.dé:.dè] (Standing Bear) sounds better than *Sétédjè*

[séʔ.dé:.tè]. It just depends on the sound. It's understood in Kiowa which is right and which is wrong.”

A key fact about name-marking suffixes is that even when they are considered part of the name, they can be dropped with no effect on understanding. For instance Ádàuiétjè [á:.dòj.éʔ.tè] ‘Big Tree’ is often just Ádàuiét [á:.dòj.éʔ]. Cûifàgàui [kûj.pà:.gòj] ‘Lone Wolf’ is often just used as Cûifàgàu [kûj.pà:.gò], and so on. In addition, the suffixes can be tacked on to names that usually do not bear them. For instance the name Yísàum [jí.sòm] ‘Twice Looked At’ can appear as Yísàumjè [jí.sòm.tè].

The name-marking suffix is identical in form to a compound-linking suffix *-/dé/*, which connects adverbs, personal names, and clauses to other stems in compounds (8)–(11). McKenzie et al. (2022) gloss the compound-linker as an adverbial marker (ADV). Crucially, it exhibits the same allomorphs in similar environments to the name-marking suffix. While this variation suggests that the name-marker and compound-linker are the same morpheme, we cannot yet rule out accidental convergence (cp. the plural and possessive marker *-/z/* of English). Also, it is not clear what meaning these morphemes would share, so we leave that question to future research.

- (8) àunqîdèfài [ʔn.k'î:.dè.pàj] ‘last summer, the previous summer’  
 ʔnk'î: \***-dé**+páj  
 in.past–**ADV**+summer  
 ‘previous summer’
- (9) Parkerjéjò [pʰákàɪ.té.tò:] ‘Parker’s house’  
 pʰákàɪ–**té**\*+tó:  
 Parker–**ADV**+house  
 ‘Parker’s house’
- (10) tògâuijò [tʰò.gôj.tò:] ‘old-fashioned house, old-style dwelling’  
 tʰògò: \***-j**+tó:  
 long.ago–**ADV**+dwelling  
 ‘old-fashioned dwelling’
- (11) Émqóltàdèfài [ém.k'ól.tʰà:.dè.pàj] ‘Cut-throat Summer (1833)’  
 ém=k'ól\*+tʰá:–**dé**+páj  
 3EMPA:3EMPO=neck+sever:PL:PFV–**ADV**+summer  
 ‘The summer they cut off their heads’

The name-marking suffix is distinct from the nominalizing enclitic *=/dé/*, which is glossed BAS for basic number, despite having a more similar meaning than the adverbial suffix. This clitic essentially takes a sentence and returns the event or situation being described—exactly what happens in commemorative names. It thus converts clauses into nominal expressions to make the Kiowa constructions corresponding to complementation and internally-headed relative clauses. In (12) it occurs twice, in a sentence comparing the times that two distinct events occurred.

- (12) Fólǎjè é hòldètàu sákónvài gà dǎumê, áugàu tàlyóp è qǎuhèmdè.  
 pólǎ:tè é\*=hól=dé+t<sup>h</sup>ó: sá:+k<sup>h</sup>óp'ǎj  
 Poolant 3INVA:3SGO=kill:PFV=BAS+beyond winter+in.middle.of
- gǎ=dó:mê: ógò t<sup>h</sup>ǎljóp è=k'ó:.\*+hêm=dé  
 3PLS=be:HSY SBRD boy:INV 3INVS=freeze+die:PFV=BAS  
 'It was midwinter, before Poolant was killed, that the boys froze to death.'  
 (McKenzie et al. 2022: S136)<sup>3</sup>

It is tempting to link the nominalizing enclitic to the name-marking suffix, but this clitic does not take on different forms the way the name-marker does, and it is not an affix.

### 3.4 NAME-MARKING STEMS

A number of names consist of content compounded with a stem whose meaning is not usually part of the name *per se*, but does indicate the gender or relative age of the name-bearer.

- (13) Séndémǎ [sɛn.dé.mǎ:] 'Sende'  
 séndé\*+ mǎ:  
 Sende+female  
 'Sende'

Table 2 lists these name-marking stems, which occur name-finally.

**Table 2:** List of gendered/aged stems

PMO	IPA	Gloss
<i>qáptǎu</i>	k'ǎpt <sup>h</sup> ó:	'old man'
<i>chǒhǐ</i>	tsó:hǐ:	'old lady'
<i>qí</i>	k'í:	'male'
<i>mǎ</i>	mǎ:	'female'
<i>qǎhǐ</i>	k'ǎ:hǐ:	'man'
<i>mǎyí</i>	mǎ:jí:	'woman'
<i>tǎlyí</i>	t <sup>h</sup> ǎlí:	'boy'
<i>mátǎun</i>	mǎt <sup>h</sup> ǎn	'girl'

Most of these stems are free nouns, except for *qí* / k'í:/ 'male' and *mǎ* / mǎ:/ 'female', which are bound stems that only occur with names, ethnicities (14), animal species (15), or deverbal agentive nouns (16).

- (14) Cǎuiqǐ [kój.k'í:] 'Kiowa man, (2) men'  
 kój\*+k'í:  
 Kiowa+**male**  
 'Kiowa man, (2) men'

<sup>3</sup> We amended this transcription slightly to fit our IPA conventions, but the sounds represented are the same as in the original text.

(15) chēma [tsê:.mà] ‘mare’  
 tsê:.\*+má:  
 horse+**female**  
 ‘mare, (2) mares’

(16) dǎuqǐ [dó:.k’i:] ‘singer’  
 dó:.\*+k’i:  
 sing+**male**  
 ‘singer, (2) singers’

The stems *chǒhî* /tsó:.hî:/ and *qáptǎu* /k’jáp.tʰò:/ are usually reserved for elders, and the epithet ‘old man’ and ‘old woman’ is generally included in the name.

(17) Pǎuchǒhǐ [pʰó:.tsò:.hì:] ‘Old Lady Bison Bull’  
 pʰó:.\*+tsó:.hî:  
 bison.bull+**old.lady**  
 ‘**Old Lady** Bison Bull’

(18) Tǎukǎuiqáptǎu [tʰò:.kʰòj.k’jáp.tʰò:] ‘Old Man Saddle Blanket’  
 tʰò:+kʰòj+k’jáp.tʰò:  
 saddle+blanket+**old.man**  
 ‘**Old Man** Saddle Blanket’

Additionally, the stems can be added to names that do not lexically contain them, simply as an honorific epithet. In (19), the speaker, who had been using *Sétǎgài* [sét.á:.gǎj] (see (4)) added *qáptǎu* /k’jáp.tʰò:/ to this one instance of the name, and it replaces the name suffix *-j/*.

(19) Nǎu áuihyǎudè Séttháidé gǎu Sétǎgàqáptǎu gǎu Ádǎuiét—ódèhǎu ò hègǎu ét  
 sǎuhêl.  
 nò ójhò\*—dé sétt’ájde gò sétǎ:gǎ\*+k’jáp.tʰò: gò á:dòjét  
 and:DF that—BAS Satanta and:SA **Satank+old.man** and:SA Big.Tree

ódè—hò: pʰá:ò: hègó ét=só:—hêl  
 as.many—DEF three then 3INVA:3EMPO=put.in:PL:PFV—HSY  
 ‘And they put only three men away, that Satanta and **Old Man Satank** and Big Tree.’ (McKenzie et al. 2022: S81).

Age exceptions are attested, but only occur when a young person inherits a name containing one of these stems (see section 7.1). Bert Geikaunmah, who grew up as *Gâcàumhǎfǎu* [gǎ: kòm.hà.pò] ‘They Aimed at Him’, was renamed *Pǎuqáptǎu* [pʰó:.k’jáp.tʰò:] ‘Old Man Bison Bull’ while still a young man. Mary Buffalo was renamed *Fáichǒhǐ* [páj.tsò:.hì:] ‘Old Lady Sun’ at age twelve in 1873 (SFN 1935: 396-397).

