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# The Afterlives of Language: Chiwere Preservation as a Revitalization Movement

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# THE AFTERLIVES OF LANGUAGE:

# CHIWERE PRESERVATION AS A REVITALIZATION MOVEMENT

**Saul Schwartz**

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## Abstract

In response to the problem of language loss, anthropologists, linguists, and tribal members have long worked to preserve Native American languages through documentation and revitalization. Advocacy within and beyond academic linguistics beginning in the 1980s has led to renewed visibility and opportunities for those involved in indigenous and minority language research and activism across the globe. Against this background of increased concern and support for projects to save endangered languages, my dissertation examines current efforts to preserve Chiwere (Ioway and Otoe-Missouria) and other Siouan languages. I interpret these efforts as recent examples of revitalization movements.

Based on twelve months of formal participation observation fieldwork, interviews, archival research, and my own long-term collaborative involvement in Chiwere preservation, the dissertation analyzes collaboration and conflict among intersecting social networks dedicated to documenting and revitalizing Chiwere and other Siouan languages and lifeways. Community linguists, language activists, and educators in dialogue with academic researchers and tribal members use literacy, metalexical speech genres, and translation to imbue Chiwere with social and cultural significance. By comparing how and why these diverse practitioners and constituencies value Chiwere with rhetoric used to promote Native American language preservation in advocacy and policy settings, I show how anthropologists, linguists, and community members circulate and challenge discourses and ideologies about language and culture.

The dissertation integrates ethnographic literature on language preservation with longstanding anthropological attention to revitalization movements. It explores the nostalgic, aesthetic, symbolic, and ideological dimensions of language preservation and describes language revitalization in terms of three related themes. First, language revitalization is a social movement saturated with elements of nostalgia and aesthetic appreciation. Second, language revitalization involves a symbolic approach to language whereby recovering a language is associated with broader social and cultural effects. Third, language revitalization is a generative practice for constructing and contesting language and culture ideologies.

I conclude that documentation, revitalization, and other forms of remembering and valuing heritage languages renew and reshape social relationships and cultural practices following language loss. Languages have significant symbolic afterlives in which they contribute to processes of cultural creativity and identity formation even after they cease being spoken in everyday communication.

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# Chapter 1: Introduction

One evening in July 2012, I was having dinner with fellow students at the Institute on Collaborative Language Research (CoLang), which was held that year at the University of Kansas in Lawrence. CoLang is a six-week summer institute on community-based language documentation and revitalization sponsored by the National Science Foundation's Documenting Endangered Languages Program (DEL). The weekend before CoLang began, the University of Kansas also hosted the annual Siouan and Caddoan Languages Conference. I came down for the conference from White Cloud, Kansas, with Jimm Goodtracks, whose Chiwere (Ioway, Otoe-Missouria) language project—also funded by DEL—was my primary site of participation observation during my fieldwork on Siouan language documentation and revitalization. Jimm left after the conference, and I stayed on for CoLang in order to learn more about documentary linguistics as a disciplinary subfield.

Over dinner, my CoLang colleagues were discussing their respective research interests. Someone turned to me. "So, you're an anthropologist, right?"

I nodded.

"What do you work on?"

"I'm doing research for my dissertation," I said. "It's an ethnography of endangered language documentation." Blank looks from my dining companions. "I study language documentation as a social process," I explained. "I've been doing fieldwork with a community-based project here in Kansas, up in White Cloud."

"What language?" someone asked.

"Chiwere," I said. "It's a Siouan language."

"So that's the language you're working on?"

"Well, no," I said. "I don't really study the language itself. I'm more interested in how and why people document languages."

"So, are you studying us?" My tablemates were beginning to consider the implications of my research.

"Well..." I hesitated. I never quite knew what to say at these summer programs. Delimiting the field during fieldwork could be difficult. "If I were studying *you* right now, you would know because I would have asked your permission. That's what I do when I interview linguists. I have to get informed consent." My dining companions nodded—field linguists deal with IRBs, too. "Maybe I'll ask you for an interview sometime," I continued, "but I'm really here to understand how language documentation is supposed to be done. You know, all the best practices we learn about. Then, I can compare those to how the Chiwere project works."

"Like, what do you mean? What are they doing that's different?" someone asked.

"Well," I said, relishing the moment, "they're writing a dictionary in Microsoft Word!"

"What? Why?" They were shocked.

"That's what my research is about," I said. "I know using Word isn't best practice, but we're also supposed to collaborate with consultants and respect their preferences. The person I work with is a semi-speaker. He's tried Toolbox and other dictionary programs but likes Word better. It gives him more control over the entries."

"Do you have the dictionary in other formats?" someone asked.

"No, it's all in Word," I said.

"You should save in plain text so you won't lose it."

"I don't know."

"Why not? It would be easy. You may lose formatting, but you'll still have the data."

"But that's not my role. I'm there to understand what they do, not change what they do."

"What? I can't believe you! You could lose everything! You should do it."

"I'll think about it."

"You really should do it."

I said nothing. My interlocutor shook her head and looked away. The conversation went on.

My interlocutor was voicing a common concern among documentary linguists. In 2003, Steven Bird and Gary Simons published an influential article on best practices for technology in language documentation. Bird and Simons point out that "much digital . . . documentation . . . becomes inaccessible within a decade of its creation" because projects employ "software versions, file formats, and system configurations" with limited lifespans (2003:557). Compared to earlier media, like paper and clay tablets, which can last for thousands of years, digital documentation is "evanescent" because of its binary ontology (2003:567).

Bird and Simons echo common rhetorics of language loss but transfer the terms to technologies and data themselves, drawing an analogy between the object and means of preservation: "In the very generation when the rate of language death is at its peak, we

have chosen to use moribund technologies, and to create endangered data. When the technologies die, unique heritage is either lost or encrypted" (2003:557). Like languages, technologies and data can be "endangered," "moribund," or even "die" leading to encrypted heritage, in which digital encoding entombs rather than preserves.

Against these forms of loss, Bird and Simons emphasize portability as a central value for documentation technology. Portability involves four dimensions of transcendence: of time, of software and hardware platforms, of scholarly communities, and of purposes (2003:558). To Jimm, the advantages of Word are obvious: the files are easy to create and share with community members and entries are completely customizable—unlike in more specialized dictionary database programs. But as Bird and Simons point out, the problem with Microsoft Word and other conventional office software is that the data they contain is not portable: such programs store data in a secret proprietary format, which leads to problems of openness and longevity. Commercial developers usually stop supporting formats within a decade of their release, rendering data stored in obsolete formats potentially irretrievable.

While data in secret proprietary formats can be exported to open formats, its structure can change due to software incompatibilities—conversion between formats usually results in some form of transformation. For example, bold, italic, underlined, or superscript font in Microsoft Word will be usually be regularized in conversion to plain text (unless standard Unicode characters were employed). Thus, XML descriptive markup (which defines categories of data) is more portable than presentational markup (which defines the display of data), which is in turn more portable than no markup (which uses fonts and other procedural formatting codes) (2003:564, 575). Markup is used not

only for converting but also storing and using data since it enables users to write programs to process or present information in new ways (2003:571).

For example, at the 2012 Siouan and Caddoan Languages Conference held in conjunction with CoLang, a graduate student presented on her project to "bundle" multiple Siouan dictionaries into a single searchable database. Her goal is to facilitate comparative linguistic analysis—instead of having to look up a word in a dozen separate print or digital dictionaries, users can query multiple resources with one search. In order to import word processor files into her database, the presenter relied on markup or formatting structure to pull content into the correct field. But Jimm's Chiwere dictionary was left out of the database since it has no markup and employs inconsistent formatting to distinguish data categories. The Chiwere dictionary is handmade in Word: every component of every entry is painstakingly formatted by hand, but this element of total human control permits a proliferation of idiosyncrasies that undermine the dictionary's value for some purposes and audiences. The presenter advised that nobody make dictionaries in Word anymore, especially since there is no funding to convert them to other formats. In a sense, the Chiwere dictionary is "living legacy data"—data in the process of being encoded in a format that is already obsolete.

At CoLang, I defended my choice not to convert the files by invoking a principle of non-interference. My role, I claimed, was to understand how Jimm's project operated, not to change his established workflow. Of course, this is not actually a principle of participant observation at all (which is not to say that ethnographers are immune from anxieties of influence). In any case, strict non-interference certainly did not characterize my fieldwork: as my knowledge of and network in documentary linguistics expanded, I

came to be seen and function as an intermediary between Jimm's Chiwere project and the academic community and its resources. For example, I drew on what I learned at CoLang and another summer program (the Linguistic Society of America Summer Institute) to write the Project Description for a DEL grant that funds Jimm's current work on a Chiwere corpus. In the proposal, I was concerned to justify Jimm's existing practices (e.g., Microsoft Word) even when they contradicted best practices. When I espoused non-intervention over dinner, then, I was half-correct: even when I intervened, as in the case of the grant, I always tried to maintain Jimm's existing practices—thus, my resistance to my interlocutor's exhortation to convert the dictionary files.

My reluctance to convert the files reflected how I understood the role of Jimm's practices in my research: they constituted the relevant cultural activity I was studying. To the extent that I was trying to preserve anything, it was practices like his use of Word that I was documenting in my fieldnotes. I considered the fact that they were "exotic" or unconventional vis a vis best practices in documentary linguistics as an aspect of ethnographic leverage—a discovery of a rules/practices discrepancy that justified my fieldwork. After all, if everyone simply followed best practices, there would be no need to do fieldwork to find out how documentation is really done.

As I reflected on this conversation at CoLang after my fieldwork, however, I came to feel that our contrasting perspectives on the locus of significance in need of preserving—in their case, the dictionary; in my case, the practices producing the dictionary—revealed an important difference in disciplinary orientation between documentary linguistics, on the one hand, and sociocultural and linguistic anthropology, on the other. In a sense, this dissertation is an attempt to integrate my anthropological

interest in practices surrounding preservation as cultural phenomena with the textual-orientation of my CoLang interlocutors, who argued that I have a responsibility to ensure the portability and longevity of the dictionary and the "data" it contains. I try to reconcile the two perspectives by showing how preservation practitioners like Jimm infuse Chiwere and other Siouan languages with significance in part through the production of texts that are themselves mobilized to accomplish further social and symbolic goals. Rather than being significant in and of themselves, languages become significant through strategic processes of extextualization and recontextualization. Thus, the cultural value of language is accomplished over time as a process and product of social investment.

## Disciplinary Background

An account of the historical divergence of American anthropology and linguistics, synthesized from work by Agha (2007), Duranti (2003, 2012), and Stocking (1992), constitutes essential background for this dissertation. Anthropology and linguistics were originally complementary subfields of Boasian salvage anthropology (Gruber 1970), in which the collection and linguistic analysis of American Indian texts was a central research activity. American linguistics emerged into an autonomous discipline by defining its object of study as Saussurean *langue*: a set of structural grammatical contrasts distinct from utterances and their interactional settings (*parole*). The structural emphasis on language as an autonomous system of grammatical patterns marks the beginning of a process of linguistic specialization that intensified in subsequent decades, particularly as the rise of generative grammar further isolated the linguistic study of language from contexts of actual language use.

While language documentation and description based on fieldwork remained at the center of American anthropological and structural linguistics through the first half of the twentieth century, the development of generative grammar in the late 1950s produced a lasting shift in disciplinary priorities and methods: 1) theory, and theoretical syntax in particular, became the highest status area of linguistic research with a resulting devaluation of documentary and descriptive work; 2) since generative research draws data primarily from linguists' intuitions about their own native languages (overwhelmingly English), methods such as introspection superseded other forms of data collection, including fieldwork.

A famous instance of the latter point would be Chomsky's use of examples like "Colorless green ideas sleep furiously" and "Furiously sleep ideas green colorless" to prove that whether a sentence is grammatical has nothing to do with whether it makes semantic sense. From Chomsky's perspective, in fact, it is a virtue that these examples are neither drawn from a corpus nor have "ever occurred in an English discourse" (Chomsky 1957:16). These examples thus isolate grammaticality from both actual language use and semantic sense, and they rely for their persuasive power on Chomsky's and his readers' grammatical intuitions as English speakers: "any speaker of English," according to Chomsky, "will recognize that only the former is grammatical" (1957:15). Under the sway of generative grammar, well into the 1980s many linguistics departments refused to accept descriptive grammars of endangered languages as dissertations because they were not seen as making a valuable (i.e., theoretical) contribution to the discipline.

The involution of linguistics around an increasingly narrow view of language contrasts with the history of linguistic anthropology: left to justify themselves to their

sociocultural colleagues by emphasizing connections between language and cultural concerns, linguistic anthropologists developed areas of research related to the ethnography of speaking, performance, language ideology, indexicality, and agency. The result was that by the 1980s, the major areas of research in both linguistics and anthropology had moved away from language documentation and description but in very different directions: inspired by the notion that the underlying structures of language could provide insight into human cognition, linguistics as a whole became relatively uninterested in actual language use; meanwhile, anthropologists became so committed to analyzing language use in particular interactional contexts that they largely abandoned formal descriptions of language structures.

One consequence of this disciplinary divergence has been a lack of cross-training between anthropology and linguistics. Even many anthropological linguists today know little about anthropology, for example, and are unfamiliar with ideas about fieldwork that have been widely accepted in anthropology following its critical reflexive turn (Dobrin and Berson 2011:202-203, 210 n. 8). Similarly, even many linguistic anthropologists today know little about linguistics proper. Most linguistic anthropologists, for example, no longer receive training in core linguistic competencies like phonology, morphology, and syntax or in linguistic field methods such as elicitation (Ahearn 2003:335; Duranti 2003:333).

As a result, linguistics rather than anthropology has been at the forefront of responding to the perception of impending crisis surrounding global language loss. While language documentation became a low-status area of linguistic research following the generative revolution, this situation changed in the 1990s as linguists involved in the

social movement to preserve endangered languages put documentation back on their disciplinary agenda by framing language shift as both a *scientific* problem of diminishing natural language data and a *moral* responsibility for a discipline dedicated to understanding languages and increasingly accountable to members of speech communities (Hale et al. 1992).

Predicated on a dual promise to "revolutionize linguistics" by giving theorists digital access to primary data (Whalen 2004) while also serving as the discipline's moral conscience, documentary linguistics was reborn as a subfield with considerable international institutional support. From 2000-2012, the Volkswagen Foundation awarded over €28 million to language documentation projects through DOBES; Arcadia has promised £17 million for similar projects, of which the Hans Rausing Endangered Languages Project at SOAS, University of London, has awarded over £10 million since 2003; the NSF-NEH DEL program has awarded over $30 million in grants and fellowships since 2005. Funding on this scale for language documentation is all the more remarkable in that it was created and expanded during a time when most areas of humanistic and social science research faced significant budget cuts due to economic crises. Linguists who have studied endangered languages for their entire careers have been heard to complain that now everyone wants to "jump on the endangered languages bandwagon" and capitalize on the rising status of the field.

Increased funding for language documentation in linguistics contrasts with funding priorities in anthropology. The Wenner-Gren Foundation, which funded research for this dissertation, states that Dissertation Fieldwork Grant "proposals whose primary objective is to 'fill in' knowledge about . . . a language . . . will not be competitive unless

a further case can be made for the importance of this finding to broader issues in anthropology." The Foundation also states that it "does not fund salvage work on endangered languages (e.g., preparation of dictionaries and/or grammars)" or "other descriptive research on languages or work on language structure that is not grounded in anthropological concerns" (n.d.). Funding sources for documentary linguistics, in contrast, emphasize the need to fill in gaps in records of linguistic diversity before un- or under-documented languages with few speakers are no longer spoken and further documentation becomes impossible (e.g., National Science Foundation 2015).

The recent rise of documentary linguistics has created new opportunities for people like Jimm. While Jimm has been involved in Chiwere documentation and revitalization since the 1960s, he has only been a professional practitioner since 2007, when DEL funding allowed him to pursue language preservation full-time (see Chapter 3). The following chapters address how Jimm and other practitioners navigate this new context for language documentation, how they balance obligations to academic and community audiences, and how the process of tacking between these audiences enriches and complicates their practice.

## Summary of Chapters

This dissertation describes the cultural value of language as a social accomplishment, one that can give heritage languages significant symbolic afterlives in which they continue to contribute to processes of cultural creativity and identity formation even after they cease being spoken in everyday communication. The process of investing a language with significance through documentation, revitalization, and other forms of engagement is not a simple one, however. Even as Chiwere and other Siouan

language preservation projects seek to link language and culture, they also struggle to control the recontextualization of heritage languages across multiple domains. Some recontextualizations threaten to devalue indigenous languages by stripping them of accumulated indexical significance and/or associating them with settings deemed inappropriate. In other words, entwining language and culture is an ongoing project predicated on the recognition that they may unravel.

Giving a language cultural value also involves social coordination (and occasionally conflict) among and between diverse participants and audiences, including academic and community linguists, language activists and educators, tribal members, and broader publics. In their interactions, these practitioners and constituencies circulate and challenge discourses and ideologies about language and culture, reflecting diverse perspectives on why endangered languages should (or should not) be preserved and how documentation and revitalization should be carried out. Integrating ethnographic literature on language preservation with longstanding anthropological attention to revitalization movements, the dissertation addresses the nostalgic, aesthetic, symbolic, and ideological dimensions of language preservation in practice.

In this introduction, I have provided structural and historical background for the chapters that follow by sketching a history of disciplinary differentiation between anthropology and linguistics that culminates in the recent rise of documentary linguistics as the primary academic response to the problem of global language loss. The rise of documentary linguistics has led to new possibilities for existing and aspiring language preservation practitioners in the form of increased funding for documentation through programs like DEL and new opportunities for training through programs like CoLang.

My own experiences at CoLang led me to wonder how practices of production and circulation can imbue a text like a dictionary with a significance of its own, making it and the language it contains valued objects worthy of preservation in their own right.

The next chapter reviews five recent ethnographies of language documentation and revitalization (Debenport 2015; Meek 2010; Morgan 2009; Nevins 2013; Perley 2011), which I then put into conversation with a long tradition of anthropological work on revitalization movements. I organize my discussion by focusing on three "moments" in the history of anthropological research on revitalization movements: Mooney's (1896) study of the Ghost Dance, midcentury research on nativistic and revitalization movements (Linton 1943; Wallace 1956), and a recent edited volume (Harkin, ed., 2004) that seeks to revitalize "revitalization movement" as a concept in anthropological research. In each case, I connect themes in the literature on revitalization movements with central issues in recent ethnographic research on language preservation related to the representation of endangered languages, the semiotic logic of language revitalization, and the role of language revitalization in indigenous nationalism.

Chapter 3 builds on the intellectual connections between language revitalization and revitalization movements developed in Chapter 2 by describing social interconnections between language revitalization networks and those involved in other kinds of revitalization projects. In other words, Chapter 3 makes the case for seeing language revitalization as a revitalization movement on the basis of social experience rather than intellectual affinity. I draw on my own "arrival story" and socialization process to describe how a hybrid network of academic and indigenous researchers and activists interested in revitalizing various aspects of historical or traditional Ioway and

Otoe-Missouria lifeways introduced me to "the Siouanists," an intersecting and equally hybrid network of academic and community linguists dedicated to documenting and revitalizing Siouan languages. I compare my socialization experiences with those of other Siouanists and describe the temporal and structural conditions that shape Siouanist modes of interaction and the knowledge economy of Siouan studies.

Chapters 4, 5, and 6 focus in on the Chiwere (Ioway, Otoe-Missouria) context and describe how community linguists, language activists, and educators use literacy, morphological analysis, and translation to imbue Chiwere with cultural significance and resist "semantic purification" (Samuels 2006) or inappropriate recontextualization. Chapter 4 notes that one consequence of the lack of living Chiwere speakers is that literacy has become the primary means of language socialization and revitalization. This puts increased pedagogical pressure on orthographies, which come to be seen as prescriptive formulas for future utterances as much as systems for describing prior utterances. In this context, conversations about writing systems turn rather quickly to issues of cross-cultural and interlingual influence, reflecting a long history of Chiwere literacy being used as a tool for promoting enculturation and language shift. Just as missionaries in the nineteenth century used Chiwere literacy as a means of acculturating, "civilizing," and teaching English to Ioways and Otoe-Missourias, community linguists today use similar textual strategies to (re)connect English-speaking tribal members with their heritage language, which is associated with a nostalgic vision of traditional culture rooted in recursive recontextualizations of elders' speech.

Chapter 5 moves from the level of the letter to the level of the word. I discuss how community language activists and educators in dialogue with academic linguists use

morphological analysis to break Chiwere words into their component parts, which are then translated (Chiwere-)morpheme-for-(English-)word to produce knowledge about the experiences, practices, and worldviews of previous generations. I present a number of examples of this morphological discourse, which I characterize as a metalexical speech genre. I argue that this genre is used to demonstrate Chiwere's ongoing importance to tribal members and other audiences and to resist a sense of transparent equivalence between the heritage language and English, a common problem in Native American language revitalization.

Chapter 6 explores how linguists, language activists, and educators use translation at levels beyond the word to infuse Chiwere with social and cultural import. I propose that these translation practices are more visible to sociocultural and linguistic anthropologists than to documentary linguists due to the contrasting role translation plays in the professional practices and identities of the two disciplines. While ethnographers have long thought of what they do as a form of translation directed at a specific contemporary audience "back home," documentary linguists are more focused on creating an enduring archival original that will serve diverse audiences with unknown (and unknowable) needs far into the future. Turning to specific translation practices I encountered during my fieldwork, I describe how linguists treat requests for translations from English into Siouan languages as an opportunity control (to some extent) the indexical associations of indigenous languages. In responding to translation requests, linguists thus serve as linguistic and cultural gatekeepers, mediating between Siouan languages and both tribal and non-indigenous publics, who seek to access the iconic significance of Native American languages to accomplish extra-linguistic goals. I then

examine Jimm's strategies for translating Chiwere literature into English. Even in translation, Jimm preserves distinctive features of what he calls the "classical" style of Chiwere oral narration, including frequent discourse markers, repetition of topic/focus and spatial information, and evidentials. Jimm's use of intertextual comparison, compilation, supplementation, and elision to reimagine texts in the "classical" style complicates sharp distinctions between originals and translations. The resulting translations preserve a sense of Chiwere's unique stylistic resources and resist notions of transparent equivalence through Jimm's distinctive Chiwere-influenced English.

Chapter 7 scales up from the Chiwere context to consider connections between "language" and "culture" in Native American language policy. The Native American Languages Act (NALA) invokes "culture" to justify federal support for American Indian language preservation in the United States. Chapter 7 traces the origin and elaboration of language/culture equations in NALA discourse and develops an indigenous and anthropological critique of the relationship between language and culture that NALA promotes. Conceptual tools developed by linguistic anthropologists to study performance show how processes of discursive recontextualization through reported and quoted speech create an illusion of consensus between policymakers and stakeholders regarding language/culture equations. But many Native Americans, especially those from communities without fluent heritage language speakers, reject language/culture equations because they believe that their cultures can continue without their "traditional" languages. I present an example of such a critique from my fieldwork and argue that this critique resonates with modern anthropological culture concepts, which recognize the role of creative transformation in the transmission of any living tradition.

