

THE UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA

THE COMPOUNDING OF WORDS

IN THE

COMANCHE INDIAN LANGUAGE

A THESIS

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MASTER OF ARTS

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

BY

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To my wife and daughter,  
Rozella Harder and Margaret Ann Becker,  
this work is affectionately dedicated.

for their scholarly guidance and for  
their constructive criticism in the  
preparation of this study.

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To Professor Sardis Roy Hadsell,  
Professor Lawrence N. Morgan, and to  
Professor Andrew Robert Ramey, I wish  
to express my sincere appreciation  
for their scholarly guidance and for  
their constructive criticism in the  
preparation of this study.

*H. J. Becker*

## PREFACE

"Our national duty and honor are peculiarly concerned in this matter of the study of aboriginal American languages, as the most fertile and important branch of American archaeology. Europeans accuse us, with too much reason, of indifference and inefficiency with regard to preserving memorials of the races whom we have dispossessed and are dispossessing, and to promoting a thorough comprehension of their history. Indian scholars, and associations which devote themselves to gathering together and making public linguistic and other archaeological materials for construction of the proper ethnology of the continent, are far rarer than they should be among us. Not a literary institution in our country has among its teachers one whose business it is to investigate the languages of our aboriginal populations, and to acquire and diffuse true knowledge respecting them and their history. So much the more reason have we to be grateful to the few who are endeavouring to make up our deficiencies by self-prompted study, and especially to those self-denying men who, under circumstances of no small difficulty are or have been devoting themselves to the work of collecting and giving to the world original materials. The Smithsonian Institution has recently taken upon itself the office of encouraging, guiding, and giving effect to the labours of collectors, under special advantages derived from its relation to the Government, with laudable zeal,

and with the best promise of valuable results. No department of inquiry, certainly, within the circle of the historical sciences, has a stronger claim upon the attention of such a national institution; and it becomes all Americans to countenance and aid its efforts by every means of their power."<sup>1</sup>

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1. William Dwight Whitney, Language and the Study of Language, New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1901, p. 352.

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## INTRODUCTION

The American Indian belongs to one of the five racial divisions of the human family. He is by no means the least significant nor the least endowed, although his race is the smallest in numbers.

The physical resemblances and the extreme diversity of language seems to be a fair indication of the great length of time the Indians must have inhabited America. About fifty-five or sixty linguistic divisions are found in America north of Mexico. These languages, however, differ so radically that one language cannot be understood by a person of another tribe. Structurally there is also a great variety.

The Indians as a rule have natural artistic powers and poetic instincts which are exceptional, but which have had little opportunity for expression. Having no written language the Indian must store in his memory and pass on to his tribe the accumulated knowledge and wisdom which may have come to his attention.

A large number of religious songs have been translated, not only from the English, but also from the Spanish and German languages into the Comanche. Attempts at translations of parts of the Bible have been made, but not with any great success, probably because there is no written vocabulary which is reliable and dependable.

One of the sub-divisions of Shoshone is the Comanche. There are various traditions as to the early location of the Comanches: "(1) Omaha tradition avers that Comanches were on the Middle Loup River in the nineteenth century, (2) Crow tradition maintains that they lived northward in the Snake River Region, (3) Bourgement found a Comanche tribe on the upper Kansas River in 1724, (4) Pike in his explorations in 1810 indicates that the Comanche territory bordered the Kiowa on the North, the Comanches occupying the head waters of the upper Red River, Arkansas, and Rio Grande. The Shoshoni (Comanches) had pushed across California; dispossessed the Mariposan tribes thus occupying nearly the whole of Nevada, California, and the S. E. part of Oregon."<sup>1</sup>

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1. U. S. Bureau of American Ethnology, (7th Annual Report, 1885-1886) Washington: Government Printing Office, 1891, p. 109.

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"Another wide-spread sub-family, including the Shoshone and Comanche, ranged from the shores of Texas northwestward to the borders of California and the territory of the Althapaskas."<sup>2</sup>

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2. Whitney, Language and the Study of Language, p. 351

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The Comanche is the language of one of the Shoshone group which today lives in the region between the Wichita



Mountains of Oklahoma on the north, the Red River on the south, the main line of the Rock Island railroad on the east, and the North Fork of the Red River on the west. Another group of Comanches, however, is located in Texas, near Quanah and Nocona.

The study of the Comanche language by comparative methods is rather complicated because of associations of tribe with tribe, of Indians with Europeans, removal of tribes from one locality to another, and the spread of civilization. This often has led to a jargon language which in many cases is considerably developed. I do not wish to infer, however, that the Comanche is a jargon language. The great simplicity of the Indian's thoughts and the influence of his surroundings, the wild tempests, the water-falls, the woods and the skies, have led him to the use of figures, elements of poetry, and an eloquence that is remarkable in its appeal. This element of strength which is in evidence in the Comanche language is explained in the following quotation:

"Speaking of the poverty of his language, as many have done, whereby it is ill adapted as a means of eloquence in expression, great injustice is done to the Indian languages which are languages that are rich in those words or parts of speech called verbs, which express action, and in which regard, no element in a finished language for the purposes of

expression of thought was wanting; and as for nouns and substantives, his language was not wanting in any respect as to those objects with which he was surrounded."<sup>1</sup>

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1. Elijah M. Haines, The American Indian, Chicago: The Mas-sin-na-gan Company, 1888, p. 501.

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The Comanche is one of the many linguistic dialects which does not have a written form, and therefore most of the information in regard to the language has come through personal interviews with early day cattlemen, traders, old tribal leaders, missionaries, government workers, employees, agents, and superintendents who are familiar with the language. With regard to the language itself my information must come from the accumulated knowledge of the Indian and my own linguistic familiarity with it.

The Comanche in its youth was probably uninfluenced by other languages, and had the power of growing words. These words grow from a stem root, and have a family likeness, branching out into various derivative words. Slurring extends over syllables and from one word to another, such as the elision occurring in French. The Comanche language uses a limited number of sounds, many of these being consonant mute sounds, which are never excessively large in any particular dialect. Easy communication requires limited

phonetic resources, because the Indian is inclined to use signs with his verbal conversation.

It is worth while to take into consideration the articulate speech of the Comanches in addition to a study of the grammatical structure. In a comparison of the English sounds the following letters are entirely omitted: f, j, l, x, z, and g, the last letter, however, appearing in a sort of guttural way related to the letter k. Sounds appearing in the Comanche which have no English equivalent are: wr, vw, and rd, these letters combined really form definite phonetic sounds. The letter r in both cases above is trilled, as it is in practically all words where it is used, except in a case where the letter following receives the greater prominence. 'A' and certain other letters are used as inseparable prefixes or as prepositions especially in the formation of compound words. This is done ostensibly for the sake of euphony.

#### Pronunciation

##### Vowels

ä	long as in English art, father
a	long as in English ate
e	long as in English me
e	short as in English met
i	long as in English lie, rise
i	short as in English pin
o	long as in English go
oo	long as in English soon
ü	long as in English tune
u	short as in English run

Diphthongs

ai	as	ai	in	aisle
ea	as	ea	in	'nēä'
oi	as	oy	in	boy

Consonants

r	always trilled	m	English
ch	sound of modern German (acht), also as in choose	n	English
ts	tongue formed to say t plus hissing plus ah	p	English
k	always k, as in kind	q	English
b	English sound--often p	s	English
c	sound of k	t	English
d	English	v	English
h	English	w	English
		y	English

Personal Pronouns

	Singular		Plural	
Person	Comanche	English	Comanche	English
1st	nēä'tak	myself	(No plurals but the emphasized form for we or us, tan'se, ourselves, is used.)	
2nd	per'tak	himself,		
3rd	(none)	herself		

"The following is a table of numerals of the Shoshone language to which the Comanche is related:

Shoshone	English	Comanche
simitich	one	semnus
hwat	two	waha
pite	three	pahu
hwatchiwit	four	hagar-sowa ?
managet	five	mawaka
navite	six	
tatsuit	seven	
nywatsuit	eight	nakua-wachota
shimeromen	nine	1
shimmer	ten	shurmun"

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1. John Wesley Powell, Nineteenth Annual Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology, 1897-1898, Washington: Government Printing Office, 1900, p. 869.

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The purpose of this thesis is to make a study of the compounding of words as found in the primitive Comanche language, as compared with the compounding of words in Anglo-Saxon, Middle English, Modern English, and German. In the study of compounds I shall limit my discussions almost exclusively to compounds formed by nouns, and those formed by combining a noun with an adjective.

In studying and making comparisons of compounds in the various languages with those found in the Comanche Indian language, the question naturally arises as to whether or not the compounds of languages and especially of primitive languages follow a uniform rule or scale.

It is a known fact that compounding is one of the methods used to form new words in practically all languages. I shall give examples and show by references that compounding is not merely one method, but that it is the most common method used, and that in the primitive Comanche language compounding of words comes before a period of extended borrowing.