Among the Kiowa names that Mooney collected in his fieldnotes many were recorded with a variety of stems and suffixes. These variations suggest that some forms may reflect a progression in age, convenience in use, and as by-names. For example, the man known as Saddle Blanket (18) was known by at least three variations; *Tǎukǎuidè* [tʰò:.kʰòj—dè] ‘Saddle Blanket’, *Tǎukǎuiqáptǎu* [tʰò:.kʰòj+k’jáp.tʰò:] ‘Old Man Saddle Blanket’, and *Tǎukǎuibóljè* [tʰò:.kʰòj+bó<sup>d</sup>l—tè] ‘Rotten Saddle Blanket’. Similarly, the man



known as Trail was known as Hóàun [hó.ʔn] ‘Trail’, Hóàundè [hó.ʔn-dè] ‘Trail’, and Hóàuntàlyì [hó.ʔn+thà.lì:] ‘Trail Boy’. Many women's names also have relevant suffixes and stems used interchangeably with the same name root. Existing data suggests that such changes were far more common for male names than for female names, although far more names were recorded of men than of women.

Despite this variation, different suffixes and stems enabled more than one person to have a similar name concurrently. Examples include the males Máunhédè [mónhè:-dè] and Máunhèqì [mónhè:+k'í:] ‘No Hand’, and the females Fénhàjè [pènhà:-tè] Fénhàmǎ [pènhà:+mà:] ‘Sugar’.

In Kiowa song texts, the male stem +/k'í:/ is sometimes added to an existing name form that generally does not take it, or replaces a suffix commonly used. This practice occurs particularly in men's military society and individual veteran's songs, which celebrate manly prowess (Meadows 2010: 283-284). Examination of song texts suggests that these changes occur to achieve a specific number of syllables that are conducive to the rhythm of the songs.

### 3.5 NAMES COMPOSED OF A NOMINAL PHRASE

Whether a name includes a name-marking suffix or stem, it is built out of some kind of expression. One common group of expressions is the nominal phrase. Sometimes, the phrase is just a simple noun. Other times the name consists of a noun modified by an adjectival verb.

#### 3.5.1 Simple nominal names

Simple nominal names occur, either bare, with a name-marking suffix, or with a gender-specific name-marking stem. The name Ségàui [sé:.gòj] ‘Prickly Pear’, anglicized as Saingko, is notable because it is clearly a number-inflected noun, rather than simply a stem. Indeed, Harbour (2007) shows that number marking is the sign of an entire determiner phrase, rather than a bare noun. Being inanimate, the noun bears the inverse number marker on the singular, and in this case, the name-marking suffix is affixed afterward. However, this is a lexicalized inflection, as the name itself triggers animate singular agreement rather than inverse agreement.

#### (20) Names built from nouns

a.	Kísáu	[k'í:.só:]	‘Noon’
b.	Étâl	[é:.t'â <sup>d</sup> l]	‘Ears of Corn’
c.	Fítâu	[pí:.t'â <sup>d</sup> u]	‘Spears’
d.	Qáupàl	[k'ó.pà <sup>d</sup> l]	‘Osage’
e.	Hóàundè	[hó.ʔn-dè]	‘Path’
f.	Pánjé	[p'ân-té]	‘Cloud(s)’
g.	Ségàui	[sé:.gòj]	‘Prickly Pear’
		sé:.*-gó-j	
		prickly.pear-INV-NAME	
		‘prickly pear’	
h.	Xómǎ	[ts'ó:.mà:]	‘Plume’
		ts'ó:.*+mà:	
		(fluffy.)feather+female	
i.	Zóqì	[zó:.k'í:]	‘Tooth’
		zó:.*+k'í:	
		tooth+male	

Our classification of simple nominal names includes lexicalized compounds. While these compounds can be decomposed morphologically, these are single lexical items, as reflected by ordinary usage and by names.

- (21) Lexicalized Compound Names
- a. Éjáfòl [é:.tá:.pò<sup>d</sup>l] ‘Cicada’  
 é:+ tá:.\*+pól  
 fruit+ripen+bug  
 ‘fruit-ripening bug’
  - b. Fíèl [pí:.ê<sup>d</sup>l] ‘Thanksgiving Day’  
 pí:+êl  
 meal+big:SG  
 ‘feast’
  - c. Hǎujòltòì [hó:.tò<sup>d</sup>l.t<sup>h</sup>òj] ‘Sword’  
 hó:.\*+tól+t<sup>h</sup>ó-j  
 metal+handle+club–NAME  
 ‘metal-handled club’
  - d. Chǎlthài [tsâ<sup>d</sup>l.t’áj] ‘Canada goose’  
 tsâl\*+t’áj  
 waist+white  
 ‘white-waist’ (exonymous compound)

### 3.5.2. Modified nominal names

Modified nominals are quite commonly employed for names. Nouns can be modified in Kiowa by forming a noun+verb compound with an ‘adjectival’ verbal predicate (there is no distinct category of adjectives in the language). Generally, the noun precedes the modifier but this order can be reversed, especially with colors and other visual attributes. The circumstances driving that reversal are not clear.

- (22)
- a. Máukàupèl [mó:.k<sup>h</sup>ò.p<sup>h</sup>è<sup>d</sup>l] ‘Flat Nose’  
 mó:.\*+k<sup>h</sup>òp<sup>h</sup>èl  
 nose+flat
  - b. Cûifǎgǎui [kûj.pà.gòj] ‘Lone Wolf’  
 kûj+pá:.\*=gó:-j  
 wolf+one=only–NAME  
 ‘(a) single wolf’
  - c. Kǎugùtqòmǎ [k<sup>h</sup>ó:.gùt.k’ò.mà:] ‘Yellow Robe’  
 k<sup>h</sup>ó:.\*+gùtk’ò+má:  
 robe+yellow+female
  - d. Bóichê [bój.tsê:] ‘Shiny Horse’  
 bój+tsê:  
 be.shiny+horse
  - e. Thénégúl [t’èné:.gú<sup>d</sup>l] ‘Redbird’  
 t’èné:.\*+gúl  
 bird+red  
 ‘cardinal’

Thénégúl [t'è.né:.gù<sup>d</sup>] is a particularly interesting name because it contains a tone alteration that is a rare signal of a name. Normally the stem *théné* /t'èné:/ has a low tone on the first vowel, even when compounded. It also triggers tone-lowering, so the compound 'red bird' should be pronounced [t'èné:gù<sup>d</sup>]. However, some names, like this one, trigger high tone throughout.

### 3.5.3 Compounded nominal names

Compounding is a productive noun-building process in Kiowa, and many names consist of such compounds. Noun-noun compounds are common (23), and so are deverbal verb-noun compounds (24).

#### (23) Noun-noun compounds

- a. Áfítàu [á:.pí:.tʰò:] 'Wooden Lance'  
     á:.\*+pí:.tʰó:  
     wood+lance
- b. Màyténdè [mà:.jí:.tʰèn.dè] 'Woman's Heart'  
     mà:jí:.\*+tʰén-dé  
     woman+heart-NAME
- c. Qóđèbòhòn [k'ó:.dè.bò.hòn] 'Swift-fox Headdress'  
     k'ó:dè\*+bòhòn  
     swift.fox+headdress
- d. Gómđájè [góm.dó:.tè] 'Wind Spirit'  
     góm+dó:.\*-té  
     wind+spirit-NAME

The deverbal structure is commonly used for indicating agentive properties (as *-er* does in English; see (16)). This use sometimes makes it into the translation (24). Deverbal compounds often allow the verb to bring with it various incorporated stems including objects (A. McKenzie 2022).

#### (24) Deverbal compounds

- a. Cáuihèjèqĩ [kój.hè:.tè.k'í:] 'Kiowa Story Teller'  
     kój\*+hè:tè+k'í:  
     Kiowa+storytell+male
- b. Chèjòqĩ [tsè:.tò.k'í:] 'Hunting Horse'  
     tsè:.\*+tò:k'í:  
     horse+hunt<sub>c</sub>+male  
     'horse hunter'
- c. Fímá [pí:.má:] 'Eater'  
     pí:+má:  
     eat<sub>c</sub>+female

### 3.6 NAMES COMPOSED OF ADVERBIALS

Rarer are names built out of adverbial expressions, some of which are simple, while others are built out of postpositive compounds.