By way of conclusion, I suggest that the prominence of "culture" in endangered language advocacy provides an opportunity for anthropologists to educate extra-disciplinary audiences about anthropological knowledge. The emergence of a social movement to save endangered languages has been accompanied by critical attention to the rhetoric of endangered language advocacy. To the extent that this critical metadiscourse emphasizes dissonance between "expert" advocacy rhetoric and the language ideologies of the speech communities being advocated for, they are self-defeating: the very process of constructing a singular native's point of view to which advocacy rhetoric can be compared raises the same representational concerns as the critiques themselves. Categories like "endangered language communities" obscure diversity within and between speech communities, a point I illustrate by considering the various exclusions that language/culture equations effect. While language/culture equations suit the purposes of speakers and communities with speakers, they may exclude nonspeakers and communities without speakers from claiming "authentic" indigenous identities and associated political protections. As an alternative to language/culture equations, I propose developing advocacy discourses derived from the central findings of this dissertation. Namely, rather than emphasizing that the cultural or other significance of language inheres automatically in the code itself, it may be more inclusive and sustainable to highlight the shifting significance of language over time as a social accomplishment that can give language an afterlife beyond "loss."

# Chapter 2

## Language Revitalization as a Revitalization Movement

Ethnographies of language documentation and revitalization are a relatively recent phenomenon. As linguists in collaboration with indigenous and minority language communities worked to make global language loss a matter of public concern in the 1980s and 1990s, anthropologists followed in their wake in the early 2000s, studying the cultural dimensions of the social movement to preserve endangered languages. A coalescing ethnographic literature has now emerged around these issues (Debenport 2015; Meek 2010; Morgan 2009; Nevins 2013; Perley 2011).

While this new generation of ethnographers are involved to varying degrees in language documentation and revitalization themselves, what distinguishes their work from their predecessors is that they are engaged with language preservation as participant observers. Anthropologists interested in studying endangered language documentation and revitalization have become involved in preparing dictionaries (Debenport 2015 and me) and corpora (Nevins 2013 and me), developing pedagogical materials (Debenport 2015, Morgan 2009, Nevins 2013, and me), and working in language classrooms (Debenport 2015, Meek 2010 and Perley 2011).

While corpora, dictionaries, and grammars were once (and to a marginal extent still are) recognizable and publishable linguistic anthropological genres—ends in their own right—these ethnographers are not producing those kinds of texts as their primary scholarly contribution. Rather, they engage in language documentation and revitalization—including the preparation of corpora, dictionaries, and grammars—in

order to examine the cultural contexts and implications of language preservation as social action. This is what distinguishes the ethnography of language documentation and revitalization from earlier anthropological and current linguistic involvement in language preservation for its own sake.

Since this dissertation constitutes another ethnography of language preservation, this chapter reviews five recent ethnographic monographs on Native American language documentation and revitalization in order to clarify how my approach is informed by their work and how it makes an original contribution to the existing literature. The books I focus on are Mindy Morgan's (2009) *The Bearer of This Letter*, Barbra Meek's (2010) *We Are Our Language*, Bernard Perley's (2011) *Defying Maliseet Language Death*, Marybeth Eleanor Nevins's (2013) *Lessons From Fort Apache*, and Erin Debenport's (2015) *Fixing the Books*.

While a specifically ethnographic approach to language preservation based on participant observation fieldwork has gained momentum in recent years, few studies draw on earlier anthropological literatures on nativistic and revitalization movements, even though language revitalization would seem to be a special case of these more general phenomena. Though not quite messianic like the Ghost Dance and other religious revitalizations, language revitalization nevertheless anticipates a return and seeks to repair a perceived tear in the social texture of history and time. Returning to overlooked literature on nativistic and revitalization movements provides new insight into current emphases in ethnographic research on language revitalization.

I organize my discussion in the second half of this chapter around three "moments" in the history of anthropological research on revitalization movements:

Mooney's (1896) seminal study of the Ghost Dance, midcentury research on nativistic and revitalization movements represented by Linton (1943) and Wallace (1956), and a recent edited volume (Harkin, ed., 2004) that explores the ongoing relevance of "revitalization movement" as a rubric for research in North America and the Pacific. Mooney's work raises questions about the representation of revitalization movements that illuminate recent discussions about how advocates present endangered languages to different audiences (Meek 2010; Nevins 2013; Perley 2011). Linton and Wallace highlight the fact that revitalization movements are informed by conscious indigenous reflection on "culture." This insight helps explain the semiotic logic of language revitalization, which often seeks to revitalize a code in anticipation of broader social transformations but can end in disappointment when indexical links between code and culture are severed (Debenport 2015; Meek 2010; Morgan 2009; Nevins 2013; Perley 2011). The authors in Harkin 2004 raise questions about knowledge, authority, authenticity, and nationalism that reappear in work on the role of language revitalization in indigenous nationalism and in mediating between indigenous communities and broader political orders (Morgan 2009; Nevins 2013; Perley 2011).

**Morgan: History and Literacy**

Mindy Morgan's (2009) *The Bearer of This Letter: Language Ideologies, Literacy Practices, and the Fort Belknap Indian Community* is an ethnohistorical account of literacy on the Fort Belknap Indian Reservation in Montana. From 1996-2000, Morgan was the curriculum coordinator for a collaborative project between Fort Belknap College, a tribal college on the reservation, and Indiana University, which developed materials for Nakoda (Assiniboine) language classes at the tribal college. The book begins with an

account of a meeting between elders/speakers, tribal college language teachers, and linguists from Indiana University to discuss what orthography the project would use to write Nakoda. At the meeting, a number of the elders/speakers claimed that "Nakoda is an oral language" and expressed reservations about it being written. Pointing out that this sentiment is common in many American Indian communities, Morgan seeks to explain "how many tribal members at Fort Belknap came to believe that their languages cannot, or rather should not, be written" (2009:3).

Morgan advances three explanations for this belief—one historical, one functional, and one native. The historical explanation centers on the role of English literacy as an instrument of colonization in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. It was not the introduction of English to the multilingual speech communities of the Great Plains but the role of English documents in regulating early reservation life that produced the radical language shift we see today and an enduring association among English, literacy, and colonization (Chapter 1).

Following the establishment of the reservation in 1887, agents, clerks, traders, and priests used English documents to manage political, social, economic, religious, and family life on the reservation (Chapter 2). These documents included treaties, tribal enrollment and census records, ration tickets, passes granting permission to leave the reservation, marriage and divorce certificates, affidavits of adoption, wills, vouchers, receipts, deeds, and leases. At the same time, local colonial administrators, educators, and missionaries implemented federal policies focused on assimilating Indians by promoting language shift. Since official policy encouraged English and discouraged Nakoda, a tradition of Nakoda literacy never developed in the early reservation period (Chapter 3).

During the Indian New Deal in the 1930s-1940s, termination policies in the 1940s-1960s, and federal support for bilingual education programs in the 1970s-1980s, tribal members used English literacy for self-government and for recording elements of their cultural heritage, yet they continued to transmit Nakoda orally both at home and, increasingly, in school programs (Chapters 4 and 5). It is only with the rise of the current endangered language paradigm, however, that academic and local concern about language loss has produced an incipient, contested tradition of Nakoda literacy; some in the community see it as a way to preserve an important element of Assiniboine identity and others, due to the historical association between literacy and colonialism, see it as a form of external appropriation and ongoing assimilation (Chapter 6). Thus, Morgan acknowledges ideological variation among tribal members about the role literacy should play in language revitalization:

> The proposed development of writing systems for the Indigenous languages was viewed by some community members as a necessary step to preserve a distinctive identity; however, others viewed it as the final step in assimilating Native identity into a Western frame-work. Indigenous-language literacy, therefore, became a way of not only talking about language loss but also debating about what it means to be Assiniboine and Gros Ventre in contemporary U.S. society. [2009:15]

Morgan's account focuses on the development of a symbolic association among English, literacy, and colonialism: "A fundamental point to this study is how the use of literacy as a symbol has affected language use within the reservation communities" (2009:242). At key moments throughout her text, Morgan employs this symbolic association to explain current resistance to Nakoda literacy (2009:5, 115, 211-212). In Morgan's account, this symbolic association has persisted even despite a history of Assiniboine appropriation of English literacy for their own purposes, first in the early reservation period through the practice of petitioning officials on the reservation and in

Washington (2009:64-83) and then following the Indian Reorganization Act in 1934 when English literacy became the medium of tribal government (2009:143). Morgan's discussions of petitions in the early reservation era and the role of English documents in tribal government complicate the idea that there was an "inextricable link" among "English, writing, and institutional power" (2009:5). Clearly, English writing was also a form of resistance to institutional power and eventually the medium of tribal government. Nevertheless, Morgan argues that the association between literacy and colonialism is strong enough that "the transformation of literacy from a symbol of a colonial past into an example of self-determination is difficult" (2009:243).

In addition to this historical explanation, centered on an enduring association between English, literacy, and colonization established during the early reservation period, Morgan also offers a functional explanation, in which the emphasis on Nakoda as an oral language serves to control the circulation of traditional language, in line with restrictions on transmitting other kinds of traditional knowledge. As speakers became fewer and knowledge of the language more restricted in recent decades, religious contexts became one of the primary domains for Nakoda language use. The association between language and ceremony led the language itself to be seen as a kind of powerful knowledge subject to the same kinds of restrictions surrounding ceremonial knowledge. In this context, Nakoda literacy short-circuits established methods of cultural transmission that rely on personal relationships with recognized authorities and makes formerly esoteric knowledge public.

Finally, Morgan offers a native explanation in that some of her consultants seem to frame positions on literacy and orality in terms of generational differences:

> For most of the participants [at the orthography workshop], the literate and oral divide was a way of discussing generational differences. This idea extended to other forms of learning as well, and in other conversations elders discussed how children are much more visual as a result of television and video games. Within these conversations there was subtle criticism of the younger generations, who they do not think listen as well as they should. Many elders recounted how they learned as a result of constant lecturing from their grandparents and parents and thus considered orality as more representative of traditional values. [2009:221]

As discussed below, Meek (2010) and Nevins (2013) encountered similar discourses in their research, and intergenerational continuity figures in this dissertation as one of the primary goals of Chiwere revitalization.

Morgan's hypothesis that current resistance to writing down Native American languages can be explained by the documentation regimes of the early reservation period is intriguing. Drawing on work by Stoler on and in colonial archives, and consistent with an emerging of ethnography of documents and documentation, Morgan reads archival sources not only for their content but also their context as documentary artifacts, in order to reveal how literacy first served colonial interests before being used by community members to resist colonization. This makes a contribution to existing literature on local cultural receptions and appropriations of literacy by Schieffelin and others (see Chapter 4 of this dissertation). It is not necessarily intuitive to situate current language documentation materials in the context of archival documents from the early reservation period like tribal enrollment records and ration tickets. In addition, we will see below that themes of history and symbolic association are central to earlier anthropological literature on revitalization movements.

### Meek: History and Indexicality

In *We Are Our Language: An Ethnography of Language Revitalization in a Northern Athabaskan Community*, Barbra A. Meek (2010) focuses on Kaska language

revitalization in the Yukon, Canada. Noting that language revitalization efforts are rarely successful in creating new speakers, Meek points out that "endangerment is not simply a result of past assimilation projects; today's atmosphere of multiculturalism and aboriginal rights is equally a path for the ongoing march toward language death" (2010:41). Meek seeks to understand why current language revitalization efforts fail to produce new speakers by examining "disjunctures" been language socialization strategies and language ideologies across different domains of community life.

She begins by tracing the historical factors that have contributed to language shift and the resulting emergence of heritage language knowledge as a form of specialized knowledge associated with elders in the community (Chapter 1). Meek then introduces her primary theoretical contribution, the notion of "sociolinguistic disjuncture," which she defines as discontinuities between the language practices and ideologies promoted in different social domains (Chapter 2)—between homes and schools, for example (Chapter 3). Meek also analyzes how indigenous languages are represented in pedagogical materials designed to promote vernacular literacy (Chapter 4) and in nation-building projects associated with the provincial government (Chapter 5).

Meek treats history in a more ethnographic fashion than Morgan. She considers how a history of colonialism and Canadian government policies have contributed to language shift, but she also describes how Kaska people narrate their own history of changing linguistic practices over time. The main theme that emerges is that community members have come to interpret differences in language facility as a function of how different generations have been socialized (or not) to value "listening" and "respect." The Kaska term elders use in this context is *á'i*, which also refers to various avoidance-type

taboos. According to this view, younger generations' lack of ability to speak Kaska is derived from their not listening and not behaving respectfully according to the standards of *á'i*. As a result, Kaska language knowledge has become a form of specialized knowledge that indexes one's status as an elder, and younger community members are discouraged from trying to learn the language. The ability to speak Kaska is in fact so strongly correlated with being an elder that many younger community members believe they, too, will become Kaska speakers when they are old—overlooking the fact that the current elders learned Kaska as children because it was the primary language of home and community life; the ability to speak did not just suddenly come to them when they reached a certain age.

The central theme that emerges from Meek's book is that institutionalized literacy practices associated with school- and government-based language revitalization initiatives dissociate Kaska language from the cultural practices and values that motivate community members' desire to revitalize Kaska in the first place. In other words, while children learn a set of Kaska words, expressions, and grammatical rules at school, they learn little of the communicative styles and interactional patterns that elders associate with speaking Kaska. Thus, schools are essentially teaching a different (grammatically- and topically-simplified) version of the language that only exacerbates the divide between elders and younger generations. In fact, Meek found that the institutional variety of Kaska and classroom routines were replacing other kinds of Kaska language interactions in the community (Chapter 3).

Meek also notes similar patterns in pedagogical materials that "reduce aboriginal languages to a compilation of nouns and token phrases, emphasizing the referential

aspect of language while downplaying all other indexical dimensions, and thereby diminishing their sustainability as complex systems of and for communication" (2010:126). This leads to disappointment with language revitalization efforts, since the primary theme of local discourses about the value of heritage languages is that they teach children proper behavior and important cultural knowledge (2010:144-148). As Meek puts it:

> If an indigenous language, as a grammatical system or set of vocabulary items, were intended to serve only as an index of a Yukon Indian identity, and locally as a sign of status, then simply speaking an aboriginal language, knowing a grammar, or even knowing only tokens of a grammar would satisfy the Yukon's revitalization goals. In that case, the curriculum materials would suffice. However, if grammatical competence is *not* the primary endpoint, if the goal of language revitalization includes, instead, the acquisition of social and cultural knowledge through language, then these basic lessons have failed. The ideological disjuncture has transcended the discourse and ruptured into the actual activities intended to revitalize and change the current linguistic situation. [2010:158]

Here and elsewhere, Meek (2010:50) uses indexicality to explain language revitalization as "intentional processes of social transformation" (2010:42) that rely on indexical connections among Kaska language, respectful behaviors, and cultural knowledge. Yet, many language revitalization efforts teach Kaska as a code (a lexicon and grammar, etc.) without transmitting these associated practices and values. Drawing on Silverstein's work on indexical orders, Meek characterizes these kinds of "sociolinguistic disjunctures" as "points of discontinuity or contradiction, moments where practices and ideas about language diverge" (2010:50) and which "can appear between ideas and practices, between practices, or between ideas shared by a group or across groups—between indexical orders" (2010:51). A disjuncture between local ideologies that link a code with a culture—and the reality that the code can be dissociated from the culture—is one of the central issues in language revitalization and one of the foci of this dissertation.

Midcentury research on the semiotic logic of revitalization movements (discussed below) illuminates this emphasis in ethnographic literature on language revitalization.

**Perley: Language Revitalization and Indigenous Nationalism 1**

Bernard Perley's (2011) *Defying Maliseet Language Death: Emergent Vitalities of Language, Culture, and Identity in Eastern Canada* is an ethnography of Maliseet language revitalization at Tobique First Nation in New Brunswick, Canada. As a member of Tobique First Nation himself, Perley foregrounds his identity as a native anthropologist (e.g., 2011:20-30, 196-198) and writes in large part for community audiences. The book draws on Perley's own personal and family history, interviews with tribal members, and participant observation fieldwork in a native language classroom at the community elementary school. Like many ethnographies intended for native readers as much as or more than anthropological ones, *Defying Maliseet Language Death* is difficult to evaluate using conventional disciplinary rubrics (Schwartz and Lederman 2011).

Perley begins by seeking to determine whether Maliseet is undergoing language "death," "obsolescence," or "shift." After reviewing various sociolinguistic factors associated with these labels, he decides that all three apply (Chapter 2). He then argues that that Maliseet is shifting from an "embodied practice" of the home to a form of symbolic capital in institutional contexts and describes the institutionalization of Maliseet language in, and the relationships between, the community elementary school's language classes, the provincial government's native education initiatives, and the Native Studies program at a university near the reservation (Chapter 3). The first part of the book ends with Perley describing the Maliseet curriculum and classroom at the community

elementary school focusing on tensions between oral and textual pedagogies and the competing demands of teaching Maliseet versus French (Chapters 4 and 5).

Perley's introduction alerts readers that his book includes both "'objective' diagnostic analytical discourses and affective 'embodied' discourses" (2011:21) and that Chapters 2-5 take the former approach and Chapters 6-8 the latter (2011:29). In the second half of the book, Perley revisits material from the first half from the "phenomenological" perspective of an engaged subject rather than a distanced analytical observer. He includes, for example, his own "experience of the trauma of Maliseet language disembodiment" when his mother decided to immerse him in English so that he would be able to understand what was happening at school (2011:8, 124-125, 144). Perley uses an "affective" and "embodied" perspective to argue that Tobique First Nation is committing "language suicide" (Chapter 6) in part because many Maliseet see "aboriginality" and blood as more important than language for defining Maliseet identity (Chapter 7). Perley concludes by describing how certain people and projects—including a community cultural resource center, aboriginal self-determination, new media practices, and his own Wəlastəkwi Cosmogensis / Maliseet Cosmological Beginnings project—are creating "emergent vitalities" for Maliseet language (Chapter 8).

Perley's Wəlastəkwi Cosmogensis / Maliseet Cosmological Beginnings project represents the culmination of Perley's phenomenological/affective/embodied presentation of Maliseet language shift and revitalization and foregrounds his intention to address Maliseet audiences in his work. The project is an arrangement of paintings that incorporates language, oral traditions, prayer, and landscape, as "an expansion of ethnographic representation" since "ethnographies need not be restricted to textual

representations of fieldwork years after the fact" (2011:198). "As a native and an anthropologist," Perley writes, "I advocate engaged ethnographies that support emergent constellations of language, culture, and identity." (2011:198). The paintings are designed to "create a sacred space for prayer and meditation. The process of designing, constructing, and experiencing Wəlastəkwi Cosmogensis was itself (and continues to be) an act of prayer. The goal for this reintegration project is to instill prestige in Maliseet language, culture, and identity. It is designed to inspire Maliseet community members to reintegrate the Maliseet language into their everyday lives" (2011:199).

As outlined by Malinowski (1922), classical ethnography seeks to describe "the native's point of view" and make native perspectives relevant to an audience of (presumed non-native) anthropological readers. It is unclear to what extent such a framework is relevant to *Defying Maliseet Language Death*, which is often addressed to a native audience and seeks to prescribe rather than describe ideologies of language and identity.

The book begins by describing a 1993 meeting at the community elementary school that was organized to solicit support for a Maliseet language immersion program on the reservation. A particularly significant moment of the meeting occurred when the organizer showed participants a chart that listed all of the aboriginal languages spoken in Canada and enumerated the quantity of speakers for, and "viability" of, each language; Maliseet was listed as "on the verge of extinction" (2011:2). In Perley's account: "There was silence in the room as each of us assessed the gravity of the word *extinction* in personal terms. The organizer skillfully allowed the reflective silence to drag on for several moments. Finally she broke the silence by reiterating her reasons why an

immersion program in Maliseet is desperately needed on the reservation" (2011:2). Perley states that this moment in the meeting has had a significant impact on his life: "the most indelible message from that meeting is the specter of Maliseet language death and that is what has haunted (and continues to haunt) my personal and professional life" (2011:3).

Perley credits the meeting organizer with being able to "transform the abstraction of language death [as presented in scholarly literature] into an immediate and emotional community problem" (2011:2-3). Perley seeks to accomplish a similarly persuasive transformation in his book by describing the prospect of Maliseet language death in both objective sociolinguistic and phenomenological/affective/embodied terms. Just as hearing that the language was "on the verge of extinction" at the 1993 meeting changed the course of Perley's own personal and professional life, Perley uses discourses of enumeration and extinction in order to effect a similar transformation in others, thereby "sounding the alarm to alert community members to the prospect of language death" (2011:34).

Perley tells us that his work reflects "an engaged anthropology practice where professional knowledge serves the communities from which that knowledge is derived" (2011:3). He presents his book as "a program for language revitalization as an important aspect of Native American self-determination" (2011:4,20), and "a celebration of the role of the Maliseet language in Maliseet identity deliberations and self-making" (2011:10). Ironically, however, while Perley seeks to "becom[e] part of the solution to the problem of language death" (2011:3), many community members do not consider language shift to be much of a problem. "Part of the irony of this research," Perley acknowledges, "is

that the tragedy of language loss is not seen as a tragedy for a large majority of the Tobique population" (2011:56) because many tribal members believe that "you don't have to speak Maliseet to be Maliseet" (2011:57) and consider blood or aboriginality more important aspects of Maliseet identity than language (Chapter 7). Noting that many language programs that are started on the reservation are discontinued due to lack of community interest, Perley concludes that "the great majority of community members do not feel a need to participate in language maintenance and revitalization classes or programs" (2011:138), and "the community was generally indifferent to the communicative health of the language" (2011:185). In response, Perley begins to substitute the phrase "language suicide" for "language death" in order to confront community members with their own "complicity in the erasure of the Maliseet language from our lives" (2011:122). He encourages community members to reject a narrative of victimization by external forces and embrace their capacity to revitalize Maliseet as an aspect of aboriginal linguistic and political self-determination.