In order to do this I have devoted a few paragraphs to the historical facts dealing with the Comanche tribe, as to original and present location, and general information concerning the linguistic stock. An entire chapter will be devoted to the language itself.

In dealing with the Comanche language it is necessary to touch upon its classification, nature, development, evolution, as well as upon the grammatical structure, vocabulary, alphabet, pronunciation, and phonology.

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1. George D. Yule, *A Grammar of the Comanche Language*, New York: Macmillan Company, 1913, p. 11.

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Dehabel gives the following definition: "Two words may be joined and the result called a compound word. The words, i. e., by composition. The words are combined together to form a whole; it is implied to mean that the two single ideas combine in one way or another in the compound idea."

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2. Otto Dehabel, *Historical Grammar of the Comanche Language*, London: Macmillan Company, 1909, Reprinted 1913, p. 11.

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## CHAPTER II

### DEFINITIONS OF COMPOUNDS

There are various definitions of compounds, all of which, however, carry with them some fundamental principles.

"A compound is a word formed by the close union of two or more words whose meanings blend so thoroughly as to produce one single idea. The natural tendency is to distinctly mark this oneness of meaning by a oneness in form, that is by writing together the different words of a compound: Dampfschiffart, steam navigation." ----- "A compound may consist of two words or several, it can as a rule have only two compound elements--the basal component-----and the modifying component."<sup>1</sup>

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1. George O. Curme, A Grammar of the German Language, New York: Macmillan Company, 1913, pp. 479, 480.

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Behaghel gives the following definition, "New words may be formed and are daily formed, by using already existing words, i. e., by composition. Two words are connected together to form a third; it is implied thereby that the two simple ideas combine in one way or another in the compound idea."<sup>2</sup>

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2. Otto Behaghel, Historical Grammar of the German Language, London: Macmillan Company, 1899, Reprinted 1915, p. 65.

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Compounds differ in nature and "Languages differ in the accuracy with which they distinctly mark compounds as such by writing the parts in one word."<sup>1</sup>

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1. Curme, op. cit., p. 479

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Curme again states, "One of the components is often shortened by dropping a word, as the natural tendency is toward simpler forms." This tendency is found very apparent in the Comanche Indian language and evidences will be shown in a later chapter. On the same page the author says, "Since every part of speech except the article can become the basal component, all parts of speech except the article can form compounds."<sup>2</sup> We see examples of this in the German, as the

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2. Ibid., p. 480

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numeral dreizehn, the compound adjective blaugrun, Gartenbaum, und Baumgarten. Often addition takes place as Butterbrot, butter and bread. The Comanche language is no exception to this rule of compounding as may be seen in words such as Ta-a'pah, day-father or God, or in the formation of numerals, maw'wa-ka - symen, five tens or fifty, and nak'sa-re, ear dog, or trail hound.

Compounds are of twofold character. "The composition may be of a twofold kind. First, the two ideas are upon an equal footing and -----second, the two ideas are of unequal



importance as regards the whole; the less important and determining part stands first, the more important in the second place."<sup>1</sup>

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1. Behaghel, op. cit., p. 65

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Whitney states: "That we are in the constant habit of putting together two independent vocables to form a compound word, is an obvious and familiar fact.

Instances of such words are: fear-inspiring, god-like, break-neck, house-top. They are substitutes for the phrases inspiring fear, like a god, apt to break one's neck, and top of a house. Our common talk is strewn with such words, and so gradual is the transition to them from the mere collocations only, or with a hyphen, as loose compounds. Other words like dial-plate, well-being, usage so far recognizes for compounds that they are always written together, sometimes with the hyphen, and sometimes without. Others like godlike and herself, are so grown together by long contact, by habitual connection, that we hardly think of them as having a dual nature. Again there is fortnight, altered both in pronunciation and in spelling from fourteen nights out of which it grew. Such again is our familiar word breakfast. We gave this name to our morning meal, because it broke, or interrupted, the longest fast of the day, that which includes the night's sleep. We say, 'I broke fast at such an hour this morning.' They who first

ventured to say, ' breakfasted', were guilty of as heinous a violation of grammatical rule as he would be who should now declare, 'take-dinnered', instead of 'I took dinner'.<sup>1</sup>

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1. Whitney, op. cit., pp. 55, 56.

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Compounds may be classified in various ways, according to composition, parts of speech used, and modifying elements.

Curme gives this definition: "A compound proper has two components, which do not stand in any self-evident syntactical relation to each other. It is formed by joining the stems of two words without the aid of inflectional endings between them: Bern-baum, Haus-herr. The peculiarity of composition proper is that the ideas which lie in the two components are so thoroughly fused together that one idea results from the union."<sup>2</sup>

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2. Curme, op. cit., p. 481

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He further classifies the compound elements and defines Composition Improper: "The different compound elements of such compounds, and also those of proper compounds, have in a number of cases become so contracted and corrupted in the course of time that they are no longer clearly distinguished, and the words which they form are not always felt

as compounds; Junker, young nobleman, from M.H.G. juncherre =  
junger Herr.<sup>1</sup>"

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1. Curme, ibid., p. 483

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In the same chapter he defines Loose Compounds,  
"-----words, mainly new formations, have not as the above  
mentioned compounds, a basal component and a modifying com-  
ponent, -----but form a loose compound in which the elements  
stand only in a grammatical relation to each other. Such a  
compound is in fact only the syntactical fragment of a sen-  
tence or indeed a whole sentence which has been written to-  
gether as one word: dasschwarzrotgoldene Banner Deutschlands,  
consisting of the black, red, gold banner of Germany."<sup>2</sup>

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2. Ibid., p. 486

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The following divisions of compounds are worthy of  
consideration, although not all of these classes will be  
used. "Compound Nouns (i) noun and noun; (ii) noun and  
adjective; (iii) noun and verb; (iv) noun and adverb;  
(v) noun and preposition, and (vi) verb and adverb. Com-  
pound adjectives, compound verbs, and adverbs."<sup>3</sup>

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3. J. M. D. Meiklejohn, The English Language, Boston:  
D. C. Heath and Company, 1904, pp. 116, 117, 118.

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### CHAPTER III

#### THE PRIMITIVE NATURE OF COMANCHE COMPOUNDS

It appears that compounding is one of the oldest and simplest devices used to supply new names or words in languages. Behaghel calls compounding "Diese <sup>1</sup>älteste und einfachste Art".

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1. Behaghel, Die Deutsche Sprache, Zweite Auflage, Leipzig: G. Freytag, 1902, p. 152

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Examples will be given and comparisons made with Teutonic languages to show that compounding of words is not only an old method of word formation, but a device which is preferable to that of borrowing.

If compounding of words does come before a period of borrowing in Teutonic languages, does the Comanche Indian language of southwestern Oklahoma follow the same rules of word formation?

Although the laws of language appear to be entirely unknown to the Comanches, and linguistic phenomena never rise into the consciousness of primitive man, the compounding of words is one of the most common methods used to form new names or words.

It is true that borrowing of words takes place and is resorted to only when the native language fails or when there is close contact with foreign languages. Strange to say the Comanche, although in close contact with Spanish

speaking people in New Mexico and Colorado, shows very little evidence of borrowing.

As the Indian came into contact with unfamiliar objects he tended to describe them by the use of compounded words and figures of speech. "The whites brought to America a host of things which were utterly strange to him, and which he could comprehend only by comparing them to familiar objects. Thus he fabricated a number of quaint metaphors which seemed indicative of poetic fancy; "fire-water" is a stock example. In every language too, much primitive poetry is embedded. Many of our commonest words were once bold figures of speech. Their poetry emerges anew if they are translated literally into another tongue. "Dark and Bloody Ground" gives us a much deeper thrill than "Kentucky" could have given the redman. Thus Indian efforts to speak English, and English efforts to translate Indian, no doubt added to the savage's reputation as a coiner of images."

In speaking of Mackenzie's "Man of Feeling", which shows how the Indian talks, Fairchild says: "The balanced, image-laden cadences remind one of Ossian; it seems that the Indian sings pseudo-Celtic songs, and speaks pseudo-Celtic<sup>1</sup> prose."

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1. Hoxie Neale Fairchild, The Noble Savage, New York: Columbia University Press, 1928, p. 492.

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The Comanche name for whiskey is Bosa-pah, literally translated, crazy water. The Comanche name for soldier, eck'-sap-a-nah, red abdomen, is much more descriptive than one which merely designates a soldier by some non-figurative word, or the word o'hap-te-po'ewe, yellow metal, gold, is more figurative than our own term.