(25)

- a. Xóttài [ts'ó:.tʰàj] 'On top of the rock'  
ts'ó:.\*+tʰáj  
rock+atop
- b. Jòdôm [tò.dôm] 'Under/Beneath a Lodge'  
tò:+dôm  
home+underneath
- c. Máusájè [mọ.só.tè] 'Six'  
mósó-tè  
six-NAME
- d. Àuncâuidè [ʔn.kôj.dè] '(At the) Ankle'  
ònkôj\*-dé  
at.the.ankle-NAME
- e. Cûijàhèdè [kûj.tà.hè.dè] 'Blind Wolf'  
kûj\*+tá:+hè:-dé  
wolf+eye+lacking-NAME  
'eyeless wolf'

#### 4.5 SENTENTIAL NAMES

The most common way to make a Kiowa name is a complete sentence, with or without a name-marking suffix. Kiowa phrase structure can loosely be described as SOV, though arguments are routinely dropped and V is closer to the mark (Watkins 1984; Adger et al. 2009). The verb must begin with an agreement proclitic that indicates up to three arguments: A transitive agent (glossed A), an intransitive subject (S) or transitive object (O), and an oblique argument that can express one a variety of roles, including dative recipient, benefactive, or possessive (all glossed D). Our glossing follows A. McKenzie et al. (2022)'s convention.

Many Kiowa names have the form of ordinary sentences. Their English translations often feature a poetic verbal or participial construction where the subject is dropped, but the Kiowa expression is simply a complete finite sentence (26). As Parker McKenzie (p.c.) explains, "Many names are just expressions that are accepted as name forms."

- (26) Cûièmîjèjè [kûj.èm.pê.tè.à:] 'Persevering Wolf'  
kûj èm=pê:tè\*-à:  
wolf 3SGA:REFLO=persevere.PFV-ALL.DISTR  
'The wolf has been persevering'

The simplest sentences are just a predicate. If the subject is 3<sup>rd</sup>-person singular it is null, so it might appear like 'just a word'. It is however, an entire predicate.

- (27) Máunsép [mọn.sép] 'Restless/Mischievous'  
Ø=mónsép  
3SGS=restless  
'he/she is restless (like a child)'
- (28) Cãujáháp [kọ:.tò.háp] 'Fond of Trading'  
Ø=kọ:.tò\*+háp  
3SGS=trade+fond.of  
'he/she is fond of trading' [The expected tone is altered in this name]

Simple sentences with non-null pronominals are common as well.

- (29) Égîsàuiãumè [é.gî:.sòj.ỳ:.mè:] ‘They Caused A Delay For Him’  
 égî:\*=sòj+òm-é:  
 3EMPA:3SGD:3PLO=delay+make-PFV  
 ‘They caused a delay for him.’

Sentences with adverbials are common, and so are sentential names starting with adverbials.

- (30) Ácàdè [á:.kìà.dé] ‘Standing in the Timber’  
 á:\*=kìà Ø=dé:  
 trees-in 3SGS=be standing  
 ‘He/she is standing in the woods.’
- (31) Cãutõfãhól [kó:.tʰó:.pà.hó<sup>d</sup>] ‘Killed An Enemy Near the Shore’  
 kó:tʰó:\*=pá Ø=hól  
 marsh-against 3SGA:3SGO=kill.PFV  
 ‘He killed him at the edge of the marsh’

Many sentential names exhibit common types of syncope, contraction, and other phonological processes. In (34), the proclitic /è/ combines with /s/ to make a heavy rime /sỳ/ (the tone adjusts idiosyncratically in this name). The /j/ then spreads across /h/.

- (32) Tõcãmhã [tʰó:.kìàm.hã:] ‘Arose from the Water’  
 tʰó:~kìà (è)m=hã:  
 water-in 3SGA:REFLO=arise.PFV  
 ‘He/she arose from the water.’<sup>4</sup>
- (33) Kãugánfãu [kʰó:gìànpó:] ‘Acquired a Name’  
 kʰó:~gì(à) án=pó:  
 name-BAS 3SGD:3PLS=get.DETR.PFV  
 ‘He/she acquired a name’
- (34) Íjãgãuihyòl [í:.tã:.gòj.hjò<sup>d</sup>] ‘Killed the Utes’  
 í:tã:\*=gò é=hól  
 Ute-INV 3SGA:3INVO=kill.PFV  
 ‘He killed (the) Utes’

Kiowa makes frequent use of incorporation, adding bound stems to make complex verbs. Oftentimes, this process leads to changes in tone or consonant ablaut. As a result, many names contain finite verbs that show incorporation.

<sup>4</sup> This sentence might also be translated for other contexts as ‘He stood up in the water.’ Kiowa contains no lexical postpositive form that denotes ‘from’ or any other ablative sense. Instead, locatives can be used to describe the initial point of the event’s action and derive an ablative meaning. In (32) that would give a literal meaning closer to ‘He stood up, starting in the water.’

- (35) Gácàumhàfâu [gʲá.kʲ:m.hà:.pò] ‘They Aimed at Him’  
 gyá=kʲ:m+hà:pò  
 gyá\*=kò̃m+hâ:pò  
 3EMPA:3SGO=aim+pick up.PFV  
 ‘They aimed at him’
- (36) Étdáubìngàu [éʔ.dó:.bìn.gò] ‘They Competed to Kill’  
 ét=dó:.\*+bìngò  
 3EMPA:REFLO=kill<sub>c</sub>+scramble.PFV  
 ‘They scrambled to (be the first to) kill.’
- (37) Ézépǵǎ [é.zép.gù:.à:] ‘Striking an Enemy with his Bow’  
 é=zép\*+gù:à:  
 3SGA:3INVO=bow+hit.PFV–ALL.DISTR  
 ‘He was striking enemies with a bow (coming this way).’

The clearest indication that these names are actually sentences is that they contain the functional elements of the grammar, which are associated with finite clauses. This includes viewpoint aspect (38), negation (39), and the deictic spatial distribution auxiliary  $\hat{a}$  / $\hat{a}$ :/, glossed as an allative distributive (ALL.DISTR) following A. McKenzie et al. (2022). This auxiliary indicates that the action is spread out over a path that is coming toward a contextual perspective point, and is used in sentences in place of overt aspect marking. It can be found in sentences (1), (26), (37), (40), (41), (42), (55), and (57).

- (38) Éttàlyìdònmaui [éʔ.thà.lì:.dòn.mòj] ‘Searching For Boys’  
 ét\*=thà.lì: +dòn–mò–j  
 3INVA:3PLO=boy+look.for–IPFV–NAME  
 ‘They are looking for boys.’
- (39) Háunyídògúfâu [hʲn.jí:.dò.gú:.pô:] ‘Wasn’t Hit Twice / Twice Missed’  
 hʲn jí:–dò Ø=gú:p–ô:  
 not two–times 3SGS=hit.DETR–NEG  
 ‘He was not-hit twice.’
- (40) Thènénfǒǎ [tʲè:.nέ.án.pó:.à:] ‘Eagle Sounding Coming Hither’  
 tʲè:nέ án=pó:.\*–á:  
 bird 3SGD:3PLS=sound–ALL.DISTR  
 ‘A bird has/had been audibly approaching’

Kiowa does not have tense marking, so these sentences could be translated in the past or present depending on the context. The language does have hearsay evidential marking, but we have not observed any names containing it, a fact that reflects how names commemorate deeds and events that were witnessed or experienced first-hand.

### 3.8 ABBREVIATED NAMES AND CLIPPING

Many Kiowa names at first glance appear to be proper names devoid of any synchronic meaning. However, these are invariably clippings of sentential names that do have meaning. Usually, clipped names are reduced to two or three syllables (more rarely to one), and two general patterns emerge: Preserving either the first two syllables, or two key syllables chosen from the word.

While European names often have common conventionalized clippings, such as Bob for Robert or Peg from Meggy, a diminutive form of the name Margaret, conventional nickname forms have not been reported for American Indian naming systems (French and French 1996: 202). The same goes for Kiowa; clipped names are simply parts of longer names, and contain no changes apart from a lengthened vowel at the end (6).

### 3.8.1 First two syllables preserved

Names clipped to the first two syllables are very common.

- (41) a. Ákău [á.kʰə:], clipped from  
 b. Ákăudòṅ [á.kʰə:.dòṅ.ə:] ‘Been Looking for a Name’  
 á\*=kʰə:+dòṅ-ə:  
 3EMPA:3SGO=name+look.for-ALL.DISTR  
 ‘They’ve been looking for a name’<sup>5</sup>

- (42) a. Hóbê [ho.bê:], clipped from  
 b. Hópéhólā [hóp.é.hó<sup>h</sup>l.ə:] ‘Killed the Travelers’  
 hóp é=hól\*-ə:  
 travelers 3SGA:3INVO=kill-ALL.DISTR  
 ‘He killed the travelers (coming along)’

The clipping process ignores the morphosyntax completely. For instance, the clipping in (42) splits an agreement proclitic from its verb. In Káugùtqòmà [kʰó:.gùt.k’ò.mà:] ‘Yellow Robe’ (22), the clipping changes the name to Káugùt [kʰó:.gùt] even though the root /gùtk’ò/ ‘yellow’ is cut in half. Table 3 presents the clipped form of three names that we have already seen.