While Perley (2011:196) acknowledges that heritage or official languages often function as symbolic capital in ethnonationalist ideologies that link linguistic, cultural, and political distinctiveness, he gives little reflexive attention to the fact that he is promoting such a connection himself or that there is a substantial critical anthropological literature on these features of nationalism. Perley argues that while in the past, community members had to give up Maliseet to survive, today the situation may be reversed since the community needs Maliseet to survive: "the Maliseet language needs to live for the people to live. More reports are being published that argue for language as essential for identity, and I hear similar claims being made by members of the Tobique

community" (2011:194-195; cf. Chapter 8 of this dissertation). Perley goes on to say, that "if the Maliseet language is reinstated in its role as the mediator for Maliseet culture, Maliseet identity, and everyday conversations, then we can celebrate the life of the Maliseet language and the survival of Maliseet cultural identity for generations to come" (2011:199-200). These assertions, however, come just after a chapter describing how many Maliseet themselves do not in fact believe that their heritage language is essential for Maliseet identity.

Thus much of Perley's book is language advocacy directed toward members of Tobique First Nation, but rather than describing native points of view, Perley often writes against their perspectives, in the sense that he tries to convince his fellow tribal members of something that they do not currently believe—that Maliseet language revitalization is essential for sustaining their aboriginal identities and political self-determination. In other words, Perley puts anthropology in the unusual service of creating, rather than describing and deconstructing, linguistic nationalism (cf. Handler 1993; Nevins 2013). As discussed below, the relationship between revitalization movements and indigenous nationalisms is one of the central issues in recent literature on revitalization movements.

**Nevins: Language Revitalization and Indigenous Nationalism 2**

In *Lessons from Fort Apache: Beyond Language Endangerment and Maintenance*, M. Eleanor Nevins provides precisely the critical perspective on language maintenance and indigenous nationalism that Perley declines to provide. Nevins compares language ideologies and speech practices common in White Mountain Apache family and religious settings with those of schools and culture centers on the Fort Apache Reservation in Arizona. A student of Dell Hymes, Nevins works within the ethnography

of speaking tradition that he pioneered to draw out diverse understandings of and responses to language shift across different contexts on the reservation. Along the way, she develops previous work on Western Apache language ideologies and speech practices by Keith Basso and David Samuels.

In *Lessons from Fort Apache*, schools, culture centers, families, and religious settings emerge as different sites for constructing community identity and negotiating authority around language. Schools and culture centers draw on ethnonational ideologies of language as national heritage and are important for community definition in relation to national and international contexts. As a result, however, such programs are often controversial among community members whose authority and identities are rooted in family and religious contexts, where different language ideologies and notions of community predominate. Thus, language maintenance involves negotiation between local and national/global definitions of community. This helps explain why language revitalization programs are often both valued and controversial among communities—on the one hand, they provide a source of displayable national heritage useful in interactions with outsiders; on the other hand, they promote language ideologies and pedagogical strategies that conflict with how Apache language is understood and transmitted in other community domains. Rather than seeing such ideological diversity within the community as an obstacle to language maintenance, Nevins argues that community critique reflects an investment in language maintenance but perhaps in a different form of language maintenance than current language programs provide.

Nevins begins by problematizing the distinction between language shift and preservation in endangered language advocacy discourse. She argues that language endangerment and maintenance are complementary processes:

> Where the endangerment literature describes language endangerment and documentation as opposed processes, a broader consideration of history and social context reveals endangerment and "saving" languages to be aspects of a continuous overarching process of negotiated political incorporation. From this standpoint, rather than saving and preserving something from the past, it is more accurate to describe documentation and maintenance as innovative social actions directly articulated with ethnonational forms of political recognition and participation. [2013:217-218]

In other words, just as language shift reflects interaction between local communities and forms of settler colonialism, language maintenance also involves community participation in global and national forms of recognition, where language is seen as an emblem of ethnicity, culture, and identity (Chapter 2).

Linguistic forms of difference recognizable to states, however, may conflict with local forms of differentiation and community definition. For example, an Apache language revitalization program was controversial in the community because it was perceived to be teaching Apache language without attention to proper social relations between elders/speakers and language learners and without transmitting the speaking styles and cultural and moral values that are considered important aspects of language socialization in family/domestic environments (Chapter 3). This is an example of what Meek would describe as a sociolinguistic disjuncture between institutional and home-based expectations for what language revitalization should accomplish (see above). Nevins examines a number of other language domains where competing definitions of community are circulated including naming practices for housing developments (Chapter 4), interactions with documentary linguists (Chapter 5), storytelling (Chapter 6), and

religious restrictions on what can be taught in school language and culture programs (Chapter 7).

Nevins concludes by presenting her ethnographic emphasis on the ways in which different forms of language maintenance reflect community articulation in local and national contexts as a contribution to the linguistic literature on endangered languages. She also argues that the entextualizations that documentation produces allow for multiple interpretations and recontextualizations beyond what researchers can anticipate. Finally, Nevins proposes reciprocity as a model for expert-community relations that would allow linguists to contextualize community critique as part of a culturally meaningful conversation about the role of language in different domains of community life rather than just noise or an obstacle to language maintenance (Chapter 8).

As her conclusion makes clear, many of the lessons Nevins derives from her fieldwork at Fort Apache are presented as a critique of linguistics. Nevins (2013:31) identifies paradoxes of expertise and authority as one of the primary tensions that language documentation and revitalization engenders, in the sense that "university-accredited experts" like "researchers, translators, and teachers" come into conflict with "speakers" or "elders, parents, and grandparents," who derive authority from their status in local family or religious life. A conflict between linguistic authority grounded in university backgrounds and institutional connections (2013:15) and alternative local sources of authority within indigenous communities is a recurring trope in Nevins's book.

One of Nevins's main goals is to oppose "the authority claims of linguistics as a science" (2013:223) and to "move us away from conferring upon the linguist a singular and untenable authority" (2013:226). In order to resist this hegemonic linguistic

authority, Nevins (2013:35) draws an analogy between her work and science and technology studies. Citing Latour (2004), she suggests a "postcritical" approach to language endangerment as a "matter of concern" open to diverse disciplinary experts/practitioners and community stakeholders.

In this context, Nevins ties anthropologists' contribution to their ability to convey and contextualize community critiques that linguists tend to ignore due the ways in which they objectify language as an apolitical autonomous system (2013:220-221). Thus, the role of anthropology becomes to assist indigenous voices in resisting the authority of linguistics. Nevins writes:

> While the role of linguistics in language endangerment resembles the role of natural science in ecological endangerment, there is an important difference. Natural scientists speak for the nonhuman world that cannot, at least in conventional terms, speak for itself. Saving languages, however, is different because here scientists are not speaking for the viability of breeding populations or wetlands or global climate. Rather, in this case they are speaking on behalf of the speech of other human beings, for what some linguists have termed "vanishing voices" (Nettle and Romaine 2000).
>
> This raises inevitable and uncomfortable questions. Do linguists rightfully claim the role of spokespersons for indigenous languages and voices? To the extent that language and language shift belong to the realm of human political agency, on what basis should scientists, as opposed to the bearers of indigenous languages, be accorded the authority to define them? For example, one of the people who I worked with in an educational office complained about the linguistic presentations at the Athabaskan language conference, saying that he found listening to White/*ndah* strangers use Apache and other Dine languages to claim authority for themselves made him uncomfortable, even angry. He felt as if these linguists were stealing something that did not rightfully belong to them. These questions and concerns may well be answerable, but they have only begun to be broached in the endangerment literature . . . and linger as unacknowledged disputes expressed through community responses to and interventions upon research and programs. [2013:221-222]

In other words, one of the central questions Nevins addresses is who has the authority to speak for endangered languages. She consistently critiques "the polemics of the language

endangerment literature" (2013:215-216) and "the rhetorical cover endangerment provides to neocolonial politics in the relation between scientific research and indigenous communities" (2013:220), and she seeks to give voice to indigenous concerns and priorities regarding language preservation. We will see that two of Nevins's primary themes—first, the relationship between language revitalization and indigenous community definition and, second, questions regarding who has the authority to represent indigenous language communities—are raised by earlier literature on revitalization movements.

**Debenport: Literacy and "Hopeful Nostalgia"**

In a recent monograph, Erin Debenport (2015) examines the nexus of literacy, secrecy, perfectibility, and community at San Ramón Pueblo in New Mexico, which in 2003 decided to develop written Keiwa language materials as part of a language preservation effort. In keeping with Pueblo restrictions on knowledge circulation, both "San Ramón" and "Keiwa" are pseudonyms, and all Keiwa language tokens in her text have been redacted—the Keiwa language data being analyzed in translation. These authorial strategies involving concealment and revelation, secrecy and indirectness, perform her arguments about Pueblo literacy (2015:8). As Jones puts it, "these redactions (and the innovative strategies Debenport uses to operationalize the information they conceal for linguistic anthropological analysis) are visually striking iconic indexicals of anthropological investment in upholding—and involvement in remediating—an indigenous system of secrecy" (2014:64).

One of the primary themes that emerges from ethnographic research on Pueblo communities is a local belief that the proper treatment of secret knowledge (including

Pueblo language) is necessary to sustain the intertwined political and religious system at the heart of Pueblo social life; secrecy and perfectibility give cultural objects value (Chapter 1). Against a backdrop of a recent influx of gaming revenue at San Ramón and resulting political struggles over tribal membership, in which certain segments of the community have been targeted by the political/religious leadership for disenrollment, Debenport's central argument is that treatments of literacy emphasizing the formation of anonymous publics overlook the ways in which literacy can be a means of controlling, curating, and perfecting/revising information.

Since language and culture are politically sensitive issues, those involved in producing Keiwa textual materials do not do so for an unrestricted public, even within the Pueblo; rather, texts are produced in limited copies, the circulation of which is restricted. The texts themselves are continually revised, edited, and otherwise perfected by those involved in the community language program. One focus of these textual practices involves using indirect and veiled communication strategies to communicate sensitive cultural knowledge, since explicit communication about such matters is politically dangerous. Thus, authors leave it up to readers to infer the intended indexical connections between language and culture in order to discover the full meaning communicated in Keiwa language materials.

Drawing on Kroskrity's work on Pueblo language ideologies, Debenport examines how dynamics of secrecy and perfectability play out in Keiwa dictionary construction (Chapter 2), in the grammatical features used in example sentences within the dictionary (Chapter 3), in a pedagogical text written by a speaker for the community language program (Chapter 4), and in a script for a Keiwa soap opera written by young

adults (Chapter 6). Despite Debenport's long-term involvement in these efforts, her fieldwork came to an abrupt end in 2009 when the Pueblo's governor decided to end the Keiwa literacy program and stop working with outsiders on language revitalization. The governor sent his staff to the tribal library and the homes of those involved in the language program to confiscate written Keiwa materials. This lesson in the vagaries of long-term community collaboration also illustrates the ongoing social and cultural role of secrecy in the reproduction of Pueblo political and communal life (Chapter 7).

While Meek (2010) and Nevins (2013) describe situations in which institutionalized Kaska and Apache language instruction produce a disjuncture between language and culture—wherein language is decontextualized from traditional interactional styles, practices, and values—the opposite theme runs through Debenport's chapters. Debenport shows how the creators of Keiwa texts work hard to build indexical connections between texts and ways of speaking and cultural practices present in the community. This dissertation follows Debenport in her constructivist emphasis on the cultural value of language as a social accomplishment. According to Debenport, "It is hoped that by learning to speak Keiwa, community members will learn how to conduct themselves appropriately and exhibit behavior and engage in activities that connect them to the pueblo and identify them as Indians, both within and outside the reservation" (2015:73). Tribal members involved in the language program want their texts to be able to "teach people how to be San Ramón" (2015:22), "live life the way it's supposed to be lived" (in the words of one dictionary example sentence) (2015:58), and to convey speaking styles and personal qualities necessary to "be Indian" (2015:88).

In so doing, however, the authors of these materials confront the paradox that the most important speaking styles, cultural practices, and values they want to transmit are precisely the topics most controversial to discuss directly. Thus, their communicative practices revolve around veiling and indirection. They use the seemingly objective, neutral, and referential genres of dictionaries and pedagogical texts to communicate decontextualized sensitive information, leaving just enough clues (it is hoped) for readers to be able to infer and recontextualize what is being referred to, which ranges from traditional cultural and religious practices to political critique. In the case of the dictionary, "the lexicon is at once a neutral reference work and a potential place for creatively encoding salient cultural information" (2015:64), with the result that "the work as a whole is linked to the goal of ensuring the future of particular speaking styles and their associated values" (2015:82).

While literacy is the primary topic of Debenport's book, temporality plays a key role. Drawing on Kroskrity, Debenport identifies "speaking the past" as a particularly salient genre for pedagogical materials on the reservation. "Speaking the past" correlates the loss of certain cultural practices with moral decline, and encourages "carrying it hither" by urging current audiences to revive the practices and values felt to be disappearing. "Speaking the past" is used to encourage future collective action that will preserve the Keiwa language and produce a cooperative San Ramón community and positive pan-Pueblo relations (Chapters 3-4). In this way, the dictionary and other Keiwa pedagogical texts "do not communicate grammatico-semantic regularity but index preferred ways of being through the use of nostalgic yet hopeful discourses" (2015:140).

Developing this theme, Debenport characterizes language revitalization movements in terms of "hopeful nostalgia" (Chapter 5). She argues that anthropological work on nostalgia, hope, and faith are essential for understanding a number of peculiar features of language revitalization: its focus on absence, its utopian character, the difficulty of evaluating success or reaching an end point, and its repetitive/ritualistic rhythms. As part of her discussion of nostalgia, hope, and faith, Debenport notes a connection between language revitalization and classic examples of revitalization movements:

> Like cargo cultures or the Ghost Dance, attempts to promote the use of indigenous languages are often seen by practitioners as "successful" despite the lack of quantifiable results or the predictions about language "death" made by academics and media figures. Language revitalization efforts share many traits of cultural revitalization movements . . . including a focus on purism, . . . revivalism and innovation surrounding cultural practices, . . . and the centrality of objects in both reflecting and constituting such programs. [2015:112]

Similarly, Debenport quotes Crapanzano's (2003:19-20) discussion of cargo cults to draw a connection between "how those hoping for cargo were really hoping for 'a new moral, social, and cultural order in which these objects figure'" and "San Ramón authors' assertions that fluency in Keiwa would necessarily lead to a community in which people help one another, are not greedy, and essentially inhabit an imagined pre-contact context. Widespread Keiwa fluency, it is thought, would create a community in which the correct 'moral, social, and cultural order' could exist and readers/listeners could 'live life the way it's supposed to be lived'" (2015:116).

Debenport's discussion of temporality and dynamics of nostalgia, hope, and faith animating language revitalization suggest the relevance of literature on revitalization movements for understanding language revitalization. In the next section, I develop these

connections by examining three "moments" in the history of research on revitalization movements and their relevance for recent ethnographic research on language revitalization.

## Moment 1: The Poetry of the Ghost Dance

In the history of anthropology, James Mooney's (1896) "The Ghost Dance Religion and the Sioux Outbreak of 1890" is a landmark study of a religious revitalization movement. Mooney presents the Ghost Dance as a particular instance of a more general phenomenon that all people can relate to, and he is acutely self-conscious about using specific rhetorical devices to shape how his readers relate to participants in the Ghost Dance. Mooney's topic was particularly fraught since he began his research at the same time that the Ghost Dance was associated with Sioux resistance to a number of government policies, including the partition of the Great Sioux Reservation and implementation of the Dawes Act, which allocated communal land to individual families and made the "surplus" available for public purchase. The so-called "Sioux outbreak" culminated in tragedy with the well-publicized Wounded Knee Massacre. Thus, Mooney was writing about a sensationalized religious revitalization movement with exotic, irrational, threatening, and violent associations (a number of white observers referred to it as "the Messiah craze" [1896:831]).

In order to make the familiar strange, Mooney draws an analogy in his introduction between human ontogenesis and social history, arguing that the life courses of both individuals and societies end in disappointed old age accompanied by nostalgia for the youthful glory days. Especially when oppressed by powerful outsiders, nations incline toward "redeemers," who promise to restore what has been lost. Mooney's final

chapter, “Parallels in Other Systems,” argues that the Ghost Dance is one instance of a widespread phenomenon with parallels in Christianity and many other religions. Thus, he universalizes the messianic elements of the Ghost Dance as common to the trajectories of individuals, civilizations, and religions, including those of his readers. Mooney distills his approach to the Ghost Dance as a rather prosaic phenomenon with a quotation from Ecclesiastes: “There is nothing new under the sun” (1896:928).

In his biography of Mooney, Moses writes that Mooney’s colleagues at the Smithsonian and Bureau of American Ethnology found his comparisons provocative because they

> assailed the blissful celebration of progress which had become almost a secular religion for the United States in the late nineteenth century. While Powell and McGee were busily sculpting the final ornamentation on their theories of developmentalism at the bureau, Mooney was announcing his apostasy, his emancipation from the bondage of the idea of “stages of civilization.” [2002:87]

While Mooney’s comparisons may have been subversive, fears that they would make his study controversial proved unfounded, and his sympathetic treatment of the Ghost Dance was widely praised (Moses 2002:91-92).

One of the most prominent rhetorical devices Mooney uses to bring his readers in touch with the Ghost Dance is his use of poetry to frame his discourse. The epigraphs to his monograph, for example, include excerpts from three poems. The first is from the concluding stanza of “My Dead,” by Bayard Taylor, whose poems were less admired by his nineteenth century contemporaries than his translation of *Faust*. From the poem, which begins “Give back the soul of Youth once more!” Mooney excerpts the final stanza: “Say, shall not I at last attain / Some height, from whence the Past is clear, / In whose immortal atmosphere / I shall behold my dead again?” The poem plays on two

meanings of "my dead": on the one hand, they are deceased people the narrator has known, whom he will be reunited with in heaven; on the other hand, they are the narrator's own past selves whom have successively "died" as he has climbed the allegorical "mount divine" of "Art." Thus, the poem laments loss in two respects: loss of others and loss of selves over time. In the context of Mooney's ethnography, these lines are meant to evoke an association between loss and nostalgia on personal and social levels.

The second epigraph comes from Edna Dean Proctor's (1892) "The Song of the Ancient People." In the poem, Proctor writes in the voice of a Zuni Indian addressing a white reader and their encroaching civilization. The poem was widely praised by contemporaries for presenting an authentic Indian voice and thus was likened to ethnography. In his preface to the poem, John Fiske credits John Whittier with proposing the title based on his sense that "we hear their own voice and feel their own heart's beat in every line" (1892:xv). "The poet's instinct was here as sure as if he had been an ethnologist," Fiske continues (1892:xv-xvi). The ethnographic legitimacy of the poem is reinforced by Frank Hamilton Cushing's appended commentary, written in his "Zuni Familiar" persona. "The poem itself," Cushing writes, "seems to invite such a course,—so ancient is it in spirit and feeling, so true to the thought and the lore of the people it speaks for" (1892:27). The poem even merited a review in the nation's leading anthropological journal, in which Washington Matthews noted: "The review of a poem would ordinarily not come within the province of a journal devoted to science, but 'The Song of the Ancient People' is so strictly based on modern ethnological researchers that

we feel we may make an exception in its favor and treat it in the pages of *The American Anthropologist*" (1893:340).

Mooney's excerpt captures a moment of "hopeless woe" as the Zuni narrator acknowledges that American civilization will encompass and supersede his own: "The fires grow cold, and the dances fail / And the songs in their echoes die; / And what have we left but the graves beneath, / And, above, the waiting sky?" Mooney's selection is interesting, however, because it is uncharacteristic of the poem as a whole. Proctor concludes the poem on a rather different note: though the narrator likens his world to night's darkness vanishing in daylight, he draws on his people's proud history and declares, "We will not brook disdain! / . . . For we are the Ancient People, / Born with wind and rain!" (1892:23-24).

Most commentators emphasize the concluding tone of the poem. Cushing legitimizes the narrator's defiant fatalism with his own personal ethnographic authority: "Miss Proctor tells us in words so like their own that it seems almost vain to add another. Yet this is what their old men say" (1892:48). The following paragraph is marked off by quotations as the discourse of an elder, which includes such statements as: "Let us then turn our backs to the coming time of stormy thoughts, our faces to the mighty past of our ancients—that past which never ceases—that we may remember we are their children, and be strong yet a little longer" (1892:48). Cushing then resumes: "In such wise do the old men answer when some one younger wonders how it will seem when they are all like 'Americans,' as some Americans promise they shall be. 'Ye will not be like them,' I once heard a venerable sage reply, 'ye will be dead! Aye, and 't is better so!" (1892:49). In his review, Matthews praises Proctor for emphasizing "the higher and more romantic

elements in the American autochthon," including in the end "his brave resignation to a fate which he beholds approaching and knows he cannot avert. For her Indian there is no Messiah. He bows his head proudly and awaits the stroke" (1893:340).

In this context, Mooney's particular selection of lines for his epigraph and his choice of Proctor's poem in general seems peculiar. The poem, as Cushing's supplementary quotations emphasize, presents the past as a source of strength in the face of adversity, which is also one of Mooney's central themes. But the lines of "hopeless woe" Mooney selects for his epigraph fail to convey that theme at all. Furthermore, in the poem as a whole, Proctor presents Indians accepting the triumph of white civilization with a kind of proud fatalism; as Matthews puts it, "for her Indian there is no Messiah." But nothing could be more contrary than this to the spirit of the Ghost Dance, a messianic movement that promised peaceful co-existence with whites in some cases and the removal of whites from the Plains in others but in all cases resisted a fatalistic acceptance of white domination and Indian disappearance. What we learn by examining the original context of this epigraph, then, is that Mooney was very deliberately decontextualizing from his source material to compose his poetic framings. In the case of his second epigraph, he chose unrepresentative lines from a poem itself contrary to the essence of the Ghost Dance in order to enhance the pathos of his discussion.

Mooney's final epigraph, "My Father, have pity on me! / I have nothing to eat, / I am dying of thirst— / Everything is gone!" comes from an Arapaho Ghost Dance song. In his commentary on the song, Mooney writes that it is "the most pathetic of the Ghost-dance songs. It is sung to a plaintive tune, sometimes with tears rolling down the cheeks of the dancers as the words would bring up thoughts of their present miserable and

dependent condition. It may be considered the Indian paraphrase of the Lord's prayer" (1896:977).

Even in their mere juxtaposition, the three epigraphs make a powerful statement about the Ghost Dance as an object for aesthetic appreciation: Mooney places a Ghost Dance song alongside two contemporary poems, which suggests that they are in some sense equivalent literary productions. And while they hint at his central themes, what unites them all is their tragic, woeful, pathetic tone. They all articulate moments of despair and thus invite readers to relate to the material with aesthetic appreciation and pitying identification. Mooney is concerned with eliciting the empathy of his readers; he plays to their emotions as much as to their intellects. The epigraphs mimic on an emotional level the function of Mooney's intellectual themes that universalize the seemingly exotic Ghost Dance as another instance of general features of individual, social, and religious life, revolving around nostalgia for glorious pasts in contrast to desperate current conditions. Mooney knows that for his account to resonate with readers, he must link the particularity of the Ghost Dance with more familiar and accessible themes; he accomplishes this on emotional and asethetic levels with poetic framings.