"There remains for consideration, of the recognized great families of human language, only that one which occupies the continent of North and South America-----Dialectic division is carried to its extreme among them; the isolating and diversifying tendencies have had full course, with little counter-action from the conserving and assimilating forces."<sup>1</sup>

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1. Whitney, op. cit., p. 346

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"It tends to the excessive and abnormal agglomeration of distinct significant elements in its words; whereby on the one hand, cumbrous compounds are formed as the names of objects, and a character of tedious and time-wasting polysyllabisur is given to the language--see, for example, the three to ten syllabled numeral and pronominal words of our western Indian tongues."<sup>2</sup>

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2. Ibid., p. 348

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Examples of this are found in the Comanche numerals, as one-thousand and eleven, pěä'-Symet-syme-matoi'kut, big hundred, one added to ten; and in names as: koon'a-wabe-poke,

fire-wagon-horse, literally meaning train. At the present time, however, the new form koon-a-wagon is coming into use almost exclusively. The word wagon, of course, has been borrowed from the English.

Compounding is common in the old Anglo-Saxon and on down to the present day English, while in German it sometimes reaches colossal proportions. "A compound word is formed by the close union of two or more words whose meanings blend so thoroughly as to produce one single idea. The natural tendency is to distinctly mark this oneness of meaning by a oneness in form, that is, by writing together the different words of a compound."<sup>1</sup>

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1. Curme, op. cit., p. 479

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This same type of compounding is used quite extensively in the Comanche, and is not without its advantage, for it gives the substance of a whole thought or sentence in one compounded word. Such words might be classified as being only syntactical relations, however, I am strongly inclined to believe that the Indian thinks of the entire group of words in terms of a single unit. This same tendency is evidenced in practically all of the noun-compounded words and also those long words which are formed by the composition of other parts of speech. Such words are: Ei(t)-hanit, bad deed, or evil, but literally translated

eit, bad; nohin', anything, mahanit do, or do anything bad; cha-hin'a-supanat, wise, but literally translated, chart, good, nohin', anything, a, euphonious prefix, ma-supana-t know, or know anything (good) well.

The word in the Comanche language forms a natural unit from which the sentence is built, and may be compared to the lengthy compounds, similarly constructed, in German. The tendency to form compound words from single units is used extensively in the Comanche. As for example the Comanche word quas, meaning tail, forms the natural unit, developing into quas'ick, last, end or later; hi'a-quas-ick, last (positive, or absolute); quas'e-tivo, meaning monkey or literally quas = tail and tivo = man; and quas'e-na-vo, meaning snake, or literally striped tail.

Other words, found in the Comanche are: woonie, meaning to see; ma-woo'nie, to look; na'woonie, mirror; na'na-woonie, (glass) or window; cha-na'woonit, beautiful, good-looking; ma'nak-woon'it, to see far.

Very often a stem word merely has a suffix or an inflectional ending which gives various meanings to the word as: her'ke, arbor; her'kee-i', umbrella; her'kee-ah', shadow; and her'kee-ad', cloud. Cloud, also, to'mo-ve.

"Any one will allow that elements distinguishable by



word-analysis which can thus be identified with independent words are thereby proved to have been themselves once in possession of an independent status in the language, and to have been actually reduced by combination to the form and office with which our analysis finds them endowed."<sup>1</sup>

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1. Whitney, op. cit. p. 252

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In the light of these considerations let us examine a single word in the Comanche language, the word ka-to'ka-pah. It comes to us in the form of three distinct words which I recognize as separate Comanche words. Ka-to'ka-pah means kerosene. Ka is the regular word for no, to'ka means dark or night, pah is the Comanche word for water. Therefore the meaning by translation is: no-dark-water, which word is used in the Comanche rather than a new coined word or the English word kerosene, or its equivalent compound coal-oil.

"Whenever adjacent concepts are condensed into one, the newly created concept contains a larger number of elements than either of the two original concepts, and its sphere is therefore narrower. This fusion of concepts finds its linguistic expression in two ways, namely, (1) by the reduction, and (2) by the complete loss of one of the names of either concept. With the former there is a modification

of the phonetic form and in the latter the change of meaning is not externally indicated. -----The psychological process is first juxtaposition, then synthesis, complete fusion of two words, and formal abbreviation. One element must be dominant, 'black-bird'<sup>1</sup>".

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1. Hanns Oertel, Lectures on the Study of Language, New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1902, p.312-315.

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"A compound may consist of two words or several, it can as a rule have only two compound elements--the basal component, which contains the more general idea, and the modifying component, which contains the more special meaning, usually some essential modification of the meaning of the basal component, and hence accented; Zweigeisenbahn, a branch railroad, Vaterlands-liebe, love of native land. Each element can thus be simple or compound.

One of the components is often shortened by dropping a word, as the natural tendency is toward simpler forms: Bahnhof, railroad depot, for Eisenbahnhof. -----Since every part of speech except the article can become the basal component, all parts of speech except the article can form compounds; Mannes-mut, courage of a man, derselbe, the same, bergab, down hill, etc."<sup>2</sup>

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2. Curme, op. cit., p. 480

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The Comanche word for God is Ta-a'pah. Since the primitive Indian's conception of God was something akin to sun worship and not an abstraction, the Indian word translated is Ta, meaning day, and ap'ah, meaning father. Therefore the word means Day-father, or according to the primitive conception, God to him meant the sun, which in turn is the "father of day".

"So also, the mariner calls to'gal'nts'ls what we landlubbers know by the more etymologically correct, but more lumbering, name of topgallantsails, and these are but typical examples of what has been the history of language from the beginning. No sooner have men coined a word than they have begun-----to see how the time and labour expended in its utterance could be economized, how any complicated and difficult combination of sounds which it presented could be worked over into a shape better adapted for fluent utterance, how it could be contracted into briefer form, what part of it could be spared without loss of intelligibility."<sup>1</sup>

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1. Whitney, Language and the Study of Language, p. 72.

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"Change, retrenchment, mutilation, disguise of derivation is, then, both the inevitable and the desirable accompaniment of such composition as has formed the vocabulary of our spoken tongue.-----It contributes to conciseness and force of expression. It is the sign and means of the

integration of words." <sup>1</sup> This tendency is well illustrated

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1. Whitney, ibid., p. 74

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in the following Comanche words:

To'sarre	originally	Tovt-sar're,	black dog
To'pape	"	Tovt-pa'pe,	black head(ed)
To'tivo	"	Tovt-ti'vo,	black man (negro)
Ei'hanit	"	Eit-ma-han'it,	do evil (bad)

There are some words in our language, as also in the Comanche language, of composite structure, which we do not recognize as such, but upon tracing their history we can analyze them into two component parts." We will note as instances, only a familiar word or two, namely, such and which. The forms of these words in Anglo-Saxon are swylc and hwylc; with the latter of them the Scottish, whilk, for which, quite closely agrees, and they also find their near correspondents in the German solch, and welch. On following up their genealogy, from language to language of our family, we find at last that they are made up of the ancient words for so and who, with the adjective like added to each; such is so-like, 'of that likeness or sort'; which is who-like; 'of what likeness or sort'.<sup>2</sup>"

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2. Whitney, ibid., p. 57

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The following Comanche compounds I believe will show words which the Indian seldom recognizes as two independent elements: pah'choko meaning otter, literally water--old one,

or old one in the water; Nap'pywat a proper name, literally no shoes, nap shoe, wat without; Ase'nap a proper name, literally gray foot or shoe; pe'a-ate gun, literally big bow.

"The different compound elements of such compounds, and also those of proper compounds, have in a number of cases become so contracted and corrupted in the course of time that they are no longer clearly distinguished, and the words which they form are not always felt as compounds; Junker, young nobleman, from M.H.G., juncherre = junger Herr."<sup>1</sup>

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1. Curme, op. cit., p. 483

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The Comanche words to'tivo, literally black man, negro, and to'quas-se-tivo, black-tail-man, devil, show the use of 'tō', a contracted form of the word, tovt black, which has almost lost its original identity.

"This idea, however, rests entirely upon the fusion of the two components, and may often immediately disappear if the compound is separated literally into two parts. Thus Abendmahl denotes the Lord's Supper, not literally an evening meal."<sup>2</sup> Comanche eva-mora-yak'e, green-mule-cry, means

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2. Ibid., p. 481

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bull frog. Pe'tso-ta-gua'va, water turtle, but literally translated petso, waist, quava, grab or hug. It was rather a difficult task to trace the origin of such an odd compound, yet after a large number of Indians were questioned the following story tells the origin.

An Indian, while swimming, suddenly screamed that something, which later proved to be a water turtle, had seized her by the waist. This slight incident so impressed the Indians that the name of pe'tso-ta-gua'va was given it and is still in common usage.

It is of interest to make a comparison of the partial vocabularies which have been collected by others as early as 1848, with the vocabularies of the Comanches which I have collected recently. These words often show the origin of a compound and often the compound itself.