**Table 3:** Some clipped names

Clipped Name	Full Name	Example
Bélâu [bé:.lô:]	Bélâuájèṅ [bé:.lô:.á.tè:.ə:]	(1)
Àunkô [əṅ.kʰô:]	Àunkóvəuigàdédè [əṅ.kó.p’əj.gʷà.dè:.dè:]	(6)
Káugùt [kʰó:.gùt]	Káugùtqòmà [kʰó:.gùt.k’ò.mà:]	(22c)

The clipped names sometimes are used with name-marking suffixes or stems, like Bélâuajè [bé:.lô:–tè], or Hóbêqī [ho.bê:–k’i:].

### 3.8.2. Prominent syllable preservation

Some names are clipped in a way that maintains two prominent syllables, or on occasion, only one syllable. For instance, the name Sétqóljè [séʔ.k’ó<sup>h</sup>l.tè] ‘Bear Claw Necklace’ only seems to translate as ‘Bear Neck’. However it was clipped from the longer name Sétmáunxóqólpaqì [séʔ.məṅ.ts’ə.k’ó<sup>h</sup>l.pʰə.k’i:], preserving the stem for ‘bear’ and part of the stem for ‘necklace’.

<sup>5</sup> This name is sometimes mis-translated as ‘They’ve come to look for a name’, but that would give Ákăujòṅ [á.kʰə:.tò.ə:].

(43)

- a. sét+k'ó<sup>d</sup>l-tè  
bear+neck-NAME  
'bear neck'
- b. sét+[món+ts'ó]+[k'ól\*+p<sup>h</sup>á:]+k'í:  
bear+[paw+nail]<sub>claw</sub>+[neck+tie]<sub>necklace</sub>+male  
'bear claw necklace'

Parker McKenzie's Kiowa name Yísàum [jí:.sòm], roughly translates as 'twice looked at / twice seen', but is not a grammatical string, because the stem *sáum* /*sóm*/ 'watch (as a spectacle)' is bound and cannot occur without another stem after it. However, this name is clipped from the sentential name Yídòásàumbòdè [jí:.dò.á.sòm.bò:.dè], preserving two key syllables.

(44)

- a. jí:.\*+sóm(-té)  
two+watch(-name)
- b. jí:.\*-dó á\*=sóm+bó:.-dé  
two-times      3EMPA:3SGO=watch+look.at.PFV-NAME  
'They watched him twice with interest.'

More rarely, a name will see its first noun clipped.

(45)

- a. Èmqiájè [è̃m.k'í:à:.tè], clipped from
- b. Sètèmqiájè(jè) [sét.è̃m.k'í:à:(.tè)] 'Stumbling Bear'  
sét      è̃m=k'í:.\*-á:(-té)  
bear      3SGA:3REFLO=throw-ALL.DISTR(-NAME)  
'A bear threw itself along (this way).'

Occasionally the last two syllables may be retained.

(46)

- a. Kìbôm [k<sup>h</sup>í:.bòm] 'Rescued'
- b. Qāhîfāákìbòm [k<sup>h</sup>á:.hî:.pá:.á.k<sup>h</sup>í:.bòm] 'Rescued A Man'  
k<sup>h</sup>á:.hî:      pá:      á\*=k<sup>h</sup>í:.bòm  
man      some      3EMPA:3SGO=save.PFV  
'They rescued a man.'

### 3.8.3 The effect of clipping on translations

Clipping does not affect the translation, but it often makes the translation difficult to determine or not seem to fit when known. For instance, the clipped name in (47)a seems to be adverbial, meaning 'in the midst (of)' but the name is actually clipped from a sentential one (47)b), with the addition of a name-marking suffix. The sentential one shows that the adverbial indicates a source rather than a location.

(47)

- a. Hôlgài      [hó<sup>d</sup>l.g'àj]  
hól\*-g'à-j  
midst-in-NAME  
'in the midst'



- b. Hôlgàzón [hò<sup>d</sup>l.già.zón]  
 hòl\*-gjà Ø=zón  
 midst-in 3SGA:3SGO=pull.out:PFV  
 ‘He pulled him out of the midst (of a crowd)’

The name Yígũ, sometimes translated as ‘Twice Hit’, is actually a clipped form of a longer expression meaning the opposite. The name is based on a warrior being shot at twice in battle and missed each time.<sup>6</sup>

(48) Háun yídò gũfâu [hón.jí:.dò.gú:.pô:] ‘Wasn’t Hit Twice or Twice Missed.’

hón jí:-dò Ø=gú:pô:  
 NEG two-times 3SGS=hit.DETR.NEG  
 ‘He was not-hit twice.’

### 3.9. SUMMARY

The structure of Kiowa names reveals a complexity and intricacy that makes it crucial for our understanding of Kiowa onomastics. Kiowa names are built in a number of ways, but by and large they result from actual expressions in the language: words, phrases, and entire sentences.

This construction highlights their commemorative aspect, which we turn to in section 5. It also demonstrates the problematic nature of name translations, where even a literal translation often excludes a good amount of literal information in the name, because it takes a ‘standard’ English form applied to Indian names.

## 4. THE STORIES BEHIND KIOWA NAMES

As important as it is to unpack the way that Kiowa names put morphemes together, it is also important to think of these names not as descriptions but as commemorations. Kiowa names link to oral history in ways that signal worthy and virtuous behavior, or auspicious natural phenomena. The translations of the linguistic material in the names is important but secondary to this history.

In that sense, Kiowa names controvert trends observed more broadly. Generalizing about Native American naming practices, Exner (2007) writes that traditional names can both identify and describe a person, as well as describe at least three aspects of an individual: They tell a person’s story, they may be autobiographical, and they may identify clan membership. In contrast, Kiowa names rarely do these, unless they are given to non-Kiowas. Instead, they tend to tell a story that indirectly corresponds to a person, or is about the name-giver or a person’s ancestor. Kiowa names do not identify band or division membership or clan membership, since Kiowa society lacks unilineal, clan social organization.

### 4.1. THE STORIES NAMES TELL

We have seen how names can contain complete sentences and other expressions, but the names actually contain much more meaning than the mere words. Kiowa elders often state that every name has a story behind it. As Parker McKenzie explained, “Never ask what a Kiowa name means, ask what it refers to... There's always a little story attached to almost every name. That's a basic rule about Kiowa names.”<sup>7</sup>

<sup>6</sup> Boyd (1983:139) recorded a translation of “Hit Twice” however Gertrude Yeahquo explained the basis of the name. Gertrude Yeahquo Hines, p.c., Aug. 2, 1993.

<sup>15</sup> Parker McKenzie, p.c., 11/19/1997.

Kiowa personal names generally do not describe the person themselves, but rather commemorate a noteworthy event associated with them, such as the location or an auspicious sign associated with their birth, or commemoration of deeds of gallantry or bravery related to warfare or religious experiences that some kinfolk had conducted, from which an individual was then named. For instance, the name Áultháijè [ʰl.t'áj-tè] ‘White Hair’ is not a description of someone whose hair had grayed. Instead, it commemorates the time a relative had brought a notably blond scalp back from a victorious foray. Two children and a nephew of Kítàl [kʰí.tʰàʰl] ‘Moth’ were named after a single incident her husband had participated in at the Battle of the Washita (Meadows 2021).

Examining 500 Kiowa names, Parker McKenzie (p.c.) estimated that 50% percent were related to some aspect associated with warfare including scouting, traveling, and varied combat actions. These actions involved capturing horses, striking or counting coup, killing an enemy, scalping, and more. One boy was named Áfǒchánà [á.pó.tsán.à:] ‘They’ve been coming to see him’ by his grandfather to commemorate an incident in his own youth. He had been shot through the chest laterally in battle, but managed to recover. His recovery was so miraculous that people kept visiting to marvel at him (SFN 1935:394).