In fact, the epigraphs are just the beginning of this strategy, as his account is full of literary and poetic allusions. The title of the first chapter, "Paradise Lost," references Milton's epic poem, and the chapter begins with an epigraph from a poem attributed to Thomas Moore that evokes a nostalgic atmosphere: "There are hours long departed which memory brings / Like blossoms of Eden to twine round the heart" (Mooney 1896:657). Mooney also incorporates poetry into his analyses. His comments on an Arapaho song—"How bright is the moonlight! / How bright is the moonlight! Tonight as I ride with my

load of buffalo beef, / Tonight as I ride with my load of buffalo beef'"—conclude with an excerpt from Philip Freneau's "The Indian Burying-Ground." "There is something peculiarly touching," Mooney writes, "in this dream of the old life—this Indian heaven where—'In meadows wet with moistening dews, / In garments for the chase arrayed, / The hunter still the deer pursues— / The hunter and the deer a shade'" (1896:967). Freneau's poem contrasts the narrator's view—that "The posture that we give the dead / Points out the soul's eternal sleep"—with an Indian belief in a life-like existence after death. It describes an Indian cemetery haunted by the presence of the buried, where "Reason's self shall bow the knee / To shadows and delusions here" (2006[1787]). In Freneau's poem, Indians figure as a ghostly and irrational presence on the landscape. Here again, we see Mooney recontextualizing poems alongside Ghost Dance songs and positioning both as aesthetic/emotional objects for readers: Mooney finds the song "peculiarly touching," leading him to quote Freneau's lines for emotional and aesthetic effect while ignoring the thematic concerns of the poem as a whole.

Overall, Mooney uses multiple strategies to de-sensationalize the Ghost Dance so that readers can relate to the natives. On the one hand, he invokes Ecclesiastes to argue that "there is nothing new under the sun;" the Ghost Dance is simply another social and religious expression of nostalgia as a universal response to suffering, whether of old age or oppression. On the other hand, Mooney draws on contemporary American Romantic poetry both to reinforce that argument and to engage his readers' aesthetic and emotional faculties. By setting poems side by side with Ghost Dance songs, he invites readers to relate to them as aesthetic objects, specifically objects imbued with pathos: the poems and the songs capture "peculiarly touching," "pathetic," and "plaintive" moments of loss

and "hopeless woe" (clearly, these images drew from and played into notions of romantic, tragic, and vanishing Indians widespread at the time). Mooney's poetry introduces/frames the subsequent narrative and is a literary strategy designed to connect a readership with native experience. This problem was especially acute for Mooney in *The Ghost Dance Religion*, not only because he was writing in a historical moment in which the Ghost Dance had become politicized and sensationalized by the "Sioux outbreak," but also because nativism and messianism among the Other in general, and especially as a response to the Self, present extreme barriers to identification; the reader must come to identify with an Other who explicitly critiques the self. This is precisely where we may want to gain some critical distance on Mooney, for while his emphasis on the universal features of the Ghost Dance makes it more accessible to readers, it does so, in part, by sheltering the reader from the specificity of its reader-directed cultural critique.

Mooney's treatment of the Ghost Dance and use of poetry to frame it as an aesthetic object imbued with pathos carries relevance for research on language revitalization. Mooney writes for a more general public, for whom he makes the Ghost Dance accessible by framing it as an aesthetic art object. This connects with an emerging anthropological literature examining the rhetoric surrounding language endangerment that derives from a seminal article by Jane Hill (2002).[1] Moore (2006), for example, has argued that scholarly and popular approaches to language endangerment fall into two categories: memorialization and regenerativity. Memorialization partakes of European aesthetic discourses of Wonder and the Sublime to cultivate an appreciation for the vanishing beauty of endangered languages. Regenerativity, on the other hand, involves an

[1] This article is discussed in detail in Chapters 7 and 8 of this dissertation.

orientation to language use and revitalization. In Moore's framework, Mooney's approach to the Ghost Dance was clearly one of memorialization.

Of the monographs mentioned above, Meek (2010) and Perley (2011) address the discursive strategies that are used to make language revitalization a compelling cause for various audiences. Meek, for example, finds that provincial government rhetoric intended to support language maintenance—including slogans like "We are our language"—ends up essentializing a link between aboriginal languages and aboriginal identities that marginalizes those who do not speak their heritage languages (see also Chapter 8 of this dissertation). In a similar vein, Perley (2011) engages with the issue of what constitutes effective rhetorical strategies for raising awareness about language loss in his ethnography of Maliseet language revitalization. Perley mobilizes sophisticated representational and rhetorical discourses to persuade Maliseet tribal members to embrace language revitalization. He presents Maliseet language as an important aspect of Maliseet identity and sovereignty and replaces terms like "language shift" and "language death" with "language suicide" in order to emphasize community complicity in language loss. His Wəlastəkwi Cosmogensis / Maliseet Cosmological Beginnings project constitutes a complementary aesthetic/spiritual expression of his perspective on language loss and revitalization through a multimedia art installation that he sees as a form of prayer. Thus, like Mooney, Perley turns to art as a way of expanding ethnographic representation, though the function of art in his aesthetic practice is very different from Mooney's. The problematic ways in which Mooney frames the Ghost Dance as an aesthetic object raises questions about who has the authority to speak for revitalization movements. Nevins raises this question for language revitalization in an ethnography that

criticizes linguists for attempting to speak for endangered languages rather than listening to indigenous voices.

In other words, Mooney's text demonstrates that anthropological concern with discourse surrounding endangered languages is a problem present in the very origins of anthropological attention to revitalization movements. Issues of rhetoric and audience related to language revitalization are therefore not only a recent phenomenon but have long been central to anthropological research on revitalization movements.

**Moment 2: Midcentury Research on Acculturation**

In 1943, Ralph Linton published an article examining "nativistic movements" in the context of midcentury research on acculturation. Linton defines a nativistic movement as "any conscious, organized attempt on the part of a society's members to revive or perpetuate selected aspects of its culture" (1943:230). By "conscious, organized effort," Linton means that nativistic movements are predicated on an awareness of boundaries between one's own culture and other cultures that threaten one's own. In other words, nativistic movements are founded on native metacultural models—local theories of dynamic cultures in contact over time. By "selected aspects of culture," Linton means that nativistic movements do not seek to revive whole cultures in their entirety; rather, "certain current or remembered elements of culture are selected for emphasis and given symbolic value" (1943:231). How exactly an element of culture like language is singled out and invested with symbolic value is a central theme of this dissertation.

Linton goes on to develop a typology of nativistic movements based on distinctions between revivalistic and perpetuative orientations and magical and rational logics. Revival involves bringing back "extinct" or "moribund" cultural practices, while

perpetuation involves continuing current ones believed to be threatened (1943:231). To illustrate revivalistic nativism, Linton cites "the Celtic revival in Ireland," which seeks "to revive a moribund national language" (1943:231). Linton's distinction corresponds to, on one hand, that between language maintenance and revitalization, which generally refer to efforts to increase numbers of speakers and expand domains for use of a language that is still spoken, and on the other hand, language revival, which generally refers to efforts to bring back in some capacity a language that is no longer spoken. This distinction features prominently in much of the literature on language preservation (e.g., Hinton and Hale 2008 and Leonard 2011 on "sleeping languages") and is also relevant in language policy (see Chapters 7 and 8 of this dissertation).

Linton's distinction between magical and rational movements is less sharp, but it concerns the logic governing the selection of cultural elements to be revived or perpetuated. Drawing implicitly on a long tradition of anthropological theories of magic that goes back at least to Frazier, Linton suggests that magical nativism applies the logic of contagion to culture. It operates on the metonymical principle that reviving a particular cultural practice will bring into being an associated way of life:

> In such movements moribund elements of culture are not revived for their own sake or in anticipation of practical advantages from the element themselves. . . . The society's members feel that by behaving as the ancestors did they will . . . help to recreate the total situation in which the ancestors lived. Perhaps it would be more accurate to say that they are attempting to recreate those aspects of the ancestral situation which appear desirable in retrospect. [1943:232]

In rational movements, by contrast, the selected elements are chosen because of their psychological or social function: they are "chosen realistically and with regard to the possibility of perpetuating them under current conditions" (1943:233).

Linton seems less committed to the magical/rational axis of his typology than to the revivalistic/perpetuative one. He recognizes that the "realism" of rational movements is relative: since he finds all revitalization movements "to some extent unrealistic," the rational are not inherently so but only "appear rational by contrast" with the magical (1943:232). Linton's ambivalence here seems justified. After all, a contagious or metonymical principle of selection is rational in the context of a theory of culture (anthropological or native) that assumes indexical relations between elements. In fact, this is often precisely what the work of selecting a specific cultural element and investing it with symbolic value accomplishes: it associates the selected element with something else significant. Aside from linguists, whose job it is to analyze grammatical structures, most people care about language because the code is believed to be capable of producing something else: culture, identity, political autonomy, desired behaviors, etc.

In other words, language revitalization is a (relatively) "magical" project in the sense that the symbolic manipulation of a specific cultural practice (in this case a linguistic code; in others, a dance, etc.) is linked to a systematic series of social transformations. (Similarly, anxiety about language shift is often connected to a sense that a waning code is an index of much broader structures of oppression—thus the research situation becomes a microcosmic alternative moral universe [Dobrin and Schwartz n.d.]). In the case of language revitalization, bringing back a traditional language is usually seen as a way of bringing back a whole ensemble of associated worldviews and practices.

As we have already seen, language revitalization programs that successfully transmit the decontextualized code without producing the expected associated effects

end, as a rule, in disappointment and controversy. Of the ethnographic monographs discussed above, Meek (2010) and Nevins (2013) both provide examples of how heritage languages taught in institutional contexts are often stripped of the very indexical connections that community members value; thus, what is transmitted is a decontextualized code divorced from the interactional styles and sociocultural practices that make the code meaningful (see also Samuels 2006). Debenport (2015) focuses on the other side of the same coin, showing how connections between the code and ways of being Keiwa are built into Pueblo pedagogical materials. I take a similar constructivist approach in this dissertation. Perley's (2011) approach also involves attending to ways in which indexical connections are created: finding himself surrounded by tribal members apathetic about language revitalization because they believe Maliseet identities are rooted in other forms of historical experience and cultural practice, he seeks to make Maliseet language an essential part of what it means to be Maliseet. Finally, Morgan's (2009) account also revolves around symbolic associations: she describes how historical factors have created indexical and iconic connections among, on the one hand, English, literacy, and colonialism and, on the other hand, Nakoda, orality, and autonomy. Thus, some tribal members oppose literacy as a tool for language revitalization because it is associated with English and colonialism. For them, to teach Nakoda using literacy would represent another step toward assimilation. In other words, there is an indexical connection between the code and method of transmission such that to transmit the code using the "wrong" method is perceived as promoting cultural rupture rather than preserving continuity. Thus, the magical or rational nature of connections between language and

whatever language is supposed to be capable of producing is a key tension animating ethnographic research on language revitalization.

Linton also makes the important point that nativistic movements often divide societies into competing factions, some of which promote the maintenance or revival of perceived traditional practices and others which advocate assimilation (1943:239). He thus destabilizes any notion that "societies are homogeneous and react as wholes to contact situations" (1943:239). As noted above, ideological diversity among tribal members is a central theme in ethnographic research on Native American language revitalization: Morgan (2009) notes conflicting views on whether literacy is appropriate in Nakoda language revitalization; Meek (2010) describes generational differences in attitudes toward Kaska language preservation; Perley (2011) himself enacts intra-community conflict in his efforts to galvanize tribal members to support Maliseet language maintenance; Nevins (2013) highlights language-related conflicts among authorities in different domains of Apache community life including school, home, and religious settings; Debenport's (2015) eventual exclusion from the language program she was involved in was the result of community controversy around the role of literacy in Keiwa language maintenance. Diversity within indigenous or minority speech communities is also emphasized in this dissertation (see Chapters 7 and 8).

It would be remiss to discuss midcentury anthropological research on revitalization movements without mentioning the work of Anthony Wallace. Wallace defines a revitalization movement as "a deliberate, organized, conscious effort by members of a society to construct a more satisfying culture" (1956:265), which is essentially Linton's definition of nativistic movements; Wallace, however, reserves

"nativistic" to describe a specific kind of revitalization focused on eliminating alien cultural elements. Wallace's article feels more dated than Linton's, in part because Wallace's discussion revolves around his "mazeway" concept and therefore is oriented toward a particular framework in psychological anthropology. It is also more narrowly focused on religious revitalizations, whereas Linton treats nativistic movements more generally. Whether focused on religion, language, or some other cultural element, Linton discusses selection and symbolic valuation as processes that operate across different kinds of movements.

Wallace does, however, make an important observation about what he calls "the identification problem" (1956:276). According to Wallace, though most revitalizations combine traditional and imported elements, they often claim to be either traditional (concerned with reviving elements from the past) or foreign (focused on elements borrowed from elsewhere) (1956:276). In other words, most movements present themselves as purely traditional or foreign even though they are empirically hybrid. Nevins makes an analogous observation when she points out that while linguists act "in the name of preserving the past," what they are "actually doing . . . is recasting local languages into "old" forms recognizable as such within the institutions of the dominant society" (2013:22).

Wallace explains this tendency by proposing that both traditional and foreign are viewed in both positive and negative terms; identifying with one to the exclusion of the other resolves this "double ambivalence" (1956:276). To the extent that revitalizations resolve ambiguity by presenting as either traditional or innovative, many movements will be characterized, at least from an external perspective, by significant disjunctures

between discourse and practice: what people say about what they do will not correspond to their observed actions. The identification and explanation of such "disjunctures" is a central theme in ethnographies of language revitalization (Meek 2010; Nevins 2013).

Before moving on to consider more recent research on revitalization movements, it is necessary to highlight one more aspect of midcentury work. Both Linton and Wallace emphasize that revitalization movements are predicated on an indigenous awareness of their own culture as something that can be modified through conscious effort. This is evident from their respective definitions of nativistic and revitalization movements as "any conscious, organized attempt on the part of a society's members to revive or perpetuate selected aspects of its culture" (Linton 1943:230) and "a deliberate, organized, conscious effort by members of a society to construct a more satisfying culture" (Wallace 1956:265). This contrasts with Boas's notion of culture—derived from his concept of language—as an ingrained tradition largely inaccessible to those living in its sway (Bauman and Briggs 2003).

Since language revitalization assumes a native metacultural model—including theories of linguistic and cultural contact and change and associated discourses that explicitly invoke "culture," "language," etc.—they have the potential to circulate discourses and ideologies of "language" and "culture" that conflict with anthropological understandings of these terms. Manuela Carneiro da Cunha (2009) has described interaction between anthropological and indigenous "culture" discourses in political and legal contexts concerned with traditional knowledge and intellectual property. Language revitalization is another domain in which anthropologists confront indigenous "culture"

discourses that may or may not parallel their own, raising questions about the role of anthropological expertise in such encounters.

This tension is heightened by the fact that ethnographers are often expected to participate in the language revitalization efforts they study in ways that may go beyond conventional participant observation and that respond to indigenous concerns about how hosting researchers benefits their communities. Participation in revitalization projects is a form of reciprocity by which researchers seek to make a positive contribution to the communities in which they study. However, this has the potential to involve researchers in intra-community conflicts (Debenport 2015; Nevins 2013; see also Chapter 7 in this dissertation) or to position them in the role of promoting potentially problematic nationalist ideologies (Perley 2011). The fact that these are *indigenous* rather than dominant nationalisms may not be enough to resolve the conflict. Richard Handler (1993), for example, questions a persistent double standard in anthropology: why, he asks, do we deconstruct dominant nationalisms but uncritically support minority ones? In contrast to the "romantic anthropologist" who "accept[s] . . . Bongo Bongo self-definition" and makes "Bongo Bongo ethnicity, commodified" part of their professional identity, Handler suggests that anthropologists have other professional obligations: for him, the goal of anthropology is to show that "human beings live according to culturally constructed values" and therefore to deconstruct all ideologies that claim those values are natural or universal. Anthropology is thus a critical project, and criticizing the natives is a form of respect—"to celebrate the natives' nationalism is the true act of condescension" for Handler (1993:74). Given Handler's position, anthropological affirmation of native language (or other) revitalization movements seems problematic. I return to similar issues

in Chapters 7 and 8, where I discuss the role of language/culture equations in Native American language policy and advocacy. Recent research on revitalization movements raises analogous issues, which are discussed in the following section.

**Moment 3: Revitalizing "Revitalization"**

A relatively recent edited volume, *Reassessing Revitalization Movements: Perspectives from North America and the Pacific Islands* (Harkin, ed., 2004), makes the case that midcentury models of revitalization movements are still relevant today. Based on ethnographic and historical research on American Indian revitalization movements and Pacific so-called "cargo cults," the authors apply, critique, and expand the model of revitalization movements that anthropologists like Linton and Wallace developed.

In his Foreword, Wallace (2004) himself challenges the savage slotted-ness of the revitalization movement concept. He argues that revitalization movements are not limited to colonized communities; they can arise in postcolonial contexts or as a result of internal dynamics in colonial or imperial nations. Pointing to Muslim examples like Wahhabism and the writings of Sayyid Qutb, as well as to the rise of the Christian Right and neoconservatism in the United States, Wallace argues that the revitalization model applies as well to these hyper-contemporary phenomena, in part because these movements elaborate an external threat to promote an internal struggle. Thus, neo-colonizers promote their agenda by taking on a colonized worldview:

> The colonialist model may apply to the mentalité of contemporary revitalization movements in large polities, even though an objective evaluation of the economic, political, and military situation denies them colonial status. Colonialist fears may be psychologically true for revitalizers, who see social conflict and culture change not as the result of internal contradictions but as the play of malevolent external powers that are subverting the old values. [Wallace 2004:xi]

This is indeed highly relevant to the case of language preservation in that American Indian language preservation, especially in the Southwest, often emerges as a response to English-Only movements (Nevins 2013:16-17), which themselves present English as threatened in the United States by an influx of foreign (these days, Spanish-speaking) immigrants. The uncomfortable realization that emerges from expanding the revitalization movement concept beyond the savage slot—the realization that colonial projects as well as anti-colonial resistance wear the same clothes, and that Native American language preservation and English-Only share the same tropes—serves to connect the revitalization literature with the literature on the role of culture in nationalism and inventions of tradition.

Harkin suggests viewing "revitalization not as a scientific theory, subject to endless empirical critiques, but as closer to a literary genre, in which common elements combine to constitute a basic structure, which is then subject to transformations" (2004:144). This view strips the model of some of its midcentury trappings of scientific authority and systematicity, but it expands its current interpretive reach and helps account for these sorts of similarities by identifying a similar narrative in both anti-colonial/indigenous and colonial/imperial nationalism. Harkin notes, following Wallace, that the connection between revitalization and nationalism was at least implicit at the inception of revitalization studies, including Mooney's study of the Ghost Dance:

> Numerous nationalist movements, even predating the 19th-century heyday of nationalism, draw on an implicit revitalization teleology. The national histories of Germany, Poland, Lithuania, and Ireland, in particular, are redolent with revitalization themes. . . . For Wallace these include "an awareness of ancient glories, of a sense of wrong and deprivation, and a dream of a golden age returned" (1965:vi). This "Arthurian" formulation is, for Wallace, the archetype that James Mooney—an Irish American active in Fenian politics—applied, although never explicitly, to the first

> scholarly study of a revitalization movement, the Ghost Dance. [Harkin 2004:xx-xxi]

This is, in a sense, the historical origin of the persistent connection between revitalization and nationalism.

From a theoretical perspective, Siikala (2004) argues that Wallace's revitalization model relies on Hobbesian contractual and Durkheimian collective assumptions about the construction of culture as a social contract designed to coordinate individual actions. This image may be appealing because "that is how our society seems to work," but based on cases of revitalization movements in the Solomon and Cook Islands, Siikala (2004) argues that Polynesian movements are more about creating inventive and differentiating symbolic interpretations than a collectivizing logic.

A number of the authors present ethnographic cases that deal with revitalization, the invention of tradition, and culture discourse in the Pacific (e.g., Henry [2004] on ethnomedicine and nationalism in Tahiti) and North America. McMullen (2004) and Nesper (2004) provide contrasting perspectives on the role of invented traditions among American Indians in southeastern New England (Mohegans, Narragansetts, Nipmucs, Pequots, and Wampanoags) and spearfishing as a symbol of Anishinaabe identity among Lac du Flambeau Chippewa in Wisconsin, respectively.

McMullen argues that invented traditions arise as part of revitalizations, emerging from explicit attempts at cultural change that nonetheless establish continuity with the past. She derives this notion from Linton's and Wallace's efforts to define intentionality and cultural consciousness as critical to revitalization: "Because ideological changes are primary to nativism and revitalization, cultural change and the emphasis or invention of traditions are essentially by-products of revitalization, which is—at its heart—about

power and the relationship between superordinate and subordinate and not about cultural difference" (McMullen 2004:267). McMullen does not de-emphasize cultural difference in order to deconstruct invented indigenous cultural nationalisms as inauthentic but in order to examine the social action and meaning of such revitalized inventions. She argues that they are involved in constructing distinctive indigenous identities that are recognizable to, but oppose, the skeptical surrounding society, which has stereotypical ideas about what authentic Indians do. McMullen emphasizes that much of this identity work is discursive and metapragmatic rather than behavioral; in other words, it entails talking about culture, history, and identity, rather than engaging in particular practices. Indigenous languages are no exception to this trend:

> Native languages are also primary ethnic and nationalistic symbols often used at powwows. Native language in ceremonies and prayers at powwows and other public events suggests perfect continuity with the distant past and is part of ongoing resistance to assimilation. However, powwow speakers do not admit that language proficiency results from recent, individual efforts to reclaim traditional languages or that their proficiency is confined to the Lord's Prayer or other texts recorded by 17th-century missionaries. [2004:273]

In short, McMullen uses anthropological relativity to undermine the critical/deconstructive thrust of "invented traditions": "In working on ethnic and national projects, native people continually create their own reality, which in turn is simultaneously allied with and opposed to the realities created by those around them. As with all anthropological understandings, these realities are relative, and we must understand them as products of the colonial constructs that surround them and the postcolonial worlds they reflect" [2004:275].

Drawing on Marshall Sahlins, Larry Nesper sees invented traditions less as "by-product" of revitalization than as parallel terms to characterize similar phenomena with

varying credibility: to call something (like the European Renaissance) a revitalization is to validate it as authentic, whereas to call a tradition "invented" is to call its authenticity into question. Thus, Nesper argues that Ojibwe spearfishing is not an invented tradition but a customary practice, in Hobsbawm's sense. It became described as "traditional" in native rhetoric, but this corresponds to Hobsbawm's notion of "custom" as a long-standing historical practice/action, rather than "tradition" in the sense of ritual and symbolic accoutrement/accessories to action.