In a letter to the Department of Interior:

" May 1, 1848

Sir:

I know very little of the language of the Shoshones, and the following very limited list may not be correct.

mule	mourah	tobacco	too-parm
horse	tohuech	river, water	paah
white men	tarbabo	sun	taarpe
tin basin	wetour	moon	uphuie
pipe	parm	shirt	wanup
gun	peait	waistcoat	to-wa-nup
saddle	narrino	buffalo robe	cootche
whip	neutequar	trousers	cootche
beads	shawneep	moccasins	maunep" 1

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1. Henry Rowe Schoolcraft, Indian Tribes of the U. S., Pt. I  
Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott, 1856, p. 215, 216.

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In another letter dated May 20, 1848, the following words are given:

" Kay	no
Kaywut	none
Kayshaunt	bad or no good
Shaunt	good, or perhaps many; it commonly expresses good."2

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2. Ibid., p. 216

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The Comanche word for bad is kishwat; good, chart; and no good, kay'chart. It is interesting to note that at the present time the common word used by the Comanches to denote a bad person is kish'wat, which, according to the spelling given by Schoolcraft was originally kay-shaunt, or no good. The present Comanches use both kish'wat, meaning bad, and kay'chart, meaning no good. The author, however, is in error when he also gives the meaning 'many' to the word 'shaunt'. The word for many, sawt, is somewhat similar in sound, but is a separate element.

"The Comanches compute numbers by the fingers, the digits, by single fingers extended--decimals by both hands spread out--and the duplication of decimals, by slapping both hands together to the number required. I do not know the names of their digits, except the unit, semus; or to

what extent they carry these generic denominations; but doubt if they have any term for a higher number than twenty--after that, they resort to the names of several digits for multiplication of the decimal number."<sup>1</sup>

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1. Schoolcraft, op. cit., p. 233

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Schoolcraft's statement may easily be verified by referring to the table of numerals which has been collected in the compilation of this thesis. An exception, however, occurs in naming the digit numbers as simus, one; symen, ten; symet, hundred; pea'symet, thousand; pea-cho-ko-symet, million.

"They know and can discriminate the north star, and are guided by it in their nocturnal journeys. They call it kar-meadtasheno; literally, not moving star."<sup>2</sup> This compounded

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2. Ibid., p. 236

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word analyzed is ka, no, mēän, go, tät'sèno, star. It might even be possible to trace tät'sèno into individual syllables, thus dividing all words into monosyllabic units.

The expression "ah-hi-e"<sup>3</sup> to signify pleasure at the

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3. Ibid., p. 199

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sight of a white man is given. This word evidently is the Comanche ah-hi'ts used now as the English word 'hello', or



literally from nëä-heits; nëä, my, and heits, friend.

"It is, confessedly, illogical and impossible that the Indian's ideas should have clustered together, at the beginning, without elementary meanings. Such a botryoidal commencement of a language would be anomalous. Ideas flow together, and mix like streams. The Indian must have had some elements to make up a language from--and what were they? Earth, fire, water, wind; black, white, red; to strike, to run, to see, to eat, to live, to die, these must have been elementary ideas. Separate existence, a man, a child, a thing--these must have been elementary in the Indian mind. God, house, hill, river, plain, mountain, are terms that appear more fitted for compounds. He must have had a name for grape, before wine; for a quadruped, or bird, before he named species; for a liquid, before he specified liquids. Whatever the process of accretion was, there was a rule. It must have been known, in making compounds, what syllables or letters could be thrown away, in the new compound, without affecting the sense."<sup>1</sup>

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1. Schoolcraft, Pt. IV, p. 372.

"Shomin is a grape--but this is, itself, a dual compound. Min, in the same language, means a berry. The primordial root of this word is Sho. Hence the terms:--

A Radix	Sho	A grape
A Radix	Min	A berry
Undecided	Aubo	A liquor
A compound of four syllables	Shominaubo	Wine, that is, 1 grape-berry liquor"

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1. Schoolcraft, ibid., p. 373

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"The object in each language appears to be to press together as many root forms or particles, as are necessary to carry the several meanings; to throw away all syllables, which are merely adjuncts or affixes, and then to put the whole under the regimen of the laws of person, tense, and number. All this is done under certain leading principles of euphony. This law of euphony requires a vowel to precede or follow a consonant. Where, in a compound, two vowels would meet, one must be dropped. Where such a union would bring two consonants into juxtaposition, one must be dropped. The radix of the word, it seems, cannot be left out of the compound, but what is merely formative in the elementary shape of words, is, at once, thrown away. By these rules the botryoidal or bunch-words, as they have been called, are formed. Whatever the primary or first idea is, that comes up in an Indian's mind, whether it be a verb or noun, which is to characterize a name, there must go with it all accessory ideas, such as those of an adjective sense or of position. Compounds of only two roots sometimes

coalesce, without any syllabical change."<sup>1</sup>

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1. Schoolcraft, op. cit., p. 384

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"The principles of the language appear to correspond more with the ancient than with the modern languages."<sup>2</sup>

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2. Ibid., p. 386

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Throughout the study of the Comanche language it appears strongly evident that the natural and easy way of forming compounds has been resorted to by the Indian. In fact the Comanche Indian seems to delight in the accomplishment of forming new words for strange objects and of giving meaning to a new idea. This is especially evident in giving names to individuals. Such names are given to people of position, people whom they admire, hate, love, or in fact anyone who seems to have made a definite impression upon them.

"One of the most striking sources of Indian compounds is that derived from men's and women's names. The open firmament of heaven is the field from which these names are generally derived. They are, consequently, sublime, grandiloquent in phraseology; sometimes poetic, always highly figurative, and often bombastic or ridiculous."<sup>3</sup>

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3. Ibid., pp. 376, 377

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"Some languages allow the composition of all or nearly all types of elements. Paiute, for instance, may compound noun with noun, adjective with noun, verb with noun to make a noun, noun with verb to make a verb, adverb with verb, verb with verb. Yana, an Indian language of California, can freely compound noun with noun and verb with noun, but not verb with verb. On the other hand, Iroquois can compound only noun with verb, never noun and noun as in English or verb and verb as in so many other languages. Finally, each language has its characteristic types of order of composition. In English the qualifying element regularly precedes; in certain other languages it follows. Sometimes both types are used in the same language.<sup>1</sup>"

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1. Edward Sapir, Language, An Introduction to the Study of Speech, New York: Harcourt Brace, 1921, pp. 69, 70.

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"In general Indian names for persons are derived from the terms for sky, cloud, sun, moon, stars, mist, wind, sound, thunder, lightning, lakes, rivers, trees, animals, birds, and the like. -----In some cases they had their children named when a few days old, in others not until they had attained the age of two or three years. Almost every person received a nickname, either characteristic or arising from some peculiarity, which they often retained

after arriving at maturity."<sup>1</sup>

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1. Haines, The American Indian, p. 322

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The following is a list of names of Comanche Indians. A large number of these are titles of Indians who are still living and with whom the author is acquainted. Others are those appearing on tombstones in various Indian cemeteries.

Asenap	gray foot
Ase-tam'my	gray brother
Cha-copah'	easy to break
Cochso-que'tah	cow dung
Co'ro-pwoonie	looks brown
Cha-ten-a-yack'e	good crier
E'sa-teckwan	liar (lie-talk)
Eck'a-wi'pe	first woman
Eck'a-pe'ta	first daughter
Ka'sa-na'vo	painted feather, literally striped wing
Maw'wat	no hand
Mo'pie	owl
Mo'pe-choko-pa	old owl, (former Comanche chief)
Mo'ra-que-top	mule dung, (former Comanche chief)
Nap'py-wat	no shoes
O'hapt-e-qua'he	yellow back
O'ha-wun'nie	yellow steps
Pah'choko-to'vt	black otter
Poah'pah-cho'ko	medicine otter
Per'na-pe'ta	only daughter
Pah'choko	otter (water-old)
Po'ha-bet'chy	medicine carrier
Po'ko-a-too'ah	colt (horse-child)
Que'nah-tosavit	white eagle
Qua'va-a-ye'tchy	hugs in the morning
Quas-se-yah'	tail-lift
Saw'peten	comes often
Tah'kah-per	poor one
Ta'by-yetch	sunrise
To'pape	black head
To'mo-a-too'ah	sky child

Tis'che-woon'ie	looks ugly
Ta'yetchy	rises at daybreak
To'sa-woonit	looks white
Tip'e-konnie	rock house
Ta'by-woonie	sees the day
Ta'by-to'savit	white day
To-bits-a-ku'mah	real husband
To'sarre	black dog
Tooah-woon'ie	looks like a child
Wer'se-pappy	curly-head
Yanny-va-too'ah	laughing child
Yer'a-petun	came in the evening
Yack'e-pete	crying daughter

--

Compounds formed by a noun with a noun are very numerous in the Comanche. Probably the next largest group consists of combinations of noun with adjective. It will be noted, however, that the Comanche lends itself readily to compounds formed by other parts of speech. In the case of the compound formed by a noun, verb, and adjective or other parts of speech it is evident that this type may become extremely long, and might be classed as a syntactical relation by some authorities. In most cases, however, the Indian recognizes the group as expressing a single unit idea.