Kiowa personal names are best understood as texts that require explanation for their full context and reference to elicit meaning. For Northern Yuman names, Bonnie Kendall (1980:261) states that, “Names must be considered abbreviated texts or allusions to narratives, whose significance is social as well as cultural.” Many Kiowa personal names are also “abbreviated texts,” but differ in that the majority are intimately related to cultural concepts relating to the commemoration and preservation of warfare and supernatural activities, while also carrying overall similar restrictions concerning their use which reinforces social interaction along a predominantly kinship basis.

Scholars have long characterized some of the most salient aspects regarding Plains Indian names. As Kendall (1980:261) writes, “Plains Indians changed their names to reference socially salient events in their lives (Lowie 1963); this means that the linguistic signs their names contain have highly situated meanings. Plains Indian names make allusion to narrative, *i.e.*, they are abbreviations for histories; consequently, they require exegesis in addition to translation.” As Kendall (1980) has shown, the “meaning” or “deeper significance” of names is revealed when they are examined through both linguistic and social means.

Kiowa names are not solely labels, but “compact social histories” presented as “abbreviated texts.” Normally, no two individuals held the same name simultaneously, and in rare cases that occurred, a differential basis behind the name’s composition and different name suffixes was likely as in the names Dáuióljè and Dáuiólmá (Carrying A God/Medicine Bundle). As texts or condensed social histories, it becomes necessary to consider the basis of their development and structural features (Kendall 1980: 263, 267). Even with names that are correctly and easily translated such as Sitting Bear or Brings Everything, the basis and context on which the name was composed and given is unknown. In other words, you have to know the story behind a name to fully understand it. As Jake Ahtone noted, “I think every name has a story that goes with it.”

In time, some names have continued as symbols of deep historical and social meaning and are handed down with considerable oral history that more fully expounds on their origin, basis, meaning, and social background in terms of which individuals have previously held the name (Jordan 2011). With famous names, a core of information regarding the name may be known to many people. In other instances, names have been handed down with little or no associated semantic, cultural, and social information, and thus serve largely as labels, although they represent an ongoing cultural practice. Consequently, some less historically prominent names may only be known by a few members of a particular lineage. In either case, the difference concerning the survival and

succession of the full knowledge associated with each name usually depends on individual families.

Kiowa names also serve as compact social histories for individual recipients and their family, by representing a memorable activity (birth location, war deed, religious experience, source of power, physical attribute) of an individual (past or present) from which the name was formed. As such, the context and reference are often well known within one's lineage. In other instances, names can also serve to commemorate the events of individuals from other lineages. Parsons (1929) describes a case where a notable warrior was asked to name a child of an unrelated family and did so based on one of his personal experiences (notably, in the third person).

(49) Háunènídâu [hʌn.ɛ̃m.í:.dô:] 'Unafraid of Danger'

hón èm=i:dô:  
 NEG 3SGA:REFLO=dissuade.NEG  
 'He did not shy away (from danger)'

Whether about the recipient or someone else, names are contextually based and firmly embedded in the lives of individuals, past and present. Thus, a Kiowa name does more than simply label an individual, it refers to a multi-leveled context and body of knowledge and experience. Ideally, the best way to get at this multi-layered entity is to examine it from linguistic, social (particularly family), and cultural perspectives. This examination depends on the amount of existing knowledge associated with each name. As Parker McKenzie noted (p.c.), “Names in Kiowa that are significant often lose their effectiveness when literally translated into English.” Often, only a literal meaning and not the cultural context of the name is conveyed in translation.

#### 4.2. NAMES OF VALUABLE CONCEPTS

Kiowa names do not directly harken to virtues (Patience, Hope, Felicity), prestigious people (saints, leaders, etc.), or valuable objects (Rose, Pearl, Courvoisier), like we see in Euro-American culture. A few names relate to virtues indirectly such as Cûièmîfêjè [kûj.ɛ̃m.pê:.tè] ‘Persevering Wolf’, Ángû [ʌn.gû:] ‘Wise/Of Good Character’, and more recent names including Ánháiḡdè [ʌn.háj.ḡ:.dè] ‘Knowledgeable’ and Háundéánámà [hʌn.dé.ʌn.ḡ:.mà] ‘Accomplishing/Getting Things Done’ may reflect more modern ways of thinking. The only known names associated with social status are Máigàudé [máj.gò.dé:] ‘High Ranking/Prominent [in Society]’, Máigàuhól [máj.gò.hó<sup>d</sup>] ‘Killed A High Ranking Person’, and Táuibáudèǎ [tʰój.bó:.dè.ǎ:] ‘Becoming Outstanding/Rising in Status’. Names containing the word *qájái* /kʰájáj/ ‘chief/warrior’ suggest status and virtue through the bravery and warfare which were seminal to Kiowa male social status (Meadows 1999, 2010). The name Káuàunqǐ [kʰó:.ḡn+kʰi:] ‘Poor/Pitiable One’, relates to the third-lowest of four Kiowa social classes of the nineteenth century (Mishkin 1940:35). The name Òòwá [ò.ò.wâ:] ‘Owl’, based on an informal name for an owl in the single and dual forms, appears to be based on onomatopoeia (cp. Mǎuhí: [mò:.hí:] another lexical item for ‘owl’).

Occasionally a name could evoke parental aspirations. One family who had lost several children named one of their children Mǎuvál [mò.pʰá<sup>d</sup>] ‘Trash’, not out of any enmity, but because trash multiplies without limit and never goes away— a hope they wished for the child, who did survive into adulthood (Parsons 1929:140).

On the other side of the scale, Kiowa names excluded any content to sexual acts, genitalia, scatology, or related subjects. These kinds of names are common in many Uto-Aztecan groups, including the Comanche whom Kiowas often interacted with. However, Kiowas find such names to be excessively vulgar, and sometimes shy away from even

translating certain Comanche names into English.

#### 4.3 NAMING NON-KIOWAS

Naming was rarely commemorative when giving Kiowa names to non-Kiowas, or to captives adopted into the tribe, simply because there were no familial war deeds to commemorate.

Most names of non-Kiowas were made of words or compounds that reflected their personal characteristics. The captive Bóiel [bój+ê<sup>d</sup>] ‘Big Pale’ was named for his size and paleness. The missionary Maryetta Reeside was called Émdèkò [ém.dè.k<sup>h</sup>ò:] ‘(Come) to this side’, a positive reflection of her proselytizing. Parker McKenzie gave the name Tháiqòpmà [t’áj.k’òp+mà:] ‘Pikes Peak (Woman)’ to the linguist Laurel Watkins to reflect the area she visited from.

Some names were simply adaptations of foreign names, like Ándèlè [án.dè.lè:] ‘Andres’ or C’álàn [ká.làn] ‘(George) Catlin’ (also see Table 1). Some names were translations of foreign names into Kiowa, including Natives from others tribes such as the Cheyenne leader Black Kettle (Dàualkògài [dò.á<sup>d</sup>l+k<sup>h</sup>ó:.g<sup>h</sup>à-j]) in Kiowa, or the Delaware leader Black Beaver (Fókògài [pó:+k<sup>h</sup>ó:.g<sup>h</sup>à-j]).

One clever adaptation was the translation of a sound-alike word. The first missionary pastor of the Rainy Mountain Baptist Church, Rev. Howard Clouse, was known as Pánjè [p<sup>h</sup>án-tè] ‘Clouds’, because his English name sounded like *clouds*, which made a nice Kiowa name.

The names that Kiowas gave to the Indian agents at the Kiowa, Comanche, Apache Reservation demonstrate these techniques.<sup>8</sup> Lawrie Tatum was called Jànváuígàtháui [tàn.p’új.g<sup>h</sup>à.t’új] ‘Bald Head’, literally ‘bald in the middle of the head’, since his male pattern baldness was not a common occurrence among Kiowas. Eugene White was called Tháijè [t’áj-tè] ‘White’, a translation of his name with a name suffix. Charles Adams was just Ádàum [á.dòm], a pronunciation of his name. These show a variety of methods in assigning Kiowa names to people whose heritage lay outside the historical record that permits commemorative names.

### 5. PERSONAL NAMES IN THE GRAMMAR

Since antiquity the peculiar behavior of names has raised questions about how they fit into grammars. Names are generally considered to be definite descriptions, built with the nominal syntax thereof (Mulkern 1996, Abbott 2002, Elbourne 2005). That said, names can be composed of proper nouns, common nouns, determiners, modifiers, and so on, built out of different syntactic structures (for instance, *Ellen*, *Louis the Pious*, or *The Golden Gate Bridge*). and even contain sentences like the episode of *Friends* titled *The One After Ross says “Rachel.”*

#### 5.1. THE SYNTACTIC CATEGORY OF NAMES

Personal names in many languages are more restricted, to lexical monomorphemes with only an onymic meaning. The use of common names like *Alice* or *Barry* to name many distinct people leads to a number of interesting questions about the semantics of names (summarized in Cumming 2019).