This raises a set of issues related to metapragmatic discourse about what "culture," "custom," and "tradition" is, and the role of such discourse in ethnic nationalism. Questions of authenticity are obviously central, and the notion of an "invented tradition" is seen as variously relative. McMullen essentially sees all realties as invented in ways that respond to contemporary power relations. Nesper is more explicitly interested in discourse, where to call something an "invented" vs. "revitalized" tradition implies a judgment about authenticity (the relative dimension is that one person's invention is another's revitalization). He also points out that terms like "tradition" and "custom" can have different meanings in indigenous and scholarly rhetoric: Hobsbawm uses "tradition" to in a different way than Ojibwe who call something a "tradition."

In short, the authors in *Reassessing Revitalization Movements* successfully make the case that the "revitalization movement" concept remains relevant today, especially in raising questions about nationalism, "invented traditions," and cultural authenticity. As we have seen in work by Meek (2010), Nevins (2013), and Perley (2011)—and will see in further detail in the chapters that follow—it is precisely the potential for conflict

between linguistic, anthropological, and indigenous discourses on these topics that animate the social dynamics surrounding language revitalization.

## Conclusion

Studies of revitalization movements focus on the emulation of ancestors as a central theme (Harkin 2004; Mooney 1896; Linton 1943:232). McMullen writes:

> Much has been made of revitalization movements that focus on the extermination of colonialists and the return of the dead, such as the Ghost Dance, but in such cases we must ask what impact the return of the dead might have. Are such cases truly about the return of physical persons, or are they about recharging a cultural world with the traditional knowledge and moral and spiritual state that the dead represent? [2004:275]

Similarly, we can ask whether language revitalization is really about bringing an ancestral code back to life or whether language serves as a symbolic resource for broader cultural projects seeking to reclaim the traditional knowledge and worldviews that the language represents. Since language revitalization must do more than promote a code to succeed—since it must also help "construct a more satisfying culture" (Wallace 1956:265)—treating language revitalization as a revitalization movement helps direct our attention to the investment of social labor that makes language a culturally significance locus for revitalization activity. Giving language cultural value is a complex social accomplishment, however, and involves a variety of practitioners and constituencies with diverse language and culture ideologies. The next chapter outlines some of the social interconnections between networks dedicated to Siouan language revitalization and those dedicated to revitalizing other aspects of Native American lifeways.

# Chapter 3

## Revitalization as Social Experience

Many kinds of revitalization movements animate people living on the Plains today. These movements create intersecting networks of researchers and activists—indigenous and non-indigenous—working to revitalize various aspects of historical or traditional Native American lifeways. Though participants in these movements often specialize in a particular topic like heritage languages, ancient and heirloom crops, or arts and crafts, they maintain connections with people involved in other kinds of revitalization efforts. The connections between language preservation and related revitalization movements go beyond the intellectual affinities discussed in Chapter 2. The connections are also evoked through social experience, as I observed in the course of my fieldwork.

In this chapter, I provide examples of social interconnections between different revitalization networks. The first network I focus on, which drew me into this project, is dedicated to researching and revitalizing various aspects of Ioway and Otoe-Missouria heritage. This network has no formal name or institutions, though participants are active in various email lists and Facebook groups dedicated to Ioway and Otoe-Missouria topics. While participants in this network interact with other participants on a variable basis, there is little sense of collective identity among them. This contrasts with the second network, the Siouanists, which intersects the first and is dedicated to documenting and revitalizing Siouan languages. Siouanists have a strong collective identity, and formal institutions such as the annual Siouan and Caddoan Languages Conference and the Siouan List facilitate regular communication among members.

Both networks are composed of academic researchers, community activists and educators, and tribal members. These categories are neither exhaustive nor discrete: both scholars and tribal members are involved in community activism and education; there are also community activists and educators who are neither academic researchers nor tribal members, as discussed below. Likewise, some tribal members have advanced degrees and extensive research experience, though none of the tribal members involved in the two networks I describe are currently pursuing careers in academia.

In addition to supplying the textual argument of the previous chapter with a basis in social experience, this chapter also serves to introduce the Siouanist community as the (geographically dispersed) collective inhabiting the social boundaries of my fieldsite. The chapter also introduces some of my primary consultants, several of whom reappear in subsequent chapters. In narrating my account of coming to this project (an arrival story of sorts) and the methods I employed, I describe my own process of socialization, which I then compare to others' experiences. Through introductions to my primary contacts and consultants and comparative accounts of socialization, this chapter presents a portrait of the social intersections and structures of these networks and offers a sense of how individuals navigate them.

## Bill Green

I first heard of the Ioway Indians and Chiwere language in the spring of my junior year of college. Looking for a senior thesis topic, I e-mailed the chair of the anthropology department, who introduced me to Bill Green. Before he came to Beloit to direct the College's Logan Museum of Anthropology, Bill was the director of the Office of the State Archaeologist at the University of Iowa. As the State Archaeologist of Iowa, Bill

had two primary goals, one of which was to promote the possibilities of native crops for modern Iowa agriculture. Many associate the native crops of the Midwest with Indian gardens of corn, beans, and squash; however, Three Sisters style horticulture is a relatively late development in the archaeological record. In a cryptically titled 1924 article in *American Anthropologist*, "The Significance of Certain Traits in North American Maize Culture," Ralph Linton compared the eastern United States maize complex with those of the Southwest and Mexico. He observed that eastern maize cultures cultivated corn with a hoe rather than a digging stick, hulled the kernels with lye or wood ashes rather than lime water, ground corn into meal with mortars and wooden pestles rather than metates, and consumed boiled maize foods rather than baked corn breads. Confronted with a classic independent invention vs. diffusion puzzle, Linton proposed that Southwest Indians borrowed cultural practices and technologies associated with Mexican maize cultivation; eastern maize culture, on the other hand, was "the result of the superposition of maize upon some older food complex which was itself rather elaborate." "It is not impossible that the eastern tribes had developed at least the beginnings of agriculture," he speculated (1924:349).

Archaeobotanical findings have confirmed Linton's speculations by documenting crop cultivation in North America prior to the introduction of maize. These earlier native crops are often called the Eastern Agricultural Complex—a misnomer since the Eastern Agricultural Complex was neither exclusively eastern, nor a complex, nor agricultural (Smith 2007:60 n. 1). Peoples in the Eastern Woodlands and across the Midwest and Plains cultivated and in some cases domesticated indigenous species including starchy seeded grasses (little barley *Hordeum pusillum* and maygrass *Phalaris caroliniana*),

starchy seeded weeds (goosefoot or lambsquarters *Chenopodium berlandieri* and erect knotweed *Polygonum erectum*), and oily seeded plants (sunflower *Helianthus annuus* and marshelder or sumpweed *Iva annua*), as well as tropical domesticates introduced to North America around 2,000 years ago—long before the arrival of maize—including gourds (*Cucurbita pepo*) and tobacco (*Nicotiana rustica*).

In 1992, Bill and a colleague reviewed archaeobotanical data from sites across Iowa and found that indigenous peoples there cultivated many of the crops associated with the Eastern Agricultural Complex beginning around 2,000 years ago. Some groups also cultivated amaranth (a relative of *Chenopodium*), fruit and nut trees, and roots and tubers (Asch and Green 1992:109). Following the introduction of corn around 1,000 years ago, however, intensified maize cultivation led to the decline or disappearance of many native domesticates. In addition to maize, Oneota sites (C.E. 1000-1700) show evidence of sunflower, gourd, and tobacco cultivation. Wild varieties of *Chenopodium* and amaranth are more prevalent than domesticated varieties, which suggests that they were no longer cultivated but were gathered as a wild resource (Green and Tolmie 2004:541). These trends continued into the historic period with the familiar image of Indian horticulture limited to corn, beans, and squash.

In this report and other publications (Green 1994), Bill connects archaeobotanical research with developments in sustainable agriculture. In particular, he presents the diversity of ancient native crops as an alternative to modern monoculture. He proposes "experimental gardens" where "the practical problems of growing and harvesting" native crops could be examined, suggesting that "fuller awareness of the varieties of ancient farming systems that were practiced in the Midwest broadens the numbers and types of

agricultural possibilities people today can consider, recombine, refine, and—in modified form—apply" (Asch and Green 1992:112-113). Bill argues that ancient diversity combined with modern innovations could have agricultural applications today, in spite of "the complex modern scene of agribusiness and international marketing" in which "industrial interests foster an almost insurmountable inertia, thwarting attempts at agricultural innovation and diversity which have no perceived immediate and substantial profit advantage:"

> We can compare monoculture systems to more diversified systems and learn about ancient crops or types of crops that might prove useful in certain modern contexts. Knowledge derived from paleoethnobotany can counteract some of the forces which have limited much of modern agricultural thinking to a dangerously narrow range of options. . . . While specific prehistoric crops or methods might not be appropriate today, better knowledge of traditional practices and systems should provoke innovative thinking and, potentially, an enormous expansion in the variety of experiments in sustainable agriculture and applications to modern conditions. [Green 1994:3]

In Bill's scholarship, Foucauldian archaeology intersects the dirt-and-trowel kind: ancient indigenous agricultural crops and techniques are "subjugated knowledges," "historical contents that have been [literally] buried" but which can be recovered by archaeology and mobilized as a form of resistance to modern agribusiness (Foucault 1980:81). But Foucault also uses "subjugated knowledges" to refer to "local popular knowledge" unauthorized and often opposed or suppressed by scientific forms of expertise, and he reserves genealogy for "the union of erudite knowledge and local memories which allows us to establish a historical knowledge of struggles and to make use of this knowledge tactically today" (1980:83). This "union of erudite . . . and local," however, elides key questions related to identification—for knowledge to be local, as well as historical, it has to be claimed by people who identify with a (marginal) place or

tradition. And to the extent that "erudite knowledge" emerges from archaeological or archival scholarship, it is in fact often opposed to "local memory."

Certainly, *Chenopodium* cultivation was "local popular knowledge" more than a thousand years ago, but it is not part of "local memory" today. Oneota sites are believed to be ancestral to several modern Siouan groups, including Chiwerean peoples (Ioway, Otoe, Missouria, Winnebago) and Dhegihan peoples (Kansa, Omaha, Osage, Ponca, Quapaw); and some members of these descendant communities draw on Oneota traditions as part of their cultural heritage (e.g., see Buffalohead 2004 and below). Oneota communities, however, intensified maize cultivation at the expense of native crops, which ultimately gave rise to familiar historic agricultural patterns. Bill's research on native crops therefore focuses on a pre-Oneota period beyond the horizon of current memories and identifications. There is no one to claim as their own the agricultural practices Bill unearths.

While many Plains Indians maintain gardens and share seeds for traditional varieties of crops, they primarily cultivate corn, beans, squash, gourds, watermelons, and tobacco— not *Chenopodium* and amaranth. In his painting "Wamanje Hintewi" ('Our Crops'), for example, Iowa tribal member Lance Foster (see below) depicts an Ioway woman with a scapula blade hoe cultivating corn, beans, pumpkins, squash, gourds, and sunflowers (Foster 2013; Morain 2013). Iowa tribal member Reuben Kent (see below) maintains a garden that includes heirloom corn, beans, squash, and tobacco, and he shares and exchanges seeds with others who are interested in growing heritage varieties of these crops. One exception that proves the rule is Iowa tribal member Brett Ramey (see below), who does plant amaranth and other ancient crops in his garden. His special interest is

revitalizing traditional indigenous horticultural practices and foodways. The point is that with a few exceptions like Brett, most Plains Indians identify corn, beans, and squash as traditional crops; they have little interest in cultivating Bill's pre-Oneota native crops.

The profound cultural discontinuities that characterize the rise of Oneota cultures—the intensification of maize cultivation being one example—may account for current tribal members' lack of identification with pre-Oneota practices. Bill argues that Late Woodland Effigy Mound peoples transitioned to Oneota identities through ritual adoption into Cahokia social networks and through associated importation of Mississippian ideologies, mythologies, and religious practices: "Oneota ethnogenesis occurred . . . through creolization, conversion, and coalescence. Therefore, group continuities and, thus, relationships of shared group identities cannot be traced prior to ca. A.D. 1200" (Green 2014:63). Though some Winnebago oral traditions identify their ancestors as effigy mound builders, these oral traditions likely originated with Paul Radin, who convinced his consultants of this notion— another inflection of the "union" of erudite and local: "the Ho-Chunk historical memory of building effigy mounds appears to exemplify the 'feedback' loop that develops in oral tradition when a group adopts and appropriates an outside 'expert' opinion regarding particular phenomena" (Green 2014:52). It is likely that current identification with Oneota practices represents a similar development.

The point is that while Bill's scholarship on native crops is clearly erudite knowledge, there is little in the way of local memory with which to unite: his vision is an alternative to both current agribusiness monoculture and Three Sisters style horticulture. The problem is not one of temporality—many modern traditions, especially literate ones,

view themselves as continuous with societies from the same era as the Woodland period in North America or before—but of identification: erudite historical scholarship often reveals a range of past traditions that challenge local memories as well as dominant discourses. Whether from the earth or archive, materials must be presented and activated in a way that resonate in order for them to be claimed and made relevant again.

While Bill's project to revive the cultivation of ancient crops has yet to resonate with modern farmers and tribal members, Bill's other primary goal as State Archaeologist of Iowa was to draw attention not to the state's native crops but to its native peoples, in particular the Ioway Indians after whom the state is named and who occupied Iowa around the time of European contact. Bill continued to research Ioway archaeology and history when he came to Beloit, and he offered to collaborate with me on a senior thesis on Iowaville, a village site located on the Des Moines River in southeastern Iowa occupied by Ioways in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Bill and I drove to Iowa a number of times to see the site, interview archaeologists and artifact collectors, map finds, inventory public and private collections, conduct archival research, and consult with tribal members. For my college thesis, I was interested not only in how Iowaville was relevant to historical and archaeological scholarship but also in how the site figured in Ioway historical narratives in the past and present. My primary theme was multiple perspectives: I wanted to know what the site meant to Ioways, traders, and colonial officials in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and for Ioways, archaeologists, and historians today. It was in the course of researching multiple perspectives on Iowaville with Bill that I was introduced to the work of Lance Foster.

## Lance Foster

In one section of my college thesis, I discussed Iowaville in the context of increased interest by some tribal members in reconnecting with their ancestral homelands in Iowa. As Lance Foster, a member of the Iowa Tribe of Kansas and Nebraska, wrote about this movement: "Something has begun to happen in the last twenty years. The Spirits of our Old People, the *S'ageh*, have begun to call their lost children home, home to Iowa, the land that bears our name" (1999:xx). Lance's biography exemplifies this process of tribal members returning to Iowa: though he grew up in Montana, Foster decided to go to graduate school at Iowa State University, where he received master's degrees in anthropology (with a thesis on the Ioway sacred bundle system) and landscape architecture. Lance's desire to find connections between his cultural heritage and his nation's homelands motivated his decision to move to Iowa. He writes:

> My real reason for returning to Iowa was to spend time in my ancestral home, visiting the sites of our *S'ageh*, understanding the seasons and elements, and connecting Ioway names of plants and animals to the actual plants and animals. For example, I had heard a story in which Trickster dresses as a woman, and uses the small seed balls of the sycamore tree as "tinkler" decorations. I finally held one of these balls in my hand, standing by Nagredhe, the Spotted Tree, the Sycamore, and thought of Trickster. [Foster 2000:146]

In this passage, Lance links the land of Iowa with the "*S'ageh*"—the previous generations who lived there—and describes connections between ancestral landscapes, language, and mythology. In fact, Lance sees tribal members' renewed interest in Iowa as related to the wishes of the "*S'ageh*" buried there:

> We talk now about this process which seems to have brought so many Ioway back to Iowa these last twenty years. It all seems part of a larger 'something' that we cannot see clearly just now. We have talked about reestablishing a presence here in Iowa, somewhere where there is a lot, an acre, a patch of woods or a spring. There we would once more make the sacred connection, re-establish the ancestral covenant. We talk about this.

> We will see. The *S'ageh*, the Old People, our grandmothers and grandfathers sleeping out there on the bluffs, made that covenant. Even now, perhaps they are guiding their wayward grandchildren to fulfill it once more. [Foster 2000:147-148]

While a full consideration of the role of elders in Ioway society is beyond the scope of this dissertation, we will see in a number of the following chapters that those involved in Chiwere language preservation are also motivated by a desire to connect and maintain continuity with the elders.

I was first introduced to Lance through his articles while researching Iowaville; at Bill's suggestion, I sent him my thesis when it was finished. Since then, I have been able to meet with Lance in person a number of times and interview him for my dissertation research. Lance is currently the Iowa Tribe of Kansas and Nebraska Tribal Historic Preservation Officer, in which capacity he is also responsible for language development for tribal members and teaches weekly language classes on the reservation. Bill and Lance know each other through their mutual interest in Oneota and Ioway archaeology and history. In addition to discussing language-related issues with me, Lance has assisted Bill and me in securing tribal permission to view sensitive cultural materials in museum collections. Thus, Lance and I have a number of overlapping interests and points of contact related both to language and historical material culture. Lance is also regularly in touch with tribal members interested in Ioway history and heritage like Rebecca, Reuben, and Brett, and he communicates (and sometimes collaborates) with Jimm and Sky on Chiwere language revitalization (see below). Through the language classes he teaches on the reservation, for example, Lance has identified a number of tribal members with a strong interest in Chiwere, and he has recommended them for positions with Jimm's language project. Lance also uses pedagogical materials produced by the Otoe-Missouria

Language Department (2014) in his classes. He is an active participant on the Siouan List.

**Rebecca Liberty**

In my college thesis, I presented Iowaville as a potential place to realize Lance's vision of "a lot, an acre, a patch of woods or a spring" in Iowa where tribal members could connect with their ancestors (Foster 2000:147-148). During my thesis research, I was able to talk to some tribal members about their hopes for the site. When I met with Rebecca Liberty, for example—a member of the Iowa Tribe of Kansas and Nebraska who served on the Office of the State Archaeologist Advisory Committee to consult on repatriation and other issues—she told me that younger Ioways were interested in using the site for cultural preservation. One idea was to use the site to grow native plants such as tobacco, squash, corn, and clan foods free of chemicals. Another idea was to use the site for camping and storytelling in order to give children an opportunity to learn about Ioway culture in the area where many Ioway stories take place. These ideas were presented as long-term goals that could be realized sometime in the future, but they demonstrated that Ioways considered Iowaville a significant site for cultural preservation—a site where future generations could be educated about their nation's traditions in their nation's traditional lands. Though I met Rebecca during my research on Iowaville, she is also interested in Chiwere language, and I encountered her a number of times during my fieldwork. She is often in touch with Lance, Brett, and Jimm and participates in events that Jimm hosts at his home. While Jimm's language project is controversial among some tribal members (see below), Rebecca is one of his most vocal supporters and defends his work against critics.

**Jimm Goodtracks**

The network of people with a serious interest in research on Ioway history and culture is small, and all the primary participants know each other. When I completed my college thesis, Bill suggested I send it to Jimm Goodtracks (as well as Lance and a few others). Bill is the one who first put me in touch with Jimm, whose Ioway, Otoe-Missouria Language Project became my primary opportunity for participant observation during dissertation research.

When I sent Jimm my college thesis, he sent me extensive comments that drew on his expertise in Ioway language and history and included excerpted entries from his dictionary. In one section of my thesis, for example, I discussed an Ioway ritual described by one of James Owen Dorsey's informants in which villagers sacrificed dogs and trade goods in order to quell a smallpox epidemic. I speculated that the Ioway perceived a connection between smallpox and foreign goods and therefore the sacrifice was in part a ritual purification. Jimm agreed with my interpretation and excerpted his dictionary entry for the lemma *ÑíyuMañi*, the name of a nineteenth century Ioway leader. The entry quoted statements *ÑíyuMañi* made on his European tour with artist George Catlin in the 1840s, in which he suggested that smallpox among the Indians was a divine punishment for listening to whites and imitating their ways.

Jimm also brought my attention to issues of orthography and translation when using Chiwere language terms. For example, my college thesis included a number of Ioway leaders' Chiwere names and reproduced transcriptions and translations I found in nineteenth-century sources. My thesis referred to one chief as *Notchimine*, glossed as 'No Heart of Fear.' In response, Jimm wrote:

> In this case, a more precise rendering of the above name is: *NahjeNinge* or *NahjeNiŋe*. The latter preferred spelling (orthography) is if your PC [personal computer] is fairly new and accesses upper ASCI or Unicode character fonts. Also this particular name is popularly glossed "No heart of fear." It is dramatic, but the name is literally rendered into "heart + none." One can argue that the popular gloss can be inferred, but so can such English renderings as "fearless" or even "heartless." I am not for the blind repetition of flawed information. While one may footnote a historically popular dubbing, I prefer to stay with the strict linguistic/language evidence and keep it as "No Heart," and leave it at that, in the lack of any cultural evidence to the contrary. Keep in mind that much of the oral history still in evidence may indeed be flawed and influenced by non-Native myths and stereotypes. Keep in mind these early day non-Natives were not linguists. [Personal communication, August 2, 2008]

Jimm also corrected the spelling of Chiwere words in quotations from Lance's writings: "S'ageh = S^age, 'elders, Old People'" and "Nagredhe = nagreyi$^{n}$, 'sycamore.'" The prospect that Lance's spelling could be considered incorrect puzzled me at the time, but I would come to discover that competing orthographic conventions is a common phenomenon in many communities working to preserve their heritage languages (see Chapter 4).

Finally, Jimm concluded by complimenting me on my college thesis and giving credit for it to the "old ones." His remarks reminded me of how Lance attributed tribal members' interest in returning to Iowa to the S'ageh/S^age:

> I thank you, Warigroxi ke, for your inspired paper on Iowaville. I cannot recall a more thorough and interestingly fine paper on a former village site of so long ago. You have made a substantial and lasting contribution to the whole of Baxoje history. I am thankful for your interests, for your inspiration to compose such a well-crafted writing. Indeed, we need be Thankful to those old ones of the 1800s, for I believe that they were the ones behind your excellent story, so to them, I say: Hintugan broge, Warigroxiwi ke ['Thank you, all my Grandfathers']. [Personal communication, August 2, 2008]

Jimm's comments naturally intrigued and delighted me. They also reinforced two themes that I had become interested in during the course of researching my thesis. I had

been reading the work of a number of scholars, indigenous and non-indigenous, who advocated decolonizing historiography by developing new ways to research and write about the past. They recommended two methods in particular: dialoging with community members and learning Native languages. With Jimm's comments, I felt I was experiencing the kind of dialogue that makes history useful not just to academics but also to the communities academics write about. Moreover, Jimm reinforced my sense that knowledge of Native languages was essential for the study of Indian history by providing concrete examples of how language and history were intertwined: he showed me how a dictionary of a certain sort could be useful for historiography. In order to continue the dialogue and develop my Chiwere language skills, I requested Jimm's language learning materials. After studying them for some months, I offered to assist Jimm with his language project during my first summer of graduate school.