The reader will note that the word a'pah, father, which is given in the vocabulary, might have been omitted, but since it appears again in the compound word Ta'a-pah, God, or day-father, it has been necessary to include it as a word or stem upon which or from which compounds are formed.

The same thing is true of a large number of other monosyllables listed. Some elements such as ta, to, cha, mo, and others may at first appear to be prefixes, but they really represent shortened forms of the words ta'bin-e, tovt, chat, and mo'be, as will be noticed in the vocabulary.

The list of words presented below represents a cross section and only a part of the vocabulary, and includes such words upon which or from which compounds are formed, and also a partial list of the compounds themselves.

A

a'da	uncle, nephew	ar-ta-ke'	grasshopper
anne'koh'rah	ant	ar-ta-mo'	grasshopper (horny-nose)
annie-mo'ey	fly	ase	gray
ap or a'pah	father	ase-queta	Apache (gray excrement)
ar	horn	att'a	other

B

bena	sugar	bosa	crazy
bena-kum	sweet (sugar- like)	bosa-pah	whiskey (crazy- water)

C

ca'ra	chair	cho'ko-peh	old
ca'va-rah	sheep	co'eve	hill or mountain
cha-hin-a-su'- pe-nat	(good-anything- know) wise	coch-pan'	broken
cha'na-kut	rich	co've	face
cha-na'kut	(good feeling) feeling well		

cha-na'woon-it	beautiful	co-yon-nee'	turkey
cha-nurs'e-cut	happy	co-yon-nee-	
chat or chart	good	noi'	turkey egg
cha'wa	coyote		
cho	all right		

E

e'a-mite	rain	ei-nurs'e-cut	bad feeling
eck'a-nah	first	ei-hin-hanit	do anything
ecka-po'e-we	penny (red metal)		bad
eck'apt	red	e'nock	here
eck'a-eda	rabbit (red neck)	er'da	kind
eck'cept	green	er'chit	cold
eck'sap-a-nah	soldier (red abdomen)	er'di-ite	warm
eck'up-see	flea	e-sa-sim'us	lone wolf
		(lone one)	(borrowed-Kiowa)
eck'ah-weets	new	e'sop	lie
eda-to'yok	neck	ev'apt	green
eit	bad	ev'a-mora-yak'e	bull frog
			(green-mule-cry)
eck'a-pape	buzzard (red-head)	e-gwite	similar
eck'a-wanap	red cloth		

H

ha	yes	hin	what
hack'up-a-me'an	where are you going?	ho'be	coffee
han'e-so'ni*ka	straw hat	ho'be-a(t)	song
han'e-vit	corn	ho'ch-pe	timber
he'bet	drink	ho'ch-pe	tree, wood
he-be-tu'a-wat	I want a drink	hoch-se-peah	daughter-in-law
he'pet	when	hoch'tso	bird
he'pet	how much	hoch'tso-a-noi	bird egg
her'kee	arbor	hock'a-ni-yut	why
her'kee-ad	cloud	hia'a-wrocket	four
her'kee-ah	shadow	ho'no or honop	creek, river
her'kee-i	umbrella	ho'rup	hole
hi'a-eck-a-nah	<u>very</u> first	ho'tse-ka	saw (noun)
hi'a-maw-wite	exactly (very-like)	ho'tse-ka	to cut (verb)
hi'a-quasick	<u>very</u> last		



K

ka	no	ko-ka-rah'	chicken
ka'hit	none, or nothing	koch'so	cow
kach'pe-nak	west	koe'	top
ka'ko	grandmother	koe'eck-sep	top braid
kanick	house	koe'eck-sep-ti'vo	chinaman (top-braid-man)
ka'rit	sit	ko-mo'to	sweet potato (borrowed-Mexican)
kas'ah-ri'vwo	angel (wing-man)	koom'ach-pe	husband
ka-to'kan	lamp (no-dark)	koon	fire
ka-to'ka-pah	coal oil (no-dark)	koon	wood
ka-woon'	look, (see water)	koon'a-wabe-poke	train (fire- box-horse)
ka'y-chat'	no good, bad	koon'a-wagon	train
keem	come	koon'a-wagon-a-poah	railroad- track
ke'man	to come	kosh-so-tivo	cattleman (cow- man)
kish	wait	ko-yo-ne'	turkey
kish'wat	bad	ko-yo-ne-noi'	turkey egg
kish'wakan'ik	jail (bad-house- kay-chat-house)	kuch'tat	hard
		kut	yesterday
		ko'veh	face

M

ma-he'man	to get, buy	maw'ma-tsai	hand shake (hand- hold)
ma'ke	yes	ma-woon'e-nea	(see I) I want to see
ma-kum'ach-kut	love	ma-woon'it	to see
ma'matz	he said	ma-wrach'kon	hinder, stop
ma-na'de-me	you tell it	maw'wite (hand-like)	same
ma'nak	far	ma-yan'	get
ma'nak-woon'it	see far	me'ah-roi-tan	let us go (go-we)
ma-na'su-watch-it	forgot	me'an	go
ma-och'toi	give (it) to me	mech'tse	very soon
ma-och'ton	give	mes-i-nea'	I said
ma-or'an	got	m'heap	your
ma-rder'wich-an	tell or to tell		
ma-rib'in-ite	to ask		
ma-ri			

ma-rick'et or (en)	to lay an object down	mes-sa-sur-i-yeck-wit	said
ma-rock'su-ah-kut	to believe	mo	nose
ma-rock'su-ah-men	to forgive	mo'be or mo've	nose
ma-su'wite	want, desire	mocho	whiskers
ma-tsach'i	take hold	mo'rah	mule
maw	hand	mo'sa-re	grey hound (nose-dog)
ma-wa'ru-tam'i-kut	to remember	mo'wa-po'ra	hog (get with the nose)
ma-wat'si-kan	lost	mo'ya-nak	east
ma-weets'oke	bracelet	(straight ahead)	
ma-wer'pe	to whip	mo'pie	owl

N

na'cara	chair	nap'tsak-sa	shoe-lace
nad'i-mok(e)	harness	na'ru-ite	bashful
nad'i-no	saddle	nat'chu	medicine
na'ho	knife	na'tsch-ti-ma	gate or lock
nak	ear	na'tsa-mo-que	grapes, raisins, currants
na-ko	wash or cleanse	na-na-woonie	window (no-me-see)
na'koch-to	stove	na'tsankia	clothes
nak'sa-re	trail hound (ear-dog)	nea	I, my, or me
na'ma-wach-tee-an	baptize	nead	wind
na'me	younger sister	na'da-me	place to buy
na'ne-ok-wit	conference	nem'saw	hurry
nan'su-tie	pray	ner'nine	lazy
nan'su-yacket	beautiful or wonderful	ner-tip'ca	button
na-och'to-(n)	give - me	nim	Indian
nap	foot or shoe	no-hin'	anything
na'pah	gas (no water)	no-hin-ei'hanit	do anything bad
nap'su-ine	dream	not'na	bed
		no'yo-cut	bull

O

o'be-ti	wait	o'na-wech-kut	a cold
o'hapt	yellow	o'nip	cough
o-heap'	yours	o-son'	always
o'hapte-po'ewe	yellow metal (gold)	o-swan'	lungs
o'na-weet	salt	oy'et	all

pah	water	peh-ck	fish
pa'ark	arrow	peek'won-ate	ticking
pah'wabe-poke	boat (water-wood-horse)		
pah'tsa-toi	pump, wind-	pe'he	heart
	mill (water-	pe-ho'ra	beans
	pull-up water)	(Mexican)	
pah'sa-weah	frog	peh'ts	tomorrow
pap	head	pem'a-ro	cattle
pa'pe	hair	perp	blood
pa'pus (Mexican)	potatoes (Irish)	pe'son	odor
pa're-vo	fountain pen	pe'so-ne	skunk
pa're-tso-pe	spring water	pe'sop	paint
pa'rivo	boss	be'ta	daughter
pa'chee	sister	pe'toi	arrived
pa'am	tobacco	pe'toi-kut	come, arrive
pa'at	long or high	po'ah	road
pa'vy	brother	po'ah	medicine
pah'tse	slick	po'ah-ri-wo	minister(road-man)
pah'tse-kit	slick (slick-	po-han'e-woonit	religious meet-
	like)		ing (road-see)
pah'tse-quas	opossum (slick-		
	tail)	poah'kanick	church (road-house)
peap	large	po'heep	weeds
pee'ah	mother	poi	eye
pea-to'ya	big mountain	poi-we-nah'	watermelon
pea-hoch'so	big eagle(bird)	poi'tsanika	eye glasses
pea'ta-wo (big gun)	cannon	(eye-wear)	
pea'so-ni-ka (big hat)	war bonnet	poe'we	money (metal)
pe'be-ah-ro-ah	plum	po'e-we-teck-wap	telephone
pe'che	teat		(metal talk)
pe'chen	suck	pu'	skin, hide, hairy
pe'chep	milk		