Kiowa personal names are not purely onymic, unless they are renderings of foreign names. Names can be built in a variety of ways: Simple words, compounds, or entire sentences. Many of these names bear a suffix or a final stem that marks the expression as

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<sup>8</sup> Mooney (1898) lists the agents with their Kiowa names, but Parker McKenzie retranscribes their names accurately in his papers (OHS Archive, Box 11 Folder 9).

a name. These name-markers are optional, but do conventionally become part of some names.

In that sense they are more marked than other definite expressions in Kiowa. Kiowa has no definite determiners, only a handful of quantificational ones, and a broad array of demonstratives (Watkins 1984). Harbour (2008) argues that number-marking is a sign of a determiner phrase in Kiowa. Names cannot bear number marking, but the name-markers might serve the same syntactic purpose. Alternately they may put names into a distinct syntactic category (Anderson 2010).

## 5.2. NAMES IN REFERENCE AND SPEECH ACTS

Names in Kiowa have three uses: Reference, address, and as a predicate. For the most part, the form of the name does not change across these uses, except that in address, clippings are very common, and stems and the *-dé* [dé] and *-jé* [té] suffixes are usually omitted. The other suffixes (Table 2) and the aspectual form *-á* [á:] are not deleted in address form.

### (50) *predicate*

- a. Áulpépjè à kâu.  
 ó<sup>d</sup>l+p<sup>h</sup>ép\*-té      à=k<sup>h</sup>ó:  
 hair+bush-NAME      1SGS=be.named  
 ‘My name is Áulpépjè’
- b. Áulpépjè bá kàum.  
 ó<sup>d</sup>l+p<sup>h</sup>ép\*-té      bá\*=k<sup>h</sup>ôm  
 hair+bush-NAME      1INCLA:3SGO=name.PFV  
 ‘We named him Áulpépjè’

### (51) *reference*

- Áulpépjè é táidò.  
 ó<sup>d</sup>l+p<sup>h</sup>ép\*-té      é=t<sup>h</sup>áj\*+dó:  
 hair+bush-NAME      3SGA:1SGO=accompany+hold  
 ‘Áulpépjè stayed with me.’

### (52) *address* Áulpêp, èm á!

- ó<sup>d</sup>l+p<sup>h</sup>êp      èm=á:  
 hair+bush:NAME      2SGS=come:PFV:IMPER  
 ‘Áulpépjè, come!’

In referential use however, the stems and suffixes are generally included in the enunciation of the entire name form. In cases involving the use of clipped forms as nicknames, suffixes are always deleted.<sup>9</sup>

Kiowa names are strictly referential, since no two people have the exact same name at any one time. In that sense, names cannot denote properties with covert determiners (Elbourne 2005). Instead, they simply denote expressions of semantic type *e*, referring to a specific entity. Determiners and demonstratives are not used with names; as there are no determiners and since names are unique, demonstratives with names would not distinguish any more than the name already does on its own.

At any given time only one person has a name, but through inheritance, many people can bear the same name over time. Even then, one cannot count names. ‘There have been three Lone Wolves’ cannot be translated directly, but requires a relative construction.

<sup>9</sup> JMKFN MS 2531:6:177, NAA. Parker McKenzie p.c., 3/18/1994

- (53) páò qǎhyòp Cùifàgàui á kǎugàu  
 p<sup>h</sup>á:ò: k'íá:hjòp kùjpà:gòj á=k<sup>h</sup>ò:\*=gó  
 three man.INV Lone.Wolf 3EMPS=be.named=INV  
 'three men (who were) named Lone Wolf'

It is impolite to use the names of most family members, especially elders and in-laws (Mooney 1898, SFN 1935). Instead, one uses relational terms for family members, and these do vary based on use. Table 4 has a small sample of these terms, of which the reference use is most common in narratives (54).

**Table 4:** Selected relational nouns

form	'father'	'mother'	'grandfather'	'female's sister'
noun (BAS)	jául /tól/	chǎu /tsó:/	kǒgí /k <sup>h</sup> ò:gi:/	ví /p'í:/
address use	Jáu /tô:/	Châu /tsô:/	Kǒ /k <sup>h</sup> ò:/	Ví /p'í:/
reference use	Jǎujǎui /tò:tôj/	Cǎucǎui /kò:kôj/	Kǒjè /k <sup>h</sup> ò:tè/	Víjè /p'í:tè/

- (54) Nǎu Jǎujǎui gàu Cǎucǎui háuigàu è cíl  
 nò tò:tôj gò kò:kôj hôjgò è=kíl  
 and:DF father:NAME and mother:NAME nearby 3DUS=dwell  
 'Now, Mom and Dad lived nearby.' (McKenzie et al. 2022: S139)

### 5.3. THE LEXICALIZATION OF NAMES

The names themselves, once they become names, do become detached from their literal meaning and are lexicalized as names for use in everyday language. The Kiowa concern with names focused largely upon knowing a name and the aesthetics of its sound, and less upon the basis of its composition. As Parker McKenzie explained (p.c.):

As long as you know a person's name you are not necessarily interested with knowing the content behind it. Anglos in contrast always ask upon hearing an Indian name, "What does it mean?" ...From a Kiowa standpoint there was no concern for a standard meaning or definition of a name composition such as Grace, Daniel, etc. The concern was with the sound of the name and the basis for which the name was made on.

The name Sétágài [sét.á:.gǎj] 'Sitting Bear' is just a name to me. I don't think of its meaning, no more than you think of Meadows as a nice, grassy pasture. In the same manner, I think of Séttháidé [sét.t'áj.dé] 'White Bear' as a name; and why bother about its meaning. Meanings can be elicited in such names as Hope, Carpenter, Base, Wagonseller, Grove, etc., but nobody bothers about their meanings.

Many names are just expressions that are accepted as nameforms... [the name] Ācàdé [á:.kǎ.dé:] translates 'Standing in the Brush.' I doubt if any Kiowa ever imagined someone standing in the brush, just as an Anglo would [probably never] imagine a flour processor when hearing the name Miller.

When non-Indians inquire as to what an Indian name means, what they actually have in mind is how it literally translates into English. Often, their preconceptions affect how they perceive Indian names. From samples shared in college classes, non-Indians often see translated Kiowa names such as Brave Wolf, Unafraid of Danger, Red Buffalo, and White Horse as "good," "interesting," or even "exciting" names. However, in translating Kiowa names such as One Needing To Be Named, Big Smallpox, Elk Tongue, Sore Mouth,

Poor Buffalo, Woman’s Heart, Flaky Nose Mucous, and Sloped Nose Tip Boy, non-Indians often respond with puzzled looks and see them as odd, strange, or ridiculous, even with the associated explanations of their basis or origin. Parker McKenzie wrote (p.c.) that this works both ways: Translations of English names like Underwood (Qíḍôḍè), Miller (Ējáuáumqí), Turnbull (Ásànécauljè) and Clearwater (Tòbóidè) sound just as ridiculous and amusing when translated into Kiowa.

## 6. KIOWA NAMES IN AMERICAN CULTURE

As Kiowas became gradually ensconced into American culture, whether willingly or not, their names and the translations thereof became features of the English used in their area and in government documents concerning them. Most Kiowas who came to be known broadly among Americans used their names translated into English, as in the Supreme Court case *Lone Wolf v Hitchcock*. A few were known by anglicizations, like Satanta. Most Kiowa family names derive from anglicizations. Among the Kiowa names that have been anglicized rather than translated, we can ascertain two broad classes: Those anglicized as part of Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) records, and those anglicized before that.

### 6.1. EARLY ANGLICIZATIONS

Before the reservation period, few Kiowa names were used in English in anglicized versions. Two of the most prominent ones were Satank (Sétǎgài) and Satanta (Séttháidè), who figured among the tribe’s most respected leaders in the late free period before the Medicine Lodge Treaty of 1867. Their names were written as such in the treaty (Mooney 1898:185-186).<sup>10</sup> As we see in Table 5, the names of Kiowas who signed the treaty were transcribed well enough to identify them (helped by the translation). Interestingly, only one name is listed with a suffix (*Sa-tan-ta*), although many of them were usually used with one. It is not clear why some names have *r*’s written in, since that sound does not occur in Kiowa. However, all the *r*’s are syllable-final with no vowel after them. We can tentatively suggest that the English transcriber spoke a non-rhotic dialect and heard final vowels as missing an /ɹ/.