Jimm accepted my offer to come work with him, and we arranged to meet at the 2009 Siouan and Caddoan languages conference in Lincoln, Nebraska. While Jimm is not a tribal member himself, he does claim Ioway and Otoe-Missouria heritage, and his children and grandchildren are enrolled members of the Otoe-Missouria and other tribes. Some tribal members question the legitimacy of Jimm's identity and language project (Furbee and Stanley 2002:118); other tribal members, like Rebecca, are strong supporters of Jimm and his work.

Jimm worked on Chiwere documentation and revitalization with the last generations of fluent speakers from the 1960s through the 1990s, in between a professional career in social work. When he retired, he began working full-time on language preservation. While he currently works without any formal institutional

affiliations, academic and tribal institutions have provided moral and material support over the years. The National Science Foundation's Documenting Endangered Languages (DEL) Program has supported Jimm's work with two substantial grants since 2007, the first awarded through the Iowa Tribe of Kansas and Nebraska to support his dictionary project and the other directly to Jimm to support work on a corpus. Jimm and I wrote the latter grant together in the fall of 2011; it was awarded in the spring of 2012. Both the dictionary and corpus projects are ongoing.

Jimm exemplifies how the emergence of documentary linguistics as an academic response to global concern about endangered languages has provided new opportunities for those involved in language preservation. The DEL program was established in 2005 and made permanent in 2007, reflecting the relatively recent prominence of documentary linguistics as a disciplinary subfield (National Science Foundation 2007). While Jimm has worked on language preservation for personal reasons since the 1960s, increased funding opportunities for language documentation has made him a professional practitioner since the initial award for his dictionary project in 2007.

Jimm also exemplifies the combined moral and scientific aspirations of documentary linguistics. He has little formal background in linguistics and in fact has little patience with what he sees as the more technical and esoteric aspects of linguistic description. He maintains that community members are the primary audience for his work, but he also tries accomodating linguistic audiences to the extent he is able. Participation in the Siouanist community provides his principle point of access to linguistics, and academic linguists who study Siouan languages have supported his work by consulting on specific issues and writing recommendation letters for his grant

applications. The fact that the DEL program would fund a "community linguist"[2] like Jimm illustrates how documentary linguistics as a disciplinary subfield balances scientific goals, on one hand, with a moral commitment to community engagement and empowerment, on the other.

Funding from the National Science Foundation has allowed Jimm to expand his wordlist dictionary (available upon request from the University of Colorado's Center for the Study of Indigenous Languages of the West [Goodtracks 1992)]) into the "encyclopedic" dictionary now available on his website. It has also allowed him to digitize and begin transcribing and translating analogue recordings that he has made of speakers since the 1960s. Before the grant, these deteriorating reels and cassette tapes were stored in a closet in Jimm's house. These projects involve massive investments of labor and have included funding for various forms of assistance with dictionary entry formatting, data entry, transcription, and similar tasks that require relatively little linguistics or language-specific background ("grunt work"). One can gather a sense of the scope and scale of the work that new funding has made possible by comparing the wordlist dictionary entry for *mixóge*—'gay person/homosexual/bisexual' (Goodtracks 1992:43)—with the expanded "encyclopedic" entry discussed in Chapter 5. It was Jimm's need for such labor and my interest in exploring potential participant observation

[2] The category "community linguist" generally includes speakers and other members of endangered or dormant language communities who do not have doctorates in linguistics or hold regular academic positions but who are deeply involved (professionally or otherwise) in language documentation and revitalization in their communities. For example, a community member who develops pedagogical materials, teaches languages classes, participates in teacher training, and/or organizes revitalization programs or a speaker who "works with a linguist as a consultant for an extended time, with great dedication, thereby making it possible for the language to be documented" or whose "metalinguistic insight into linguistic patterns makes a significant contribution to linguistic analysis" (Linguistic Society of America n.d.).

opportunities that led to our initial meeting.

So far, I have noted a number of ways in which Jimm is a somewhat liminal figure, one who moves between categories like Native American and non-indigenous, amateur and professional, academic and applied. As we will see below, others involved in Siouan language documentation and revitalization (such as Sky Campbell and Mark Awakuni-Swetland) blur boundaries in similar ways. The permeability of these distinctions is central in the following chapters, which describe how Jimm and fellow language preservation practitioners interface with both academic and community audiences.

Another liminal status that Jimm occupies is between speaker and non-speaker. Jimm was an adult when he learned Chiwere as a second language. He does not call himself a fluent speaker, though he has a high degree of conversational proficiency; linguists could label him a "semi-speaker." A few months before I joined him for the summer, Jimm told me that his house was a "language nest," in which Jimm was raising his grandson to speak Chiwere as a native language. The term *language nest* originates from and is a translation of a Maori language revitalization program called Te Kōhanga Reo, which focuses on early-childhood language immersion (King 2008). Te Kōhanga Reo inspired similar programs in Hawaii (Warner 2008; Wilson and Kamanā 2008) and other indigenous communities in North America and beyond. Whereas childhood language immersion programs are usually communal or corporate in nature, Jimm's language nest was domestic. A number of Jimm's relatives have lived in the language nest over the years; however, the only participants who made a consistent effort to speak Chiwere were Jimm, his grandson, and visiting graduate students. My predecessor, Bryan

Gordon, a joint anthropology and linguistics graduate student at the University of Arizona, had spent the previous summer helping Jimm with his dictionary and language nest (Goodtracks et al. n.d.).

Jimm's household is the only one I know of in which Chiwere is used as a primary language of communication. Indeed, it is one of the few places where Chiwere is spoken on a regular basis at all. White Cloud—or *Chína Maxúthga*, as I learned to call the small town where I lived with Jimm and his family—is near the reservation of the Iowa Tribe of Kansas and Nebraska. Chiwere had not been a native language there for many years. One of the last fluent speakers, Arthur Lightfoot, was born there in 1902, but he moved to Oklahoma in 1935. When he died in 1996, he was one of two or three fluent speakers remaining and the only one of his dialect. The town itself, named after an Ioway chief, runs from the banks of the Missouri River up into the neighboring bluffs. It was a regional center of commerce and culture during the steamboat era; the downtown district is listed on the National Register of Historic Places for its "sense of historic time and place as a nineteenth century river town" (Wolfenbarger 1996:1). For that reason, a few scenes from the film *Paper Moon* (Bogdanovich 1973), set in Great Depression-era Kansas and Missouri, were filmed there. Today, the area feels like a ghost town. From a population of 1,000 or so in 1868, the 2010 census reported 176 residents, almost 20% Native Americans. Abandoned buildings and houses outnumber those permanently or seasonally occupied. When cars pass through, they are usually on their way to the nearby reservation bingo hall and casino. The town is busy twice a year for semiannual flea markets, but at the last one I went to in 2012, I heard people complain that numbers were down because vendors and shoppers prefer to go to markets in towns closer to where they

lived.

For many years, Jimm only spoke to his grandson in Chiwere, and Jimm told me that Bryan had done the same when he had lived with them for a summer. Since everyone else spoke to his grandson in English, his grandson had become bilingual and would use English unless addressed in Chiwere, which did not happen outside the home. Before I went to live with Jimm and his grandson, I prepared as well as I could to be a productive participant in their language nest. I made a few hundred vocabulary flashcards, studied pedagogical materials, memorized Bryan's list of "Phrases in *Báxoje Ich^é* Indispensible to Living with a Three-Year Old," and walked around my university campus listening to Chiwere recordings on my iPod.

The first summer in White Cloud, I spent a lot of time with Jimm's grandson after I had finished working on dictionary entries for the day. We became friends, as there were few other children around and none that knew or seemed interested in learning Chiwere despite our proximity to the reservation. Jimm's grandson was also my primary language teacher. I knew more grammar, but he knew more words, so I would constantly ask him for the names of things: "*Dagúra? Jé^e ráye dagúra? Sé^e dagwígana je?*" 'What is it? What's the name for this? What do they call that?' During a walk through the woods, I asked about the Chiwere word for 'leaf,' which got us confused as we tried to sort out *náwo* 'path,' *nááwe* 'leaf,' *náwe* 'hand,' and *núwe* 'two.' Since we only communicated in Chiwere, we often played together in relative silence. At the playground in the tribal housing complex across the street, we would chase each other and jab each other with our fingers. Though we did not jab each other very hard, the person who was jabbed was supposed to yell, "Ow, *paȟ̃, gích^e ke!*" 'Ow, it's sharp, it

hurts!' Or, we would climb to the top of the slide and look out over the neighboring hayfield.

"*Díno xáñe nahá arásda je*" 'Do you see the big dinosaur?'" he would say.

"*Hú$^{n}$je, áta ke*," I would say. 'Yeah, I see it.'

Our Chiwere repertoires consisted primarily of play routines and household phrases. 'Good morning.' 'Pass the salt.' 'Have you seen my keys?' 'Where's the dog?' 'Good night.' In novel situations, we communicated with varying degrees of success through a combination of Chiwere, English, and body language. My own Chiwere production skills peaked quickly that summer because Jimm and I usually spoke to each other in English. The topics we discussed were often technical (related, for example, to the formatting of dictionary entries, computer issues, and the like); neither of us felt comfortable addressing these issues in Chiwere. From time to time we would talk about talking more in Chiwere with each other, but we never kept it up for long.

After the first summer, I returned and lived with Jimm and his grandson on and off for two years during my fieldwork. In addition to helping Jimm with his dictionary, pedagogical materials, and grantwriting, I also volunteered to help home-school his grandson in Chiwere, which was the first language he learned to read. When we began matching letters to sounds, his favorite activity was going through the consonant and glottal stop combinations: *k^a*, *k^e*, *k^i*, *k^o*, *k^u*. One problem was that there were only two books in Chiwere for us to read. One was called *Hó Gíthige*, a story about an uncle and nephew going fishing that Jimm translated from Lakota. The other was *Mischíñe na Náthaje*, a myth Jimm had illustrated by hand. His grandson was soon bored of reading

those two books over and over. In terms of math, I was able to teach addition and subtraction in Chiwere but struggled to explain more advanced topics.

Pressures to improvise gave our Chiwere novel features, including codeswitching and lexical and grammatical innovation. For example, Jimm's grandson would say, "Wanna *sgáje*?" for 'Do you wanna play?' We were also forced to come up with new words for a number of household objects (some of which found their way into Jimm's dictionary). When Jimm's grandson wanted something to drink, he would say "*Dagúra sráhda$^{n}$?*" which means 'What do you want to drink?' He associated this phrase with receiving something to drink because this is what Jimm would ask him before giving him something to drink. Jimm's grandson was unaware that *ráhda$^{n}$* and other *ra-* initial verbs follow an irregular conjugation pattern for first and second person forms. If I responded by saying what I wanted to drink rather than giving him something to drink, in order to help him understand that *sráhda$^{n}$* is a second person form (that is, I would respond to the semantic rather than pragmatic meaning of his utterance), he would say, "*Hinégo, mí^e ha-s-ráhda$^{n}$*!" 'No, me, I-you-drink!'—*hasráhda$^{n}$* being an ungrammatical form that includes both the regular first person prefix *ha-* and the irregular second person prefix *s-*. Jimm's grandson seems not to have recognized the irregular pronoun prefixes and thus treated the *s-* as part of the word for 'drink.' Moore (1988) describes a similar tendency to lexicalize already inflected forms as stems available for further inflection among younger speakers and semispeakers of Wasco (see Chapter 5).

One challenge facing the language nest was a lack of reinforcement beyond the household. All of Jimm's grandson's favorite television shows, movies, and books were in English, and he could rarely if ever use Chiwere to communicate with anyone besides

his grandfather and me. Once when we visited another reservation to help Head Start teachers incorporate Chiwere into their classrooms, the tribal language coordinator asked Jimm's grandson to say something in Chiwere. "Won't you say a little something?" he asked. "Even a word or two?" Jimm's grandson just stared at him with a shy smile and shook his head. "He doesn't do performances," Jimm said, "he uses the language to communicate." Unfortunately, Jimm's grandson had few opportunities to communicate in Chiwere outside the household, and supporters in the community treated him as something of a spectacle. Others expressed concern that his language acquisition would be delayed or that he would never learn to speak proper English.

Over time, Jimm's grandson began speaking to me in English even when I would address him in Chiwere, and I incorporated more English into the home school. We were just as likely to read *Harry Potter* as *Hó Gíthige* and *Mischíñe na Náthaje*, and all our math was in English, which suited me well because my Chiwere abilities reached their limit in trying to explain multiplication and division. Chiwere went from being the medium of instruction to a special subject. As Jimm puts it, Chiwere may not have the prominent place that it once did in his household, but it is still a permanent presence. In retrospect, I realize that Jimm's language nest has much in common with other home-based attempts to revive languages that are no longer spoken (Ben Avi 1984; Fellman 1973; Hinton 2013; Leonard 2007, 2011; Makepeace 2011).

I will let Jimm have the last word on the course of our relationship. This is from a message he wrote to an Office of the State Archaeologist employee who had some questions about Chiwere terms she wanted to use in a presentation on Iowaville. It is more or less the same story he tells everyone who asks how we met:

> It must have been in 2008 that Bill Green . . . wrote to ask if I would review and provide an opinion of a narrative by one of his young anthro students. . . . I've always had an interest in sociology and history but anthropology not so much. I agreed and discovered a most incredible writing. As I sat down to begin another dusty monologue on a site, this unknown young writer grabbed my interest by posing to the reader a question, namely, when one begins a discussion of Iowaville, which Iowaville are we speaking of? That got my attention. And my attention was held throughout the reading. . . . By the way, the young man wrote me sometime later offering to be of service as I was working on our Ioway, Otoe-Missouria Dictionary revision, including amplification into encyclopedic entries. Later he offered to personally spend time with us on-site for a hands-on experience. That in and of itself was extraordinary, but he, being an extraordinary person, took time to study and learn Baxoje Language . . . as my grandson was more fluent in Baxoje, his first language, than in English. He arrived as a welcomed stranger, and two years later, he left as an appreciated, esteemed member of the family. [Personal communication, February 5, 2013]

Whatever else comes from my fieldwork, Jimm's account, I think, testifies to the social value of anthropological engagement with marginalized languages and cultures. Sometimes, the mere fact that someone "spends time . . . on-site" or "takes the time" to learn a language like Chiwere is enough to initiate a meaningful relationship and provide an important sense of validation for those working to preserve their heritage by what they perceive to be linguistic and cultural twilight.

## Reuben Kent

Reuben Kent, who I met through Jimm, is a member of the Iowa Tribe of Kansas and Nebraska. Though some tribal members no longer know their clan affiliation, Reuben is Buffalo Clan. He is an artist, musician, and writer who practices ceramics, painting, beadwork, ribbonwork, carving, and other crafts. He is primarily known in the Indian art world for a series of Night Dancers, which feature *raku* (a Japanese glazing and firing technique) ceramic figures adorned with other media including beads, feathers, and stones (e.g., Sommer 1994:159). When he was a student at the Institute of American

Indian Arts in Santa Fe, students from other tribes would challenge his legitimacy to make ceramics based on their perception that clay was not a traditional Ioway medium:

> I got wrapped up in some of the things that they were saying: "You people didn't do clay. You didn't have clay, and that's not your tradition." It made me think about it. All these pottery sherds, and all these archaeological sites that they dig and find all this stuff—if we didn't do it, who did? So that got my interest going, and I went back and started doing a little bit of research. I finally hit upon the Oneota culture. I did more research with that, some of the designs, some of the speculations and thoughts of where these people came from and how they were developed. It's a different kind of history. It's an interesting history because depending on the archaeologists that you talk to there are different thoughts about where they came from and how they intermingled. [Kent n.d.]

An association between ceramics and Southwestern tribes, whose pottery has long been iconic Indian art objects, inspired Reuben to find an analogous Ioway ceramic tradition, which he eventually located in archaeological findings from Oneota sites. After studying what archaeologists have discovered about Oneota clays, firing techniques, and designs, Reuben began making Oneota-style pottery. When I first met him, he gave me a small Oneota pot and said, "Our teachings say never let a guest leave empty-handed." Over the years I have also been able to acquire some of his more contemporary-looking pieces.

In addition to reviving Oneota ceramic traditions, Reuben is relatively knowledgeable about Chiwere language. He sometimes incorporates Chiwere language into his art and music (e.g., Kent 2004), and he also worked on Jimm's dictionary project before deciding that the tasks were too tedious for his taste. Reuben lived just down the street from Jimm, and I used to visit him and his wife when I lived in White Cloud. Jimm, Brett, and I have all participated in events Reuben hosts at his home.

### Brett Ramey

Brett Ramey is a member of the Iowa Tribe of Kansas and Nebraska. I met him

through Jimm and Reuben, and we visited each other often when we were both living in White Cloud. Brett took me foraging for nettles, chickweed, and morels, and I was able to observe his personal and community gardening work. In addition to corn, beans, squash, and melons, Brett also grew older native crops like amaranth. He was involved in horticultural activism throughout the region and established a community garden on the reservation and a "wild garden" at Haskell Indian Nations University in Lawrence (Silva 2012).

While his specific focus is indigenous gardening and foodways, Brett is also interested in Chiwere and consults with Jimm on questions related to language. For example, when Brett started a blog, he wanted to name it 'our stories' in Chiwere and asked Jimm for a translation. Jimm suggested *hóragewi* ('stories we tell together'), which is the domain name for Brett's blog. Brett also participated in events hosted by Jimm and Reuben. While Brett and I saw each other often during my fieldwork, we have both since moved to different parts of the country and it has been some time since we have been in touch.

**Sky Campbell**

Sky Campbell is the tribal language coordinator for the Otoe-Missouria Tribe of Indians. While he is not a tribal member himself and in fact claims no Native American ancestry, his wife and children are Ponca; it is through those family connections that Sky discovered language preservation as his vocation and found his current job. As he explained to me in an interview:

> I'd been in and out of college two or three times. I'm not quite sure what I was wanting to do. I found out that I could do pretty much anything that I wanted. It's just: ok, now, which one? So this one time about over ten years ago, my wife's uncle—my wife's Ponca—invited me into a peyote

> meeting, and sitting there in the middle of the night—no idea what's going on, just trying to be patient—Parrish Williams started talking about three o'clock in the morning or so and got real choked up about language dying away, hardly anybody to talk to, that sort of thing. I don't think the guy ever knew it, but that was the moment whenever I decided I wanted to work with Indian languages.
>
> So I started pursuing ways to do that. Not a whole lot of options up here, but then we ended up having the opportunity to move down around Oklahoma City. So when I did that, I transferred to OU and finished there—focused on Indian languages. And it took four years to get my job here after I graduated. I'd actually almost kind of given up in the field. I mean, I knew going into the field that it was going to take a while or it was going to be tough to try to find work because, you know, non-tribal member, non-Indian, you know, "what do you think you know about our language?" type thing. But at the same time, after about four years I'm thinking "I've got a family to feed," so I almost actually started looking into something else.
>
> And my wife was working at the 7 Clans Casino just down the road here, and one of the guys that comes in all the time was talking to her, and she was talking about me, and he said, "Oh, well, there's a language assistant job down at the Otoe tribe just down the road there. You ought to have him apply." So I came in to apply, and Randy Whitehorn was the director. I happen to know him because he was working at the Head Start here while my son was going there, so he and I ended up chatting at some point during a zoo fieldtrip. And so I came in, we talked, and he told them that he wanted me. . . . And I got a call, and they said, "Hey, when can you start?" And I said, "Tomorrow." And so I started off as the assistant. So this is the only job I've ever had where I've been able to use my degree. [Personal communication, October 31, 2013]

In this excerpt, Sky recounts how his affinal kin invited him to participate in a Native American Church service ("peyote meeting"), in which an elder spoke eloquently about the problem of language loss. Moved by the speech, Sky, who had been searching for a vocation, decided to pursue a career in language preservation. After completing his bachelor's degree in Native American Studies at the University of Oklahoma in Norman (just southwest of Oklahoma City), he began looking for work. He knew that it would be challenging for a non-indigenous person like himself to find a job in the field. Just as he was about to give up, his wife, who worked at the 7 Clans Paradise Casino near the Otoe-

Missouria tribal complex, heard about a language assistant job opening with the Tribe. Sky knew the director of the language department because his children attended the Otoe-Missouria tribal Head Start program, and he ended up getting the job.

Sky is now director of the Tribe's language department. When I asked him whether he has drawn on his educational background in his current position, he told me that his degree in Native American Studies gave him a good foundation and some research skills, but he has had to learn much more than he knew before about linguistics and the technical aspects of documentation and archiving. He has either taught himself those skills or acquired them from workshops and seminars. For example, Sky has attended the Breath of Life Archival Institute for Indigenous Languages in Washington, D.C., a national program modeled on the Breath of Life—Silent No More Native California Language Restoration Workshop first organized by linguist Leanne Hinton (2008b). Breath of Life programs are designed to give members of communities without speakers access to archival resources on their heritage languages and provide them with the linguistic training necessary to interpret and utilize those resources for language learning and revitalization (Campbell 2013). Sky also consults with Jimm on language questions, participates on the Siouan List, and attends the Siouan conference.

As a result of his commitment to language preservation, acquiring necessary linguistic and technical skills, and close consultation with community members, Sky has succeeded in building a thriving tribal language department. His department maintains an archive of Chiwere materials, which Sky and his team of tribal member assistants solicit from archival institutions and community members, then digitize and process. Sky is compiling an Otoe-Missouria dictionary based on his research. He also promotes

language revitalization within the community through Chiwere signage, calendars, video games, and ringtones (e.g., Otoe-Missouria Language Department 2014; Otoe-Missouria Tribe n.d.). Though Sky worried that his lack of Native American ancestry would make it difficult for him to get a job in language preservation, a number of people attribute his long-term success to the fact that he is not a tribal member and thus relatively removed from the community politics that can sometimes produce rapid turnover among tribal employees.

## The Siouanists

To this point, this chapter has focused on social connections between scholars and community members involved in overlapping forms of multifaceted revitalization-oriented activism. Participants in this network are interested in revitalizing various aspects of Ioway and Otoe-Missouria heritage including language, gardening and foodways, arts and crafts, storytelling, and a connection to ancestral homelands. It is also important to note that a number of the people mentioned above are revitalizing traditional religious practices and participate in each other's ceremonies. Since such topics are considered sensitive, I will say no more about them here, except to note that they are in fact responsible for some of the more significant social bonds among participants in this network. In the rest of this chapter, I discuss a cross-cutting and similarly hybrid community known as the Siouanists. The Siouanists are a network of linguists (academic, community, and missionary) and language activists and educators dedicated to documenting and revitalizing Siouan languages. Jimm, Lance, and Sky participate in the

Siouanist community. I also developed connections with Siouanists during my work.