Q

qua'ha-de	sheep	que'ta	seat
qua'nah	smell	que'tap	excrement
quas	tail	quet'so-wite	healed from
quasick	last or later		sickness
quas-se-na'vo	snake (tail	qwuh	woman, wife
	stripe)		
quas-se-ti'vo	monkey (tail-		
	man)		
quas-se-yah'	tail-lift		
qua'sho	clothes		
que'i-nah	north, freezing		

## S

sah'ap	abdomen	si'me-yeck-wa	he said
sa-totse-nah'	mountain	(one-talk)	
sa're	dog	sis'si-ma	some
sawt	many, much	sohn	quilt
saw'kanick	city (many houses)	so'ni-ka	hat
		so'ko	earth
saw'wis	long ago	so'nip	grass
si'ma-oi-yet	everyone (one-all)	su'bet	enough
		swan	soul, spirit

## T

tach'kau	snow	toch-tea	bread, flour
ta'tse	star	to-ya-vit	mountain
ta	everybody	too-ah	son
ta-a'pah	God (day-father)	too'a-nick-pe	boy
		ti-wat-si-kan-et	loose
ta'bin-e	day	ti-wo	man (white)
ta'by-toi	sunrise	tovt	black
ta'by-yo-ko	when roosters crow	to'mo	sky
		to'mo-va	heaven (sky above)
ta'pa-vy	president (everybody's brother)	to'mo-ya'ke	thunder (sky-cry)
		to'quit	good
ta-ka(f)-per	poor	to'sa-wit	white
tam'my	brother	to'tiwo	negro (black man)
ta'wo	gun	to'wach-kun	angry
tech'kan	to eat	to'wa-ka-nea'	snap turtle (angry at me)
tech'ka-ro-nea'	I will eat now (eat-I)	tsak'sa	lace
		tso'to-tse	foamy
tech'ka-ro-tan'	we will eat now	sa'to-tse-pah	beer
		too'ah	son or child
te'he-yah	horse	tu'nits	run
te-he-yah-kar'it	horseback (horse-sit)	to'sa-poe'we	silver (white metal)
		to'sa-mocho	white whiskers
ten'a-pe	man	to-mo'cho	to-mo'cho (black whiskers)
tesh	and, also, again		
tick'a-ne-da-me	meat market	to'k	breast
ti'di-ai	to work	teck'na-nap	warrior
ti'di-ai-t	work	tso'nip	bone
tish'chat	bad	to'kan-na	night
ti-te'wick-an	tell		
tets	brother-in-law		
teap	rock, stone		
teap'e-ta-son	pavement (rock-floor)		

U-V

um	your (possessive)	un va	you above
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W

wa'nap	cloth, rag	wey-ya-ko-ro'	butterfly
wash	bag, suitcase	woon'ie	look
weh'no (borrowed- Mexican)	good (similar to 'O.K.')	wy'a-pe wy-a-pee'che	woman girl, maiden (two-breasts)

Y

ya'ke	cry	yo'rick-a-meck	rise
yo'ca-ra	sit quietly	yu'	lard, grease
yo'e-na	south, warm	yu'hu-pe-cheḡ	butter (grease- milk)
yo'nim-et	wander		

--

The rules of compounding as employed by the Comanches in the formation of proper names, place names, and general compounded words, are also employed in the composition of numerals. The Comanches compute numbers by comparison to the fingers or the hand, as, for example, five, maw'wat (like the hand). Their digits, as will be noticed, are composed of individual names for each one, to the number ten, syment. Beginning with eleven, however, one added, two added, etc., is the method used until the term twenty, wa'ha-men, is reached, when one added to twenty, two added

to twenty, is again employed to the number thirty, pi'he-men. Forty, fifty, sixty, etc., is readily formed by four-ten(s), five-ten, six-ten, or the multiplication of the decimal number. One hundred is a term related to the word for ten, and is designated by the word symet. The terms one, two, three, preceding this, renders the account to one thousand, pea'-symet, a big hundred; and the same prefixure for digits is repeated to ten thousand, hundred thousand, and so on to million, pea-choko'symet, or big-old-hundred.

For the purpose of further illustrating the mode of counting by the use of compounding I have here added a list of Comanche Indian numerals with the English equivalents.

English	Comanche
one	sem'mus
two	wa'hat
three	pi'hut
four	hia'ro-ket
five	maw'wat
six	nab'aite
seven	ta-ach'chuit
eight	nem'a-wachit
nine	wom'nat
ten	sy'men
eleven	syne'ma-toi'kut
twelve	wa'hat(e)-ma-toi-kut
thirteen	pi'hut(e)-ma-toi-kut
fourteen	hia'wro-ket(e)ma-toi-kut
fifteen	maw'wite-ma-toi-kut
sixteen	na'ba-ait(e)-ma-toi-kut
seventeen	ta-ach'chu-wit(e)-ma-toi-kut
eighteen	nem'a-wa-chit(e)-ma-toi-kut
nineteen	wom'net(e)-ma-toi-kut
twenty	wa'ha-men

thirty	pi'he-men
forty	hia'wro-ket-symen
fifty	maw'wa-(ka)-symen
sixty	na'ba-a-it-symen
seventy	ta-ach'chu-wi(t)-symen
eighty	nem'a-wa-chit-symen
ninety	wom'net-symen
hundred	sy'met
two hundred	wa-ha(t)-symet
thousand	pe'ah-symet
two thousand	wa-ha(t)-pea-symet
million	pea-choko-symet

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The above numerals are used by the Comanche Indians of southwestern Oklahoma. Collected by W. J. Becker and verified by Herman Asenap.

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## CHAPTER IV

### COMPARISONS OF COMPOUNDS

"In an analysis of the Indo-European vocabulary; every word of which this is made is found to contain a monosyllabic root as its central significant portion, along with certain other accessible portions, syllables or remnants of syllables, whose office it is to define and direct the radical idea. -----And the recognition in them of this character is an acknowledgment that Indo-European language, with all its fullness and inflective suppleness, is descended from an original monosyllabic tongue; that our ancestors talked with one another in single syllables indicative of the ideas of prime importance, and that out of those was elaborated the marvelous and varied structure of all the Indo-European dialects."<sup>1</sup>

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1. Whitney, Language and the Study of Language, pp. 255, 256.

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It is not difficult to find a number of monosyllabic roots or stems in the Comanche which define the radical idea.

Examples are:

Ka	no	ta	day
Ka'wat	none	ta-a'pah	God
Ka-cha't	no good	ta'pave	president
Ka-to'ka	no dark	ta'tech-kan	breakfast
Pah	water	ma	(future action)
Pah'choko	otter	ma-och'ton	give
Pah're-vo	fountain pen	ma-rea'wick	tell
Pah're-tso-pe	spring (water)	ma-he'man	get, buy



Cha	good	ei(t)	bad
Cha'na-kut	rich	ei'nur-se-cut	unhappy
Cha'nur-se-cut	happy	ei'hin-hanit	do evil
Cha'ma-woon'ie	see well	ei'woon'ie	looks bad

"The most primitive element of a language is the root. The exact form of the original root cannot be ascertained. They may have consisted of one, two or more syllables, but usually appear today in a reduced monosyllabic form which may be styled the stem. To this stem the inflectional endings are added, and from it new words may be formed by the addition of prefixes or suffixes. These new words thus formed may in turn become the stems from which by the addition of other suffixes still other words may be formed. Words which spring up directly from the root syllable without the addition of other suffixes than the usual inflectional endings, and which are themselves the stem from which other words by the aid of suffixes spring, are called primitives."<sup>1</sup>

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1. Curme, A Grammar of the German Language, p. 436.

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The following examples in the Comanche very readily show the stem to which prefixes or suffixes have been added in order to form new words.

Pe'che	teat	woon'ie	see
pe'chen	suck	ma-woon'ie	look
pe'chep	milk	na'woonie	mirror
yu'pechep	grease, butter	na'na-woonie	glass (window)

"Old English differed from Modern English in being---like Modern German, but in a greater degree--comparatively free from words of foreign origin. It had, indeed, incorporated a certain number of Latin words, chiefly relating either to the institutions and ritual of the Church, or to things connected with Roman civilisation. But these formed only a very small proportion of the entire vocabulary. Even for the technical terms of Christian theology, the old English writers preferred, instead of adopting the Latin words that lay ready to their hand, to invent new equivalents, formed from native words by composition and derivation."<sup>1</sup>

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1. Henry Bradley, The Making of English, New York: Macmillan Company, 1904, p. 10.

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New equivalents are readily formed in the Comanche as: po'ah, road or medicine, po'ah-rivo, road-tell(er), minister; po'ah-kanick, road-house, church; po'a-teckwan, road-talk, preach; po'ah-tabine, road-day, Sunday.