Two of the names on the list are mis-transcribed. The name *Fish-e-more*, translated as ‘Stinking Saddle’ could not be Kiowa, because neither /f/, /ʃ/, nor /ɹ/ is present in the language. *Cor-beau* is the French word for ‘crow’. Mooney (1898:196) corrects these names: ‘Stinking Saddle (Blanket)’ is *Takai’-i-bodal* (Tàukàuiból) [tʰə:+kəj+bó<sup>ɖ</sup>l]. *Cor-beau* is not ‘Crow’ but ‘Crow Bonnet’: *Gaa’-bohón* (Càuàubòhòn) [kə.ə:+bò.(h)òn], mistranscribed perhaps as the result of another intrusive *r*.

The other names are still often poorly transcribed, but recognizable.

**Table 5:** Kiowa signatories of the Medicine Lodge Treaty (1867)

Name in the treaty	Kiowa pronunciation	English translation
Satank	sét.á:.gǎ(-j)	Sitting Bear (Satank)
Sa-tan-ta	sét.t’áj-dé	White Bear (Satanta)
Wa-toh-konk	kʷú:.tò.kʰò.gǎ	Black Eagle
Ton-a-en-ko	t’è.né.ən.góp(-tè)	Kicking Eagle/Bird
Fish-e-more	—	Stinking Saddle
Ma-ye-tin	mà:.jǐ:.tʰèn(-dè)	Woman’s Heart
Sa-tim-gear	sét.èm.k’í:.à:(-tè)	Stumbling Bear
Sit-par-ga [Sa-pa-ga]	sét.pá:.gò(-j)	One Bear
Cor-beau	kə.ə:.bò.(h)òn	The Crow
Sa-ta-more	sét.èm.mò:	Bear Lying Down

<sup>10</sup> The original treaty can be read at the U.S. National Archives: <https://catalog.archives.gov/id/179022743>

Another early transcription that had a lasting effect involves the name translated as ‘Little Bluff’. The man bearing this name was the last principal chief of the Kiowas, from 1833 until his 1866 death. His name has been transcribed variously as Dohausen, Tohausen, Dohäsan, Dohosan, Tauhawsin, or even Touhason (Jordan 2011). His actual Kiowa name was Jòhâusàn [tò.hô:.sàn], and it did not mean ‘Little Bluff’. First, the word *jòhâu* /tòhô:/ does not describe a bluff itself but rather a concavity in a bluff face. Second, while the stem *sân* /sân/ does translate as ‘small’, here it was used not to describe the concavity but to distinguish the son from the father Jòhâu [tò.hô:] (see section 3.2).

## 6.2. BIA CONVERSIONS AND CORRUPTIONS

The largest number of anglicized Kiowa names came from the enrollment process. As Kiowas were included in Indian censuses by the U.S. government, their names were transcribed by Bureau of Indian Affairs agents as close to the mark as they could manage. However, that often was not particularly close. Between varying phonotactics, untrained ears, and clipped names, the transcriptions and translations have sometimes proven inaccurate compared to the original Kiowa name, or difficult to understand. Nonetheless, many of these anglicizations later became treasured family names, for the original bearer kept it as a last name.

In BIA files, the name-marking suffix *-/dé/*, whether as [dé] or [té], is routinely transcribed as *-ty* (/ti/). This mistake can be explained by phonotactics. The short Kiowa vowel /e/ is a bit higher and a lot shorter than the English /ei/, so it is easy of Anglophones to mistake it for /i/. Kiowa voiced consonants have a relatively high Voice-Onset Timing compared to English ones. As a result, English speakers—even linguists like Harrington (1928)—often mix up /d/ and /t/ in Kiowa.

Many names with syllables ending in *-/l/* are transcribed as *-dle* or *-dle* in BIA records, because the Kiowa syllable-final /l/ is lightly obstruentized as [ᵈl] (Watkins 1984). English speakers who are not used to Kiowa hear it as [d]. Scholars routinely made similar transcription errors, so it is no surprise that BIA agents made them. For instance, Mooney (1898:215) transcribes Măukàupèl [mɔ:.kʰò.pʰᵈᵈl] ‘Flat Nose’ (seen in (20a)), as *Măñ-kopédal*. Family names that underwent this process include Tsoodle, agency spelling Tsoodle, which in Kiowa is Xóól [ts’ó:.óᵈl] ‘Stone Carrier’, Odle-ty (Áuljè [ɔᵈl-tè]) ‘Hair’, Guo-laddle (Gúl-êl [gúᵈl.ᵈᵈl]) ‘Big Red’, and Kau-laddle (Cáulàljè [kɔᵈl+aᵈl-tè]) ‘Bison Chaser’. The name Paddlety, agency spelling Paddle-ty, emerges from the intersectional effect of several of these factors. In Kiowa, the name is Fál-jè [páᵈl-tè], which alone would mean ‘Bedding’, but is in fact clipped from the full name Fàlqâujétàlyĩ [pàᵈl.k’ó:.té.tʰà.lì:] ‘Knock-Kneed Little Boy’, with the addition of the suffix *-jé* /té/ that was also mis-transcribed.

Nasal vowels are usually transcribed in BIA records with a written *n*, since English requires a nasal consonant to end up with a nasal vowel. Hence the intrusive *n*’s in Satanta or Satank. The name Ákâudòṅṅ (19a) was listed as A-kaun-do-ah. Áfítâu (22a) [á:.pì:.tʰò:] became A-pe-ah-to(ne).<sup>11</sup> Coda nasal consonants were often misheard, though, as in Ákâudòṅṅ’s transcription which is missing the /n/ that is pronounced.

Syllabification is also affected by anglicization. For instance, Bo-in-de for Bóidè [bòj-dè] ‘Very Light/Pale’ or Em-hoo-lah for Èmhólà [èṃ.hóᵈl.à:] ‘They had been killing them’. The name Kom-sa-taddle results from resyllabification leading to clipping. It comes from Kòmsétàlyĩ [kʰòṃ.sé.tʰà.lì:] ‘Worn Out Tipi Cover Boy’, where the /l/ is syllabified

<sup>11</sup> In the 1904 Census he is more accurately listed as Ah-pe-ah-to (entry 402)



with the final vowel and palatalized,<sup>12</sup> rather than in the BIA name where it is syllabified with the /t<sup>h</sup>a/, and the final vowel dropped.

Not all the translations were erroneous. Some helpfully indicate phonological processes which have since fallen out of use in younger generations. For instance, around the turn of the 20th century, the sequence /gu/ was pronounced [g<sup>w</sup>u], and vowels ending in /i:/ often had an off-glide giving [i<sup>a</sup>] (Watkins 1984). In the name Yígǔ (48), the old pronunciation [jǐ:<sup>a</sup>.g<sup>w</sup>ù:] shows in the anglicized Ye-ah-quo.

In rarer instances the name is difficult to see in an anglicization. For instance, one well known family name is Sankadota [seŋ.kə'dou.rə], anglicized in records as San-ka-do-ta. It comes from the Kiowa name Xǒgàdáúde [ts'ó:gà.dó:dè], 'Medicine Plume/Downy Feather'.

### 6.3. CLIPPING OBSCURES THE TRANSLATION OF NAMES INTO ENGLISH

The origin of many names is difficult to ascertain because they result from clippings and many people are not aware of the full form. For instance, the Kiowa family name Saumty, derived from the BIA transcription *Saum-ty*, was the personal name of Sáumjè [sǒm.tè] (1854–1919), who adopted the name Billy Saumty. The name seems to denote only *sáum* /sǒm/ 'watch (as a spectacle)' and the name-marking suffix *-jè*. On its own that could either be translated as 'one who was watched' or 'watcher', although in either case the name would be derived from an ungrammatical expression (44). This suggests the name was clipped, a suggestion affirmed by several elders, who could offer no clear translation beyond "having seen something." Alice Todome, the granddaughter of Billy Saumty, provided his full name, which was a complete sentence.<sup>13</sup>

- (55) Áqàjàisàumjàuà [á.k'jà.tàj.sǒm.tó:à:] 'They Had Been Looking Upon Him with Honor'  
 á\*=k'jàtáj+sǒm+tó:-á:  
 3EMPA:3SGO=warrior+watch+act:PFV-ALL.DISTR  
 'they had been watching his war deeds and marveling / as a chief'.