The Siouanists are recognized as a subset of the community of linguists who work on North American languages. The "North Americanists," as they are known, are united by professional organizations such as the Society for the Study of the Indigenous Languages of the Americas (SSILA), which holds meetings in conjunction with the annual meeting of the Linguistic Society of America and publishes a newsletter. The primary journal for North Americanists is the *International Journal of American Linguistics* (*IJAL*).

The North Americanists divide themselves into subgroups based on the language families they study. Since related languages share structural patterns derived from common historical origins, linguists tend to consult with each other in direct proportion to how closely the languages they work on are related. In addition to Siouanists, there are, for example, Algonquianists, Athapaskanists, Salishanists, etc. (Mithun 1996:60). A description of the Siouanists published in 1996 characterizes them as follows:

> Researchers specializing in Siouan and Caddoan languages joined forces to meet together annually. Those who have been particularly active in work with Siouan languages during this period include Allan Taylor (Lakhota), Robert Hollow (Mandan), David Rood (Lakhota), Richard Carter (Lakhota, Mandan), Robert Rankin (Quapaw, Kansa), Patricia Shaw (Lakhota, Dakota, Stoney, Assiniboine), Jimm Good Tracks (Chiwere), Wesley Jones (Hidatsa), Randolph Graczyk (Crow), John Koontz (Omaha), Catherine Rudin (Omaha), Louanna Furbee (Chiwere), Jill Hopkins (Chiwere), Lori Stanley (Chiwere), Sara Sistrunk (Lakhota), Mauricio Mixco (Mandan), and Kathleen Shea (Ponca). All materials ever collected on Siouan languages were assembled in the Siouan Languages Archive in Boulder at the University of Colorado as a basis for the reconstruction of Proto-Siouan. [Mithun 1996:61]

The meeting referred to in this passage is the Siouan and Caddoan Languages Conference. As mentioned above, Jimm and I arranged to meet for the first time at the 2009 Siouan conference in Lincoln, Nebraska. The Siouan and Caddoan Languages Conference is an annual event where Siouanists gather in person to socialize and present on their research or revitalization efforts. The conference is also open to those who research Caddoan languages simply because some of the Siouanists who founded the conference—and their graduate students—also worked on Caddoan, but the two language families are unrelated, and presentations on Siouan languages far outnumber those on Caddoan. Thus, the event is usually just called "the Siouan conference." The conference is small, reflecting the close-knit nature of the Siouanist community. There are usually at most 30-40 participants and two to three days of presentations. One panel is held at a time, so everyone spends the conference together in the same room, listening to the same presentations.

Reflecting its dual orientation to academic linguistics and indigenous communities, the Siouan conference has been held on both university campuses and tribal reservations. The 2009 conference, the first one I attended, was organized by Mark Awakuni-Swetland (see below) at the University of Nebraska in Lincoln. The 2010 conference was organized by John Boyle (see below) at Northeastern Illinois University in Chicago. Jimm and I organized the 2011 conference, which was held on the reservation of the Iowa Tribe of Kansas and Nebraska. The 2012 conference was held at the University of Kansas in Lawrence in conjunction with the Institute on Collaborative Language Research (CoLang), a six-week summer program on community-based language documentation and revitalization. The 2013 conference was held at Sitting Bull

College (a tribal college on the Standing Rock Indian Reservation in Fort Yates, North Dakota) in conjunction with the Lakota Summer Institute, a three-week professional development program for Lakota language teachers. The 2014 conference was organized by graduate students at the University of Wisconsin in Madison. The most recent conference was hosted by the Tunica-Biloxi Tribe at their Paragon Casino Resort in Marksville, Louisiana.

The Siouan conference is a brief moment of collective effervescence in which the whole group is brought together on an annual basis to renew its collective identity. It is a chance to present new research, network, and socialize as a maximal lineage. But Siouanists also keep in touch with each other throughout the year publically and as a group on the Siouan email list, as well as through individual collaborations. The Siouan email list—promoted as "the best academic resource for Siouan language related issues, including news related to Proto-languages, borrowings, and other descriptive topics"—is one of the primary ways that Siouanists communicate with each other; I quote from posts to the List in the chapters that follow.

Siouanists are strongly encouraged to consult with each other on the List, where all registered members can participate. This became evident to me during my fieldwork when one of the Siouanists learned that others had been discussing Siouan languages on Facebook. He wrote to the List: "I understand that some of you guys are conducting Q & A about Kaw and/or other Siouan languages on Facebook. Some of us are not on Facebook and therefore cannot access other peoples' Facebook pages. Therefore I would greatly appreciate it if you could post your questions and comments on this list so we can all join in. That is, after all, what it is for" (Rankin 2013b). A number of other Siouanists

responded and reinforced the norm that all communication about Siouan languages should take place on the List. The accused wrote to say that he intended no harm and would begin cross-posting all material from Facebook to the List.

Since all Siouan languages are related to varying degrees, Siouanists typically have an interest in multiple Siouan languages, and there is a constant exchange of information among specialists in different languages and grammatical processes. This is especially true for academic linguists whose research involves comparative grammatical analysis or historical reconstruction of the (unrecorded) proto-language from which all recorded Siouan languages derive (see below). Even Jimm, who has a heritage connection to Chiwere and only works on that language, looks to other Siouanists for examples of pedagogical materials he can adapt for Chiwere, or for corpora he can use as models for his own text collection. In preparing the grant application for his corpus project, for example, Jimm proposed that we use recently published collections of Kaw and Winnebago texts as models for our interlinear glosses (Hartmann and Marschke 2010; Kanza Language Project 2010). He also uses other Siouanists' dictionaries in making his own. He tries to include a lemma in his dictionary for every lemma in other Siouan dictionaries and sometimes includes cognates from closely related Siouan languages. He also consults other Siouan dictionaries for inspiration when he needs to propose new Chiwere words for recent technologies or concepts such as 'cell phones' and 'computers.' Jimm attends the Siouan conference almost every year, and while he has little patience for technical presentations on the finer points of Siouan grammar, he finds the presentations on applied linguistics useful for his purposes. He would often cite something he heard at a Siouan conference when he would explain certain decisions he

has made with respect to orthography or his dictionary (see Chapter 4). In this sense the Siouanist community provides Jimm's primary point of access to linguistics: other Siouanists and their materials are usually the first and last sources Jimm consults when issues arise in his work. The Siouanist network thus constitutes a key social context for understanding Jimm's language preservation practices and my own ethnographic research. As a participant in Jimm's project, I also became involved in the Siouanist community and its information exchange networks. I will mention one example below, and then I will compare my experiences with those of two other people who were socialized to varying degrees into the Siouanist community.

**Siouanist Socialization, Case 1: Saul Schwartz**

When I first met John Boyle at a Siouan conference, he was a linguistics professor at Northeastern Illinois University. During his time there, he made the linguistics department into a major center for Siouan language research. Every year, he would bring a vanload of graduate (and sometimes undergraduate) students to the Siouan conference to give papers. His group of graduate students was conspicuous, as there were usually few other graduate students in attendance. Curious about how he turned Northeastern Illinois University into a locus for Siouan studies, I arranged to interview John in Chicago and sit in on one of his seminars. During my visit, John shared the sources of his success with me. First, he was compiling a "Siouan Languages Archive," a collection of digital materials on Siouan languages that included everything from archival fieldnotes, to grey literature (e.g., Siouan conference presentations, a draft of the *Comparative Siouan Dictionary*), to published journal articles. By 2011, the archive contained 17,400 pages of documents (and is even larger now). Second, John used this archive to teach

intensive seminars on understudied Siouan languages, in which students familiarized themselves with previous research on the language in question and then spent most of the semester analyzing primary data and writing original research papers.

During my visit, John expressed an interest in teaching a seminar on Chiwere the following semester. For various reasons, Chiwere is a relatively understudied Siouan language, and in fact many Siouanists had hoped that I would focus my research on Chiwere grammar (as an anthropologist, however, I had neither the training nor the inclination to do such analysis). In any case, John followed up with me after my visit to request my assistance in procuring resources for the Chiwere seminar he was planning. He had a 1947 Chiwere grammar sketch that was published in *IJAL*, one of the only published sources on Chiwere (see below), and wondered what other resources were available. He asked how he could gain access to Chiwere texts and the most recent version of Jimm's dictionary. In the following months, I mailed John photocopies of documents and compact discs with digital Chiwere materials that I had collected from archives and other Siouanists in the course of my research.

One of the envelopes I used to send John these materials had a Bloodshot Records stamp on it. Bloodshot Records is an independent record label in Chicago that specializes in alternative country music. One of my hobbies—collecting country music covers—had led me to purchase *The Executioner's Last Songs*, a three-volume set of anti-capital punishment albums featuring alt-country covers of classic "songs of murder, mob-law & cruel, cruel punishment" (Langford et al. 2002, 2003). I recycled the envelope Bloodshot Records had used to send me the CDs by using it to send John some Chiwere materials. As it turned out, John was a huge fan of the label. The next time we saw each other (at

the 2013 Linguistic Society of America Annual Meeting in Boston), he connected his external hard drive to my computer and gave me a copy of his Siouan Languages Archive—which included digitized copies of the photocopies I had sent him—along with some of his favorite music from Bloodshot Records.

In the time since John taught the Chiwere seminar, a number of his students have continued to revise their papers from his class to present at linguistics conferences, and some of them have contacted me to request more data. One of his students, for example, is doing a phonetic and phonological analysis of Chiwere vowel length and needed audio recordings and transcriptions, which I helped her obtain. One of his last students at Northeastern Illinois University wrote his master's thesis on Chiwere (Alansary 2014). In 2014, John moved to California State University-Fresno and has conducted fieldwork on Crow and Hidatsa with colleagues and students there. He is planning a reading group on Hidatsa phonology, which is an underdocumented and understudied aspect of the language. His Siouan Languages Archive has nearly doubled to 395 titles totaling 33,263 pages.

John and I have stayed in touch on a professional level, and we also try to see each other socially whenever we happen to find ourselves in the same place. While this is a prosaic example of Siouanist interaction, this and other positive experiences of reciprocity—in which I felt like I was simultaneously contributing to someone else's goals (by sharing Chiwere materials), gaining something from their work (John's Siouan Languages Archive), and establishing a personal connection (by bonding over mutual musical tastes)—are responsible for my successful socialization as a legitimate peripheral participant in the Siouanist community (Lave and Wenger 1991).

## Siouanist Socialization, Case 2: Vicki Sear

It is a truism that anthropologists often find themselves drawn to people who are relatively marginal to the communities they work in, and I am no exception: besides Jimm, the "Siouanist" I'm closest to is Vicki Sear. I first met Vicki at the 2012 Siouan conference, which was organized by Bob Rankin and one of his graduate students, Dave Kaufman, at the University of Kansas in Lawrence. More people than usual attended that year in large part out of respect for Bob. Though he wrote his doctoral dissertation on Romanian dialectology, Bob has focused on the Dhegihan branch of the Siouan language family and other comparative Siouan topics since 1973. Over the past forty years, he worked with speakers to document three Dhegihan languages—Quapaw, Kaw, and Osage—none of which have fluent speakers today. Bob is a polymath and the only person I know who can, if given a word in one Siouan language, derive the cognate forms in a dozen others off the top of his head. He is an institution in Siouan studies. The 2012 conference was also well attended because it was held in conjunction with the 2012 Institute on Collaborative Language Research (CoLang). Jimm, his grandson, and I went to the conference, and I stayed on for CoLang.

At the time of the conference, Vicki was an undergraduate at Bryn Mawr double-majoring in anthropology and linguistics. She had been introduced to Siouan studies by one of her professors, Daniel Altshuler, who had worked with Carolyn Quintero on Osage. Vicki came to the conference with Linda Cumberland, who had received her PhD from the anthropology department at Indiana University[3] in 2005 with a grammar of

[3] Indiana's anthropology department is a center for Siouan studies due to Ray DeMallie and Doug Parks, who are co-directors of the university's American Indian Studies Research Institute, which focuses on Siouan and Caddoan languages, particularly the

Assiniboine. She then worked for the Kaw Nation's Kanza Language Project, where she was Director from 2010-2013.[4] Vicki went to live with Linda for the summer in order to help enter data into Linda's Kaw dictionary database (published as Cumberland 2012). In the process, Vicki was making connections and doing fieldwork for her senior thesis, a combined anthropological and linguistic study of Kanza language revitalization and Osage phonetic analysis (Sear 2013). Thus, Vicki and I were both lexicographers' apprentices with ethnographic agendas.

After a day of presentations at the conference, many Siouanists enjoy socializing with each other at local restaurants and bars. Vicki and I chatted over dinner, and then we joined John Boyle and his students for drinks. We bonded over our anthropological approaches to language documentation and revitalization and compared notes on our experiences as dictionary grunt workers. Since most Siouanists are based in the Midwest and Plains, Vicki and I were glad to learn that we would both be on the East Coast the following year: Vicki for her senior year at Bryn Mawr and me for a post-fieldwork year in Princeton. As the only quasi-Siouanists on the East Coast, we visited each other a few times and saw each other at the Linguistic Society of America Annual Meeting in Boston. We ended up ethnographizing each other: I have written about Vicki as a consultant; likewise, she interviewed me as an informant for her senior thesis.

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Dakotan languages Sioux and Assiniboine and the Northern Caddoan languages Arikara and Pawnee.

[4] As noted above in connection with Sky Campbell, tribal language departments often employ language preservation practitioners from diverse backgrounds (academic and non-academic, indigenous and non-indigenous). Before Linda, the director was Justin McBride, a Siouanist and member of the Cherokee Nation currently working on his PhD in linguistics at Oklahoma State University. After Linda, the director was Dave Kaufman, Bob's graduate student and co-organizer of the 2012 Siouan conference where I met Vicki.

Though we often compare notes on the history of Siouan studies and gossip about Siouanists (we both know most of those involved in Siouan studies and even ended up interviewing some of the same people for our respective research), Vicki and I spend much of our time together reflecting on our own experiences. Since we are both somewhat ambivalent about our commitments to Siouan language preservation, we discuss our shared sense of being pushed and pulled in different directions: on the one hand, we feel drawn further into Siouan studies; on the other hand, we feel an impulse to escape. We agree that this dynamic stems in part from the sheer amount of unfinished work to be done. As Vicki remarked about the Siouanists:

> They're very welcoming. But they are very small, which is sort of a positive and a negative in some ways. It's a positive because it's very intimate, but it's a negative because . . . there aren't that many people, and there are these huge projects. . . . Something I've realized is that Swarthmore does a lot. They have an endangered language lab. They will take on a language and do a lot of work on it and have multiple people and students do . . . grunt work on it, which is the thing that takes up the most time. But it seems like in terms of Siouanists, it's sort of more individuals doing projects rather than an institution taking on this language in a way.

Here, Vicki describes how the small size of the Siouanist community and the large projects they take on is both an advantage and disadvantage. On the one hand, the constant need for labor makes it easy to join the community; on the other hand, since projects are rarely finished and there is always more to do, it is hard to leave the community. This stands in contrast to an institution like the Laboratory for Endangered Languages Research and Documentation at Swarthmore College, which coordinates groups of faculty and students and focuses their labor on more discrete projects.

Because there is so much work to be done in Siouan studies and so few people doing it, it is relatively easy to make an original contribution to the field. We have already noted, for example, that many of John Boyle's students are able to produce

original linguistic research in the course of a single seminar. Similarly, though there are few fields in which an undergraduate thesis can make a serious scholarly contribution, Vicki's phonetic analysis of Osage vowels is in fact pioneering research. Siouan phonology has always suffered from a lack of phonetic analysis resulting in persistent confusion about whether vowel length, for example, is a significant distinction in different Siouan languages. Vicki's interest in phonetics explains why at least one prominent Siouanist in particular has been encouraging her to pursue Siouan studies.

Yet Vicki's involvement in Siouan studies has already placed her in a number of uncomfortable situations involving interactions among and between tribal employees and academic linguists. In one instance, one of her contacts in a tribal language department gave her tapes for her to digitize but told her that she could not reveal to anyone else that she had the tapes; the employee in question did not get permission from the director of the tribal language program to give the tapes to Vicki due to ideological differences about the extent to which non-tribal members should be able to access the tribe's heritage language. In this case, Vicki felt pulled into conflicts among tribal employees about the appropriate circulation of their heritage language.

In another instance, a prominent academic linguist involved in endangered language documentation said that he would supervise and support Vicki if she would be willing to work on a talking dictionary[5] of a specific Siouan language. The linguist proposed that they begin the project before getting the community's approval and only make it public after approval was granted. Vicki worried that her involvement in the project would jeopardize her relationships with community members if it turned out to be

[5] A digital dictionary in which entries are linked to sound files so that users can hear recordings of speakers pronouncing lemmas and example sentences.

controversial, and she decided to approach a contact in the tribal language department before starting the work. Her contact was supportive of the project but knew that other members of the language department would have concerns. In any case, her contact was uncomfortable with the plan to begin work without formal approval from the tribe. He and Vicki spent hours talking about how to proceed in a transparent manner that would solicit community approval and collaboration from the beginning. When Vicki relayed these concerns and suggestions to the linguist, the linguist decided to scrap the project completely. This put Vicki in the awkward position of having to go back to her contact to tell him that the project was canceled. In this case, Vicki was pulled into an ethical dilemma related to relationships between a linguist and community members.

In a final example—an instance of Vicki finding herself in the middle of conflict among linguists—one Siouanist offered to give Vicki another Siouanist's data and encouraged her to begin working on that language even though the linguist who produced the data was still working on the language. The first linguist was dissatisfied with the second linguist's progress with data processing and analysis and suggested that Vicki begin working with the data. It is common for Siouanists to share their own or archival data with each other as described above; yet Vicki felt uncomfortable that one linguist was sharing another linguist's data without permission and encouraging her to use the data to begin working on the language despite the other linguist's ongoing work. Just as there is a sense of territoriality among anthropologists about particular fieldsites, there is a sense of territoriality among linguists about particular languages. Of course, linguists no more own languages than anthropologists own fieldsites, but if a linguist is working on a grammar or dictionary of a certain language, it would be an affront if another linguist

undertook a similar project on the same language. Indeed, this is a common cause of conflict between graduate students and their advisors:, if the advisor is writing the grammar of a language, the graduate student has to find another dissertation topic, despite their doing fieldwork together or otherwise working on the same language.

Beyond these kinds of ethical quandaries, Vicki's reluctance to commit to Siouan studies is connected to her broader sense that her undergraduate research was a disillusioning experience. Reflecting back on the summer of 2012, she told me:

> I was very young and came in . . . beginning of the summer like, "Oh, my God, I'm going to help revive this language, and everyone is going to love it, and everyone is going to think it's great, and everyone's going to be so excited," and then I got there, and sort of reality hit me really, really hard, so I just wanted to figure out how I feel about it, and where I fit in. [Personal communication, February 9, 2013]

For example, one of the reasons Vicki wanted to interview me for her senior thesis is because when I lived with Jimm and his grandson, we played a board game produced by the Kaw tribal language department called *Wajípha$^{n}$yi$^{n}$*, 'Camp Crier,' which we adapted for Chiwere (Kanza Language Project 2004). I was, in fact, the only person she knew who had ever played *Wajípha$^{n}$yi$^{n}$* in a domestic setting: the game had not proved popular among its intended audience of tribal members. In her thesis, Vicki notes that the backroom of the tribal language department office "is filled with unopened boxes of board games and workbooks" and "piles of envelopes and bubble wrap so that the reader and board game can be shipped free of charge to any Kaw member that requests them" (Sear 2013:30). A linguist employed by the tribe told Vicki that "many of the Kaw members who did procure the reader or board game only wanted them so that they could be displayed in their homes. [The linguist] finished the discussion by rolling her eyes and groaning that many of them never even opened the reader or took the plastic off the board

game" (Sear 2013:43). At the Siouan conference, this linguist "piled boxes of *Wajípha*$^{n}$*yi*$^{n}$ into her car, saying something along the lines of 'Only linguists want these. Nobody who is actually Kaw even cares'" (Sear 2013:29). Vicki's descriptions betray some cynicism on her part and that of the tribal linguist about the value of pedagogical materials like the board game. Linguists are more interested in them than tribal members, but both audiences are more interested in displaying them than actually using them to learn the language. (Both Vicki and I have copies of the game: mine sits on my bookcase in its original shrink wrap; Vicki took hers out to try to play once but then gave up.)

This sense of being "hit really, really hard" by "reality" and of a vast disparity between one's expectations and one's experiences is common among Siouanists. As Jimm told me near the beginning of my fieldwork, "When it comes to language and culture in the communities, better not to have any expectations. That way, you won't be disappointed." Indeed, Vicki and I share a sense of disillusionment; many of our conversations revolve around processing our research experiences on ethnographic and emotional levels. By now, Vicki has graduated from Bryn Mawr and has been working in the financial aid and admissions offices of Harvard University and Haverford College while she contemplates her next move: whether to go to graduate school for anthropology or linguistics or something else, and if so, whether to remain involved in Siouan studies.

When I gave Vicki the preceding description to read, she wrote:

> Teading this . . . gives me a sense of validation. I feel as though this is a situation that not many undergrads are faced with, and I have gone over in my head so many ways in which I could have done things differently, or if I was the real problem, why the web of my experiences kept on becoming more complex. Whatever the reality is, it's just nice to see it on paper.
>
> I find myself saying 'this world' to refer to the Siouan community and my time involved with it. I realized that I have come to think of it as

> something I either have to commit to and be entirely involved in or exit and follow another path. For some reason I don't picture that I would only be able to be involved peripherally.
>
> A theme that I kept on encountering was that there wasn't the typical focus on mentorship, but rather that I was expected to do work on my own. I am not sure if that was an oversight or just because my advisor was not involved in the Siouan community any longer, but it added to this feeling that people were pressuring me to enter 'this world' but wouldn't do very much to help guide me once I arrived.
>
> I feel like while it's incredible that I could make such contributions and enter the Siouan field so easily, I also feel that it tricks you and your superiors into thinking you're older/more experienced than you are and leads to a lack of direction and increased expectations that other undergrads would never have to work with. [Personal communication, July 21, 2014]

If she decides not to pursue Siouan studies in the future, Vicki's experience could be characterized as one of failed socialization. After confronting ethical quandaries associated with linguistic research, disillusionment about language revitalization, and unreasonable expectations about what a novice is capable of accomplishing on her own, Vicki may end up leaving the field. Even if she does decide to pursue Siouan studies, her initial socialization remains less positive than my own. While I feel that there is room for legitimate peripheral participation (Lave and Wenger 1991), Vicki believes Siouan studies is something that she has to "commit to and be entirely involved in or exit and follow another path." While she feels that she was encouraged to commit to the world of Siouan studies, she does not feel as if she would be able to succeed without more emphasis on mentorship and collaboration.