The stem word in this case is po'ah, from which any number of compounded words may be formed as the need arises. The accent as will be noticed is always on the first element which in these cases is the important or basal component.

Old English has an extremely large number of compounded words which have been formed by the addition of prefixes or suffixes.

"When two words are put together to make one, the one word so made is called a compound. The adding of prefixes or of suffixes to words, or the making one word out of two, is called word-formation.

Compound Nouns are formed by the addition of:--

(i) Noun and Noun, as--

Bandog ( = bond-dog)	Brimstone ( = burn stone)
Bridal ( = bride-ale)	Bylaw ( = law for a by or town)
Evensong	Nightingale ( = night singer)
Garlic ( = gar-leek = spear-leek; O.E. gar, spear)	Orchard ( = ort-yard = wort-yard, i.e., herb-garden)
Gospel ( = God's spell = story)	Stirrup ( = stig-rap = rising rope)
Housetop	Tadpole ( = toad-head. Pole = poll, a head, as in poll-tax)
Huzzy ( = housewife)	Wednesday ( = Woden's day)
Blackbird	
Freeman	
Midnight	

(ii) Noun and adjective, as--

Blackbird	Midsummer
Freeman	Quicksilver
Midnight	Twilight ( = two lights) <sup>1</sup>

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1. Meiklejohn, op. cit., pp. 116, 117

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"I. Nouns are compounded with Nouns--

1. Both in the same case; i.e., in apposition, the one explanatory of, or defining the other (in which case one of the nouns has a function almost, if not quite, identical with that of an adjective). Instances are: spear-plant, noon-tide, church-yard, headman, oak-tree, master-tailor, merchant-tailor, prince-regent, water-course, watershed, head-waiter, plough-boy, bishopdom (found in Milton, dom = 'jurisdiction'), bishopric, (ric = A.S. rice, 'power', 'domain'), bandog ( = band dog), barn (bere, i.e., barley ern, i.e., 'storehouse'),

bridegroom (bride groom = goom = A.S. guma, 'man'), bridal (bride ale = 'bride-feast'), cowslip (cow = slip, A.S. cuslyppe = 'cow dung'), hussy (= 'house-wife')--(Skeat, Prin. Eng. Etymol., p. 422). Lord-lieutenant, earl-marshal, wer-wolf ('man-wolf, 'A.S. wer = 'a man'), world (weoruld, wer = 'man' aeldu = 'age', 'old age', 'age of man'), yeoman (= 'village-man'--See Skeat), orchard (A.S. orceard, ortgeard, metathesis = wort-yard = 'vegetable-garden'), Lammas (= hlaf-maesse = maesse = 'loaf-mass', 'day of offering', 'first-fruits'), handiwork (hand geweorc = 'honey dew', mil = 'honey', A.S. mele), penny-worth."1

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1. Herbert Augustus Strong, Introduction to the Study of the History of Language, New York, London: Longmans, 1891, p. 317, 318.

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As is evident from these examples a large number of words not recognized as compounds, when analyzed, are found to contain two or more monosyllabic roots, as: world = weraeldu, bridal = bride-ale, orchard = wort-yard.

Again the Comanche words conform to this method of word formation and only close study will reveal the original stem or word as may be noticed in the following: ta'yetch, morning, literally day-rise, from ta'bine, day, and yetchen, to rise; to'pape, black-headed, literally tovt, black and pa'pe, head.

Our language contains a group of words whose origin is seldom interpreted by the one using them. "The word petroleum may be admitted as perfectly legitimate, but it is one of a class which is doing injury to the language. Petroleum means merely rock oil. In it the two corresponding

Latin words, *petra* and *oleum* are only put together; and we use the compound without knowing what it means. The language is full of words compounded of two or more simple ones, and which are used without a thought of their being themselves other than simple words--chestnut, household, husbandman, manhood, witchcraft, shepherd, sheriff, wheelwright, toward, forward, and the like. The power to form such words is an element of wealth and strength in a language. If those who have given us petroleum for rock-oil, had had the making of our language in past times, our 'evergreens' would have been called *sempervirids*.<sup>1</sup>"

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1. Richard Grant White, Words and Their Uses, New York: Houghton Mifflin and Company, 1899.

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Two or more simple words in the Comanche form the basis of compounds which at the same time retain their original identities, as:

to'sa-mocho	White Beard
pea'hochso	Big Eagle
to'mocho	cat fish or black whiskers

Compound names especially are numerous in the Comanche probably because of the habit of giving names in relation to some early act or characteristic of the individual. Often I have been in a group or na'nea-ok-quet, (name-meeting) conference with Indians when they were deciding upon an

Indian name for some stranger who had come into their midst. I can best illustrate this by a few examples. They have no regular word for president and since a man in that position is supposed to be a brother or friend to all, they call him ta'pave, which, translated, means everybody's brother. My father, who in the early days wore a short beard, was named To'sa-mocho, White Beard, white because of its light color. Today most Comanches and a large number of Kiowas know him by no other name.

Recently a young minister (white) delivered a series of sincere, matter of fact, religious lectures to the Indians, and before he left they named him according to their idea of his strong characteristic, "Straight Shooter" because he talked 'straight from the shoulder'. My own name, Pe'a-hoch-so, Big Eagle, dates back about twenty years. As a boy I "perched" myself in the top of a large tree, when an Indian who discovered me shouted, "Pe'a-hoch-so ma'woon-it!" (see the big eagle). This is the only name by which I am known among the older Indians unless it be To'sa-mocho-too'ah, White-Beard's son.

Compounds in Middle English are quite numerous and may readily be found in almost any of the Middle English literary productions. "Domesdei, doomsday; hellepin,

hell pain or punishment; woruldwele, worldly wealth; middeneard, middle dwelling; heveriche, heavenly kingdom; Hevekinge, king of heaven; hundredfealde, hundred fold."<sup>1</sup>

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1. O. E. Emerson, A Middle English Reader, "The Poema Morale", London: Macmillan Company, 1929, pp. 176-180.

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"No one can possibly suppose that we should ever have come to our morning meal, breakfast, if there had not already existed in our language the two independent words break and fast; any more than we should say telegraphwire, hickory-pole, gun-boat, without previous possession of the simple words of which are formed these modern compounds. Fearful and fearless, in like manner, imply the existence beforehand of the noun, fear, and of the adjectives, full and loose, or their older equivalents which have assumed, with reference to that noun, the quality of suffixes."<sup>2</sup>

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2. Whitney, op. cit., pp. 251, 252

---

The following words show the existence of two or more independent elements, such as morning and meal, metal and talk, before the formation of the compound was possible. Ta'tech-kan, breakfast, analyzed is morning meal. Ta being a shortened form while tech'kan is the complete stem word

meaning to eat. Po'ewe-teck-wap, telephone, analyzed is metal talk. These two simple words again form the modern Comanche compound.

"The composition may be of a two-fold kind. First, the two ideas are upon an equal footing; the two words might stand separate and joined by "and", and the collective idea would be the same; a simple addition of two factors has taken place. This oldest and most simple kind of composition became very rare in the historical period of the German Language."<sup>1</sup>

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1. Behaghel, Historical Grammar of the German Language, p. 64.

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"Jede Zusammensetzung besteht aus zwei Gliedern. Das eine, das den allgemeinen Grundbegriff des zusammengesetzten Wortes enthält, nennen wir das Grundwort; das andere, das diesen Grundbegriff durch eine Nebenvorstellung bestimmt oder beschränkt: das Bestimmungswort. Dieses nimmt in der Regel die erste, das Grundwort die letzte Stelle in der Zusammensetzung ein. Das Grundwort bestimmt, da es den Hauptinhalt und zugleich die Form der ganzen Vorstellung darstellt, die Wortart, und, wenn es ein Hauptwort ist, auch das Geschlecht des ganzen zusammengesetzten Wortes.

Z. B. Vollmond, Handschuh, Obstbaum, Landhaus, eiskalt,



lieblich, aufstehen. Vgl. auch: Fensterglas, Glasfenster; Arbeitshaus, Hausarbeit; Haustauben, Taubenhaus.<sup>1</sup>

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1. Dr. Joh. Christ. Aug. Heyses, Deutsche Grammatik, Vollständig umgearbeitet von Prof. Dr. Otto Lyon, Hanover und Leipzig: Hahnsche Buchhandlung, 1908, p. 185.
- 

Wetzel describes German compounds as being composed of two elements, the basal and the modifying element.

"1. Jedes zusammengesetzte Wort enthält:

(a) das Grundwort, d. i. dasjenige Wort, welches die Bedeutung des Grundwortes näher bestimmt. So ist ein Königsschloß ein Schloß (Grundwort), das einem Könige (Bestimmungswort) gehört.