The name refers to a war action performed by Satank/Sitting Bear, who with a lance fought a prolonged and mounted fight near the Mexican border against a Mexican trooper bearing a sabre. Sustaining multiple sabre cuts, his bravery and fortitude were noticed by others who bestowed the name upon him, which he later gave to his nephew Billy Saumty.

Other names were misconstrued because the translator did not realize it was clipped. For instance, Mooney (1898:215) lists *E'pea* as one of the Kiowa prisoners sent to Fort Marion, with the translation "We-(they)-are-afraid-of-him." Mooney's list was "furnished by the Indians," he writes, so we can assume the translations were, too. The translation would be correct if the name was É-fěà [é.pé:à:]. However, it is actually É-fěà [é.pè:à:], a clipping of the longer name Zébàutéfěà.

- (56) É-fěà [é.pé:à:] 'We-(they)-are-afraid-of-him'  
 é\*=pé:-á:  
 3EMPA:3SGO=fear:PFV-ALL.DISTR  
 'They have been afraid of him.'

<sup>12</sup> It was palatalized at the time; in modern speakers this is pronounced ending with [li:], but the /l/ is still part of the last syllable.

<sup>14</sup> Alice Saumty Todome to the author, 7/9/1993. See also Hayne (1944:10). Some individuals spell the name as *Saumpty*, which reflects a common insertion process in English.

(57) Zébàutéfèà̃ [zé.bòt.é.pê:.à:] ‘Coming Along Straightening An Arrow’.

zébòt      é=pê:.\*-á:  
 arrow      3SGA:3INVO=straighten:PFV-ALL.DISTR  
 ‘He’s coming along straightening an arrow.’

#### 6.4. TRANSLATING AN ENGLISH NAME INTO KIOWA

In the other direction, it is no easy task to translate an English name into Kiowa. Doing so presumes that Kiowa names have a standardized meaning or convention, and several facts show they do not. As we have seen, at any given time a name only refers to a single person. Two individuals would not have the same name simultaneously, and one way around this was to vary the names slightly, including adding different stems or suffixes that are not included in the translation. Also, some names have idiosyncratic tones (22e). Many names that are translated in the ‘classic’ Indian-name style (like ‘Running Bear’) are actually sentences in Kiowa (‘A bear has been running along’), and many other names are clippings of such sentences.

Finally, the lexical space of Kiowa words does not match those for English, making exact translations difficult or impossible. Jòhâusàn’s name exemplifies this problem. More common animal names also pose this difficulty. Kiowas had many words for deer, elk, and buffalo, depending on the age, sex, subspecies, or quality. However, these were usually translated simply as ‘deer’, ‘elk’ or ‘buffalo’. For example, the name Pàugúl [pʰò:.gú<sup>d</sup>l] ‘Red Buffalo’ is built with the word *páu* /pʰó:/, which specifically means ‘buffalo bull’. Meanwhile, Cáu<sup>d</sup>lònjè [kó<sup>d</sup>l.tʰò<sup>n</sup>.tè] ‘Buffalo Tail’ uses the word *cául* /kól/, a more general word for ‘buffalo’ or ‘bovine’.

Another common translation difficulty involves names with ‘bird’ or ‘eagle’. In the modern language, *cǔjò* /kú:.tò/ denotes ‘bird’ and the compound *cǔjòhǐ* /kú:.tò:.\*+hǐ:/ ‘bird+genuine’ denotes ‘eagle’. In names, though, the archaic word *thèné* /t’è:né/ ‘bird’, unused in the modern language, is often used rather than *cǔjò*. Moreover, as demonstrated in (58), either word sometimes is translated as ‘bird’ and other times ‘eagle’.

(58)

- a. Cǔjòkǒgái [kú:.tò.kʰó:.gǎj] ‘Black Eagle, Black Bird’
- b. Cǔjòthǎgài [kú:.tò.t’á:.gǎj] ‘Handsome Eagle’
- c. Cǔjòzèlbè [kú:.tò.zè<sup>d</sup>l.bè]  
     or Thènézèlbé [t’è:.nè.zè<sup>d</sup>l.bé] ‘Dangerous/Fierce Eagle’
- d. Thènébǎudài [t’è:.nè.bó:.dǎj] ‘Appearing Eagle’
- e. Thènéàngóp [t’è:.nè.àngóp] ‘Kicking Bird’

### 7. ADDITIONAL FACTS ABOUT KIOWA NAMES

#### 7.1. ACQUISITION AND TRANSFER OF NAMES

A person did not name themselves. In traditional culture, many children were named by their father, with no ceremony or significant delay after birth beyond a few months. Others were named by a grandfather if one was around. If a family could not figure out a name, they might pay someone esteemed to offer one, especially a renowned warrior or the keeper of a Tǎimé [tʰǎjmé] medicine bundle.

Many Kiowa men earned a new name in adulthood. Oftentimes a young man would be granted the name of an ancestor by someone who had possession of it, and wanted to wait until the young man proved himself worthy to bear it before granting it. Other times, the name would be that of a living elder: The older man would give his name to a younger

man who had proven himself valiantly. In that case there might be a ceremony, if the name-giver was prestigious enough. The name giver would then go without a name until other people gave him a new one (SFN 1935: 393-394).

Occasionally a grown man was given a new name that reflects their own deeds or traits. In the mid-1800s, a few Kiowa men had as many as four to eight names throughout their lifetime. Elders who acquired new names often were given ones with stems indicating their elder status (section 4.2).

Kiowa women less commonly acquired new names, lacking the outlet for glorious deeds. Some new names arose if a family member died and had a similar-sounding name. Other times, an elder gave her name to a younger woman she found worthy.

## 7.2. NAME TABOO

Kiowas did not have a significant name taboo. Mooney (1898:152 *et seq.*) mentions one on several occasions, as does Parsons, and some others, but what aversion existed was limited in scope and length, and is essentially abandoned today. If a person died before giving away a name, family would avoid using words in the name, or even some that sounded like it, for a period between one to ten years (SFN 1935: 393). Sometimes a woman would receive a new name if it sounded too much like the deceased's name. After this period, though, the word was used again, and the name could be given out to some other worthy person.

In any case, what aversion existed has since ceased. Parker, born in 1897, wrote "Exaggeration!" in the margin of his copy of Mooney (p. 152). Speakers in the 1970s, making recordings for the Kiowa Culture Program, had no problem using the names of deceased Kiowas when talking about their histories and deeds. In one recording, Belle Kayitah specifically asserts she is not afraid to say the names of the dead (A. McKenzie et al 2022). Modern speakers also make no mention of a taboo.

## 7.3. MODERN KIOWA NAMING PRACTICE

As Kiowa culture has adapted to a modern life, the practices of naming children has changed as well. Nowadays, names are typically given to children in a naming ceremony at a family gathering, powwow, society dance, or Native American Church meeting that serves as a focal point of indigenous community life. Family and friends are invited and fed, and an esteemed elder is asked to provide a name and its story accompanied by prayer.

Fitting with the change in society, where few men head off to war anymore, and even fewer practice the old religion, the practice of commemorative names has largely fallen out of use. Children today typically are given the names of ancestors (which can be commemorative), or names that reflect the child's characteristics.

Also, men only rarely acquire a new name later on in life. One case involved an elder granting a young man a name reflecting his efforts in teaching the Kiowa language. As more indigenous cultural touchstones are revived, perhaps more such signs of prowess will be seen in naming going forward.

## 8. CONCLUSION

This article has offered a detailed look into Kiowa personal names, combining a detailed linguistic analysis with a broad look at the social and historical context that names arose from. It demonstrates for researchers that a full accounting of Indian names requires both linguistic and social analysis. It also broadens our understanding of Indian naming practices, showing that Kiowa names for other Kiowas were rarely about the person being named.

Beyond the research community, we also hope that this article offers Kiowa community members additional resources to better investigate the histories and constructions of cherished names in their families. Lastly, we hope that this article can help correct some of the misconceptions about Indian names in Euro-American culture. Kiowa names show values and poetic qualities that reflect a distinct Kiowa worldview, that most English translations erase.

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