2. Jedes zusammengesetzte Wort, möge es aus zweien oder mehreren Wörtern bestehen, ist immer nur in zwei Teile, in ein Grundwort und ein Bestimmungswort, zu zerlegen, nur dasz eins dieser Wörter oder beide wieder zusammengesetzt sein können, z. B. Zweigeisenbahn = Eisenbahn, welche ein Zweig einer anderen ist--Eisenbahnwarterbude = Bude eines Eisenbahnwarters--Wagenbauwerkstatt = Werkstatt sur Wagenbau.

3. Das Bestimmungswort steht in der Regel vor dem Grundworte.

4. Das Grundwort sowohl als auch das Bestimmungswort kann fast einer jeden Wortart angehören, z. B. Tischfusz, Groszmut, Dreifusz, Selbstliebe, Reisetasche, Rückseite, Beiwagen, Weheruf--himmelblau, dunkelblau, allwissend, selbstredend, vorschnell--wetterleuchten, frohlocken, wiedergeben, ausgehen--zweihundert--derjenige--bergab--jahrein--nachdem."<sup>2</sup>

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2. Ed. Wetzel, Fr. Wetzel, Die Deutsche Sprache, Zehnte Auflage, Leipzig: Velhagen und Klasing, 1892, p. 56.

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"The peculiarity of composition proper is that the ideas which lie in the two components are so thoroughly fused together that one idea results from their union."<sup>1</sup>

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1. Curme, op. cit., p. 481

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Composition proper is formed by joining the stems of two words without using inflectional endings between them. Comanche is replete with words which do not appear to stand in self-evident syntactical relation to one another as may be seen by the words too'ah-woonie, child-look, (looks like a child), and tabby-woon'ie, day-look, (sees the day). The accent in the first of these words is on the first element, therefore on the main stem; whereas in the next word the accent is on the second stem, therefore the main stem or determining element. The meaning consequently is determined by the accent.

Odd compounds, in which the individual words themselves do not give the direct meaning are also numerous in the Comanche, as also in compounds of other languages which have been compared. It appears that our well-known word, whiskey, has something in common not only in effect upon people but also in the formation of language. The Gaelic form was uisgebeatha, or properly (at the time) water of life; the Irish use the word usque-baugh, fire water,

(more characteristic) whereas, the American Indians, in general, called it "fire-water". The Comanche, I believe, comes nearer to a figurative description when he calls it Bosa-pah, crazy-water.

... of the whole, or we may connect  
the facts with generally accepted or known theories  
and thus reach a conclusion by inference. The purpose of  
this chapter will be to set out the facts and per-  
mit the reader to draw his own additional conclusions. Some  
of these facts will be related in the words of the writers,  
while others will be summarized. In a study of the com-  
pound Comanche words, and in proof of the theory that compounds  
came before a period of extended borrowing, we may infer  
that, if single words were in existence before compounds  
were formed, and if compounding is one of the oldest devices for  
word-formation, the theory can be accepted as having been  
proved. In view of this we may examine a few statements.

... also in dem Wort die mehrteiligen  
Stämme mehrere einfache Wörter oder Stämme vereinigt, denn  
die einzelnen Wörter sind nach ihrer Bildung wieder  
zusammengekommen; solche Vereinigungen  
werden Zusammensetzungen genannt.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Schökel, Die Deutsche Sprache, p. 254.

X

## CHAPTER V

### CONCLUSION

We may reach a conclusion by summarizing the facts which have been presented, generalize them, and get a brief comprehensive view of the whole, or we may connect the given facts with generally accepted or known theories and thus reach a conclusion by inference. The purpose of this chapter will be to use both of these methods and permit the reader to draw his own additional conclusions. Some of these facts will be restated in the words of the writers, while others will be summarized. In a study of the compounded Comanche words, and in proof of the theory that compounds came before a period of extended borrowing, we may infer that, if single words were in existence before compounded words, and if compounding is one of the oldest devices for word-formation, the theory can be accepted as having been proved. In view of this we may examine a few statements.

"Es erscheinen also in dem Wort mit mehrsilbigem Stämme mehrere einfache Wörter oder Stämme vereinigt, denn die Geschichte lehrt wiederum, dasz die einzelnen Wörter Früher da waren als die Wortsummen: solche Vereinigungen werden Zusammensetzungen genannt."<sup>1</sup>

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1. Behaghel, Die Deutsche Sprache, p. 254.

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"Among the various ways in which want of a name may be supplied such as adoption of foreign words, rare coining of an entirely new word, or the modifications of an old word by the addition of affixes, the compounding of a new word out of old material is one of the most frequent devices."<sup>1</sup>

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1. Oertel, op. cit., p. 313

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In the study of the Indo-European language development it appears that a large number of words, nouns especially were monosyllabic. These stem words were then combined to form other words known as compounds.<sup>2</sup> This

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2. Cf. p. 42

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tendency to form compounds is evident in all languages, and is especially noticeable in the earlier stages of language development before foreign words, influences, and borrowing took place.

We are in the constant habit of putting together two independent vocables to form a compound.<sup>3</sup>

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3. Cf. p. 11

---

"The natural tendency is to mark distinctly this oneness of meaning by a oneness in form, that is, by writing together the different words of a compound."<sup>4</sup>

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4. Cf. p. 9

---

The German language contains compounds of great length and Curme states that "Such compounds though often ridiculed are nevertheless common, and are not without their decided advantage, for they, in a certain sense, tersely give the substance of a whole sentence."<sup>1</sup>

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1. Curme, p. 480

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Throughout this work examples of long Comanche compounds may be found which bear out the above statement. These compounds in our western Indian tongues, according to Whitney, are very often cumbrous.

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2. Cf. p. 16

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"Although word-composition, in those languages which freely admit it, is one of the readiest means of supplying the needs for new words, compounds are often somewhat awkward in actual use."<sup>3</sup> The reason for this is that the

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3. Bradley, op. cit., p. 116

---

compound at times does not suggest the thing to our mind directly, unless we are able to forget its literal meaning.

It appears from the evidence presented that the various writers support the idea that language is descended from an original monosyllabic tongue. In this connection it is also agreed that the most primitive element of a

language is the root.<sup>1</sup> White states that "The language is full of words compounded of two or more simple ones. ----- The power to form such words is an element of wealth and strength in a language.<sup>2</sup> Muller says, "All languages, so

---

1. Cf. p. 43

2. Cf. p. 46

---

far as we can judge at the present, can be reduced in the end to roots."<sup>3</sup>

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3. Friedrich Max Muller, The Science of Language, London: Longmans Green and Company, 1899.

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"Roots therefore are not, as is commonly maintained, merely scientific abstractions, but they were used originally as real words."<sup>4</sup>

"These roots formed the constituent elements of all languages."<sup>5</sup>

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4. Ibid., p. 358

5. Ibid., p. 356

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It must be admitted that borrowing, to some extent takes place in all languages which come in close contact with others, but these words form only a small proportion of the entire vocabulary. According to Bradley, "The old English writers preferred to invent new equivalents, formed from native words by composition and derivation."<sup>6</sup> In

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6. Cf. p. 44

---

another chapter he states:

"We have now seen how far the English language has been enriched from foreign tongues before the end of the eleventh century. After all, the amount of what it had gained in this way was not very great in comparison with the whole extent of its vocabulary. With all the Latin, Celtic, and Scandinavian words that it had acquired, the general character of the language in 1100 was essentially what it had been five centuries before."<sup>1</sup>

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1. Bradley, op. cit., p. 84, 85

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Behaghel calls the simple addition of two factors, the oldest and most simple kind of composition. In another part of this work are listed a group of simple Comanche elements which are combined with roots or stems to form still other words. New equivalents, as has been shown, are readily formed from native roots.

Schoolcraft says that the Indian must have had some elements from which to make a language; that he must have had names for simple elements before he specified varieties, and that there must have been a rule. "It must have been known, in making compounds, what syllables or letters could be thrown away, in the new compound, without affecting the



sense."<sup>1</sup>

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1. Schoolcraft, Pt. IV, p. 372

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In the Comanche Indian language as well as in Teutonic Languages, the compounding of new elements out of old roots, stems, or words is one of the most frequent devices used to supply new names or words. The list of proper names, place names, and general compounded words given elsewhere in this work, will give conclusive evidence that this simplest and easiest method of forming words has been used and is still being used by the Comanches.

In a last analysis I believe that the Comanche language is no exception to the rules of word formation; that the primitive tendency is to get new meanings by the process of compounding; and that compounding comes before a period of extended borrowing.

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Master Sgt. Morris Swett, Librarian at Ft. Sill, Oklahoma.

David Grantham, born 1856. Personal friend of Chief Quannah  
Parker (deceased).

Arthur Lawrence, owner Red Store. Indian Trading Place since  
before the opening.

Tom Fullbright, Early day trader among the Comanches.

Henry Vaughan, Early day trader and cattleman.

H. D. Bruce, old prospector and Indian trader living in a  
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Albert Atta-konnie, Committeeman for the tribe; a leader;  
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George Koweno, 60 years of age. Deacon of Post Oak Indian  
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