### Siouanist Socialization, Case 3: Mark Awakuni-Swetland

Just as Siouanists are a subset of North Americanists, Siouanists themselves break down into smaller groups based on the language subfamilies they study. In his dissertation on Omaha language preservation, anthropologist Mark Awakuni-Swetland

does a bit of native ethnography of "the Dhegihanists . . . a handful of scholars working with the five cognate languages: Omaha, Ponca, Osage, Kansa (Kaw), and Quapaw. Collectively these five languages form the Dhegiha branch in the Siouan language family" (Awakuni-Swetland 2003:92).

Mark describes meeting his first Dhegihanist, John Koontz, in the late 1970s. At the time, John was working on an Omaha-Ponca grammar using texts collected by James Owen Dorsey in the nineteenth century as well as contributing to the *Comparative Siouan Dictionary* (see below). John also wanted to work with Omaha speakers, and Mark introduced him to several speakers who served as his consultants. Mark writes:

> Out of this experience developed a personal friendship and scholarly association with John. Through the years we have maintained an on-going discussion about aspects of Omaha language. While John is interested in the technical and historical aspects of the language, he has been generous in his encouragement of my more socio-cultural tangents. He willingly shares materials and references. A few years after our meeting in Lincoln he alerted me to the wealth of linguistic materials at the National Anthropological Archives in the Smithsonian's Museum of Natural History. It was with his support that I traveled to Washington, D.C., and arranged to microfilm a portion of Dorsey's notes and manuscripts, including the unpublished 20,000-slip lexicon (word list) of Omaha-Ponka. When I announced my intention to begin teaching Omaha language at the University of Nebraska in Lincoln (UNL), John graciously agreed to let me copy any parts of his unfinished Omaha-Ponka grammar dissertation that I wished. [Awakuni-Swetland 2003:94-95]

After listing all of the Dhegihanists, Mark concludes:

> These, then, are the Dhegihanists. All have committed themselves to the study and understanding of their various languages. Some have worked mostly in the academic and theoretical realms. Others have been invited to assist Native communities and individuals in language documentation, revival, and maintenance projects. Much of the work is pro bono, motivated by a passion for language rather than an expectation of profit. All of the above named individuals have extended their help to me over the years. When I notified them of my intention to teach Omaha language at UNL, they each renewed their offers of assistance in any manner necessary. I am honored that this group of professionals has permitted me to join their ranks. [Awakuni-Swetland 2003:97-98]

It is clear from the above that Mark's relationships with John and other Dhegihanists have been mutually enriching, characterized by reciprocal information exchange, assistance, and encouragement.

Since this description was written, the Siouanist community has also supported Mark when he became involved in bitter conflicts with factions of the Omaha community. In the 1970s, Mark was adopted into an Omaha family when he was still a young man. Thus, Mark's position is somewhat analogous to Jimm's and Sky's in that he is related to tribal members and has a personal connection to Omaha heritage through those relatives but is not himself a tribal member. During the 1990s, Mark conducted research on Omaha language, history, and culture with the formal permission of the Omaha Tribal Council, and in 1999, he established an Omaha language program at the University of Nebraska with what seemed like overwhelming community support (Awakuni-Swetland 2003). But in 2010, the Omaha tribal government changed their relationship with Mark. An officeholder on the tribal council accused him of misrepresenting himself as a tribal member, profiting from the language through teaching, grants, and textbooks, and circulating the language online without full permission—claims which Mark and his Omaha family denied. An investigation by the University of Nebraska's Chancellor's Office found the accusations to be without evidence (Perlman 2010). When he came up for tenure, some tribal members lobbied the University's Board of Regents to stop the process. The tribe's cultural authority demanded damages from the university for institutional racism, commoditizing Omaha heritage without consultation, and theft of cultural and intellectual property. In a press release, they called for Mark to "cease and desist" from further work on the language and

turn over all research and teaching materials to the Tribe (Abourezk 2010a,b; Omaha Tribal Historical Research Project, Inc. 2010). The Siouanist community supported Mark throughout this period of professional turmoil by providing advice and writing letters on his behalf. The Siouanist community has mobilized in a similar fashion with regard to other controversial tenure cases (e.g., Flaherty 2013).

A comparison of my own experiences, Vicki's, and Mark's reveals similarities and differences. All of us found the Siouanists to be a welcoming community, and we all developed professionally and personally meaningful relationships with other members of the group. While Mark became a core participant in the Siouanist community, Vicki had a more ambivalent experience and is unsure whether to continue working on Siouan languages. These are perhaps contrasting instances of successful and failed socialization, respectively. For my own part, I remain a peripheral participant observer who provides various forms of assistance to Jimm's language project and who is available to help other Siouanists gain access to Chiwere materials.

## Siouanist Legacies

In the preceding account, a demand for labor, information exchange, and other forms of collaboration emerge as central dynamics shaping the social experiences of Siouanists and the knowledge economy of Siouan studies. In the following section, I clarify some of the temporal and structural processes that sustain these conditions.

Siouanist projects tend to be ambitious undertakings that require massive investments of time and labor. When these projects are comparative, they also involve coordinating the efforts of many specialists. The *Comparative Siouan Dictionary* is a paradigmatic example of an ambitious comparative project that has occupied many

Siouanists for many years (Rood and Koontz 2002). Each entry in the *Comparative Siouan Dictionary* seeks to include cognates for the lemma from every Siouan language in which they are known, as well as a reconstruction of the proto-Siouan form and the proto-forms for various branches and sub-branches of the Siouan language family. Launched in 1984, draft versions of the *Dictionary* circulated in Siouanist grey literature until 2015, when the *Dictionary* was published online (Rankin et al. 2015) with the caveat that "This dictionary is a work in progress. It will probably always be a work in progress. However, it represents a vast amount of time and effort by a large number of people, and all of us agree that it should be made available to other interested people now" (Rood 2015). Six editors and nine compilers are credited by name for their contributions. Because of the number of contributors and the length of the project, aspects of the dictionary are obscure even to its creators. "Because it has been developing for so many years," an editor writes, "there are features that we no longer understand and abbreviations we no longer remember" (Rood 2015).

Siouan projects take so long to accomplish in part because of the substantial legacy of Siouan documentation produced by salvage-oriented anthropologists and linguists in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, much of which remains relatively unprocessed and unanalyzed in archives. The *Comparative Siouan Dictionary*, for example, drew on the Siouan Languages Archive[6] that linguist David Rood assembled at the University of Colorado in Boulder by requesting copies of Siouan language materials from institutions like the American Philosophical Society and the Smithsonian. Once acquired, these materials were processed into a machine-readable form using punched

[6] The Siouan Languages Archive at the University of Colorado-Boulder is separate from John Boyle's Siouan Languages Archive discussed above.

cards, which could be searched by early computer systems to generate cognate sets for particular lemmas. As technology evolved, the data had to be re-formatted and re-processed multiple times in order to prevent it from becoming inaccessible.

Even projects that limit their scope to one language involve challenges stemming from the long legacy of Siouan language documentation. To cite just one instance, the 1947 grammar sketch of Chiwere referenced by John Boyle is one of the only published descriptions of Chiwere. The grammar sketch was written by Gordon Marsh, based on a summer of fieldwork he conducted following his graduation from Columbia in 1936 when he was only 19 years old. Marsh's fieldwork was arranged by Franz Boas and funded by the American Council of Learned Societies' Committee on Native American Languages. After studying linguistics at Oxford and in Paris, Marsh returned to Columbia to begin graduate studies under Boas. Sometime between May 1941 and December 1942, Marsh finished his grammar sketch. Linguists Carl Voegelin and Zelig Harris found the sketch among Boas's papers after his death. Voegelin, who was editor of *IJAL* at the time, arranged for it to be published in the journal, but for reasons that remain unclear, it was misattributed to one of Boas's other students, William Whitman (1947).

From 1942-1946, Marsh was in the Civilian Public Service. During that time, he continued to research Chiwere and requested access to earlier materials collected by James Owen Dorsey and William Hamilton, which were housed in the Smithsonian and temporarily relocated to Columbia for Marsh to consult. Following his Civilian Public Service, Marsh taught at the Universities of Nevada, British Columbia, and Alaska, where he began studying Alaskan Native languages. Marsh even completed a dissertation on Eastern Aleut in 1956 but apparently never submitted or defended it. The dissertation

can be found in various archives, such as the Alaska Native Language Archive, but there is no record of Marsh receiving his degree from Columbia.

Sometime before 1957, Marsh abandoned a career in professional linguistics. He joined the Russian Orthodox clergy and took the name Rev. Priestmonk Innocent. In 1971, he donated his Chiwere materials to the American Philosophical Society. The materials consist of 1,000 loose pages and 75 bluebooks of fieldnotes and texts, as well as 4,000 cards, each of which contains lexical information for one word (essentially a 4,000-word dictionary in note-card form). According to Siouanist folklore, Marsh ended up in a retirement home for clergy, where a number of Siouanists contacted him. While Marsh may have left linguistics, the languages he studied never left him: when Jimm visited him in the 1970s, he could still recite from memory the Chiwere texts he had collected 40 years before as a 19 year old novice fieldworker (Schwartz 2014).

In other words, Marsh's three months of fieldwork in 1936 produced one 16-page publication (the grammar sketch) and thousands of pages of unprocessed archival material. Just as Marsh himself consulted earlier archival Chiwere material collected by William Hamilton and James Owen Dorsey, recent Chiwere documentation and revitalization projects confront the legacy of Marsh's unfinished work. As a resource for his own dictionary, for example, Jimm reproduced Marsh's 4,000-slip lexicon, storing the cards in alphabetized boxes under his bed. Information in Jimm's dictionary credited to "GM" comes from these cards. Marsh's original cards have recently been digitized as part of an ongoing effort to organize and process data generated by another Chiwere documentation project undertaken by a professor and graduate students at the University of Missouri in the 1980s and 1990s. As part of their project, they collected copies of

Chiwere archival documentation, including Marsh's materials, from the American Philosophical Society and Smithsonian.

According to Siouanist John Koontz, "failure to matriculate, massive unfinished manuscripts, premature death, etc. are something of a tradition in Siouan studies" (2003b). While Marsh did not suffer a premature death, he did prematurely exit professional linguistics, failing to matriculate and leaving behind massive unfinished manuscripts that Siouanists today struggle to access, process, and fold into their own projects. Marsh's materials constitute just one body of work with which those involved in Chiwere preservation must reckon. There are three more substantial archival collections: Chiwere materials collected by James Owen Dorsey for the Bureau of American Ethnology in the nineteenth century; Jimm's collection of audio recordings and notebooks dating back to the 1960s; and audiovisual recordings and notebooks produced by the University of Missouri's Chiwere documentation project in the 1980s and 1990s. There are also missionary materials (see Chapter 4) and other smaller collections. Those working on other Siouan languages confront similar legacies: after John Koontz told Mark Awakuni-Swetland about Dorsey's unpublished Omaha-Ponca materials at the Smithsonian, Mark spent years working to digitize each item in Dorsey's 20,000-slip lexicon of Omaha-Ponca and check them with current speakers. Following Mark's premature death in 2015, another Siouanist who was collaborating with Mark took over the project. The work is ongoing.

## Conclusion

In this chapter, I have described the social experience of participating in two intersecting networks associated with revitalization movements. The first network

includes Bill, Lance, Rebecca, Jimm, Reuben, Brett, and Sky. This is the network that led me to my dissertation topic: it was Bill who introduced me to Lance, Rebecca, and Jimm, who in turn introduced me to Reuben, Brett, and Sky. This diverse group of scholars, educators, activists, and tribal members share an interest in revitalizing various aspects of Ioway and Otoe-Missouria heritage, including language, horticulture, art, and religion.

Three members of this group—Lance, Jimm, and Sky—are professionally involved in language preservation and also participate in the Siouanist community, a similarly hybrid network of linguists, language activists and educators, and tribal members who are involved in documenting and revitalizing Siouan languages. I have discussed the social structure of the Siouanist community, its forms of in-person and online interaction, and the socialization experiences of three people who have encountered the group: myself, Vicki, and Mark. I have also described how the historical legacy of Siouan documentation shapes the social experiences of current Siouanists and the knowledge economy of Siouan studies today. Since Siouanists tend to take on projects that they cannot finish or are perhaps by definition impossible to finish, there is a constant need for skilled and unskilled labor, information exchange, and collaboration. The next chapters of this dissertation focus in on the Chiwere context to explore how Lance, Jimm, and Sky use literacy, metalexical discourse, and translation to imbue Chiwere with social, cultural, and linguistic significance for diverse audiences.

# Chapter 4

## Writing Chiwere: Orthography, Literacy, and Language Revitalization

Once, when I was down at the Ioway tribal offices west of White Cloud, Kansas, a man who knew of my interest in their language and had a reputation for knowing something of the old ways asked me if I knew how to say 'Ioway' in "Indian."

"You mean, the Ioway word for 'Ioway?'" I said. It was near the beginning of my fieldwork. I was not used to tracking the deictic shift of "Indian" as a glossonym.

"Yeah, the Indian word for 'Ioway,'" he repeated.

"Yeah, I think I know it," I said.

"Well, how do you say it?" he said.

"[bɑxodʒe]," I said

He nodded approvingly. "Not bad. You make that [x] sound in the back of your throat. You know, a lot of the younger ones these days, they say it [bɑksodʒe] or [bɑkodʒe] because they see it written that way with an <x> or a <k>. The spelling has them all confused."

Luckily, my familiarity with linguistic notation and years of Hebrew school meant that I was able to recognize and pronounce the Chiwere voiceless velar fricative with little trouble beyond a persistent uvular accent. In addition, as a participant observer in a domestic Chiwere language nest, I practiced the sound every day. But most members of the three federally recognized tribes for whom Chiwere is a heritage language—the Iowa Tribe of Kansas and Nebraska, the Iowa Tribe of Oklahoma, and the Otoe-Missouria Tribe of Indians—have limited exposure to spoken Chiwere. There have been no

recognized fluent speakers since the 1990s. A handful of semi-speakers remain, but there are few opportunities to hear the language outside of ceremonial contexts.

As a result, many tribal members only have access to written Chiwere, which is represented using various orthographies that draw letters primarily from the Latin alphabet. Since many of the same letters are also used to write English, some tribal members have a tendency to pronounce them with their English values. Thus, Ioways may pronounce their endonym [bɑksodʒe] or [bɑkodʒe], substituting an English <x> or <k> sound for the gutteral [x]. This is what allows the man mentoned above to use the question "How do you say 'Ioway' in Indian?" as a kind of shibboleth to test the authenticity of my and his fellow tribal members' knowledge of Chiwere.

As this anecdote illustrates, issues of knowledge and authority are central to language revitalization, which involves reestablishing transmission of a code that is in decline and therefore known to relatively few or no community members. In cases like Chiwere, where access even to semi-speakers is rare, literacy is the primary means of socializing second language learners to their heritage language and associated practices and values. In the context of an epistemological shift in linguistic authority from speakers to texts, conversations about letters and literacy become intertwined with concerns about language shift and cultural change. This chapter describes how previous Chiwere writing systems and current orthographic controversies are embedded in broader strategies for using literacy to teach languages and cultures across languages and cultures. Both historically and today, Chiwere orthographies are pedagogical responses to intercultural interaction that reflect and promote projects of acculturation and enculturation.

I begin by describing how my analysis is informed by previous research on language socialization and literacy ideologies. I then examine the work of missionaries Moses Merrill, William Hamilton, and Samuel Irvin—all of whom used Chiwere literacy as a means of converting and "civilizing" Ioways and Otoe-Missourias in the 1830s and 1840s—and discuss how their work is received by linguists, language activists, and community audiences today. The next section describes the orthography used by the Ioway, Otoe-Missouria Language Project, a community-based and (since 2007) NSF-funded Chiwere documentation and revitalization project directed by Jimm Goodtracks, with whom I have worked since 2009. I focus on interactions between Jimm, linguists who study Siouan languages, and Franklin Murray, a Chiwere speaker who developed his own orthography and pedagogical materials in the 1970s. I then discuss objections to the Project's orthography raised by Sky Campbell and Lance Foster, the tribal language coordinators for two of the communities for whom Chiwere is a heritage language. Finally, I connect conversations surrounding writing systems with issues of entextualization and enculturation. I argue that Chiwere orthographies have always been designed to promote more than reading and writing: the goal of orthographies and literacy more generally is to socialize readers to a new way of life—though what is "new" changes over the course of colonial encounter. I conclude by situating these dialectics of cultural convergence and differentiation in the context of other research on the role of literacy in transforming and transmitting indigenous traditions and identities.

## Language Socialization and Literacy Ideologies

My account of Chiwere literacy draws on previous research on language socialization, an area of linguistic anthropology focused on the related processes of

learning how to use a language and learning through language how to become a member of a social group (Ochs and Schieffelin 1984). Three areas of language socialization research inform my approach. First, an emphasis on verbal interactions between children and their caregivers equips language socialization researchers with tools for studying situations of language shift—in which speakers are not transmitting one of the languages in their repertoire to subsequent generations (Field 2001; Garrett 2005; Kulick 1992; Makihara 2005)—and language revitalization, in which a language in perceived decline is being retransmitted to children and/or adult second language learners (Bunte 2009; Meek 2010; Nevins 2013:47-78). As Meek puts it, "language revitalization is ultimately a process of language socialization because it involves the intentional socialization of new language speakers . . . gramatically, interactionally, materially, politically, and so forth" (2010:48). Second, language socialization research is not limited to verbal interactions but also attends to literacy under the heading of "literacy socialization" (Schieffelin and Ochs 1986:180-183; Garrett and Baquedano-López 2002:351). Third, language socialization research makes an explicit connection between learning a language and the formation of subjectivities and identities. Language socialization involves more than learning a code or set of communicative practices. Learning a way of speaking also involves learning "a way of being in the world" (Kulick and Schieffelin 2004:349). Fader (2001) intertwines all three of these aspects of language socialization research in her analysis of how school literacy practices contribute to language shift (from Yiddish to English) and the formation of religious identities and gendered subjectivities among Hasidic girls in New York.

Drawing on these themes, I focus in this chapter on the role of orthographies in a context where literacy socialization is the primary method of language revitalization and where writing systems are used both to mediate cultural differences and create distinctive identities. In contrast to anthropology—where the sociocultural dimensions of writing systems have long been recognized within literature on language ideologies (Schieffelin and Doucet 1998)—the sociocultural aspects of orthographies have typically been neglected in linguistics, where orthography is seen as a neutral application of phonology. Sebba (2007), however, has developed a sociolinguistic approach to orthography that puts ideological issues front and center. In his framework, the notion that orthography is a neutral technology is itself an ideological position that privileges some interests over others. Sebba effects this shift in perspective by developing a social practice account of writing systems that links orthography, literacy, and language ideologies: orthography is "a practice which is bound up with other practices to do with literacy, which are themselves embedded in the social and cultural practices of a society or group" and reflect "language ideologies – beliefs about what language is, should be, and should be used for" (2007:24-25).

In this chapter, I develop what Sebba calls the "interlinguality of orthography," the recognition that "languages and their associated orthographies do not exist in isolation. Their users know something . . . about other languages or language varieties which use orthographies different from theirs, and are able to make use of this knowledge in various ways" (2007:162). When orthographies are developed by multilingual literate elites, for example, they may draw on their knowledge of one writing system to create a writing system for another language (2007:58-80). One goal in interlingual situations

involves maximizing correspondences between the orthographies for two languages so that learning to read and write one language facilitates literacy in the other. Sebba calls a writing system designed for this purpose a "transitional orthography" and notes that:

> There has been a tendency to treat literacy in the indigenous language, and hence the use of the orthography, as transitional: while initial literacy will be in the indigenous language, 'full' literacy will follow later in the national/regional/ official language. Thus, the most practical choice of phoneme–grapheme correspondences is the one which is most similar to the language in which 'full' literacy will be acquired. [Sebba 2007:75]

As discussed below, some missionaries viewed Chiwere literacy as transitional in this way and maximized correspondences between Chiwere and English orthographies in order to encourage an eventual transition to English.

In language revitalization contexts, however, the transition often moves in the other direction: literacy in a dominant language like English serves as the starting point for developing indigenous language literacy. Neely and Palmer (2009), for example, discuss how some Kiowa orthographies employ English spelling conventions in order to help an audience of English-speaking and -reading tribal members learn Kiowa as a second language. They describe this as a "transphonic" orthography because its goal is "to *trans*fer literacy skills from one language to another," in this case from English to Kiowa (2009:282, italics original). This ideology of "maximum transfer" is controversial among educators, however, some of whom argue that it promotes phonological interference from English and thus makes learning Kiowa more difficult (2009:292-293).

In contrast to transitional or transphonic orthographies, differentiating orthographies emphasize contrasts between the writing systems for two languages. These orthographic contrasts can be used to exaggerate differences between languages or to symbolize distinctive identities. Competing writing systems for Haitian kreyòl provide a

paradigmatic case of tensions between interlingual orthographic approaches: while some want to maximize orthographic correspondences between kreyòl and French for historical and educational purposes, others believe that kreyòl should look different from French in order to emphasize a distinctive postcolonial Haitian national identity in relation to France and the rest of the francophone world (Scheiffelin and Doucet 1998).

Tensions between transitional/transphonic and differentiating approaches play out in many Native American contexts in the form of competition between what Hinton (2014) calls English-based Practical Orthographies and Linguistic Practical Orthographies. While English-based orthographies are often believed to facilitate heritage language literacy and acquisition, they can also be blamed (as in the opening anecdote) for engendering (mis)pronunciations that contribute to phonological convergence with English. Linguistic orthographies, in contrast, make Native American languages look different from English through their use of diacritics and symbols drawn from Americanist linguistic notation or the International Phonetic Alphabet. In addition to English-based and linguistic orthographies, some Native American languages are written using unique symbols. While the Cherokee syllabary is the best-known example (Bender 2002), the idea of inventing new writing systems has been discussed or implemented in a number of communities, and some Siouan examples are mentioned below.

Anthropologists and linguists have documented an epistemological turning point in Native American language shift and revitalization wherein language learners transfer pedagogical authority to written resources as access to speakers dwindles with varying implications for orthography and literacy ideologies. Doak and Montler (2000), for example, note that a lack of Coeur d'Alene speakers means that most tribal members only

have access to written Coeur d'Alene, which has been represented using three different orthographies in the twentieth century. Since language learners are unaware of how the language is "supposed" to sound, they tend to ignore diacritics on vowels and pronounce homoglyphs according to English phonology. As in Chiwere, for example, the Coeur d'Alene velar fricative has been written <kh> and is often pronounced as if it were an English stop. After reviewing a number of similar examples, the authors conclude that orthographies intended to document and revitalize Coeur d'Alene are contributing to phonological changes in the language.

Kroskrity (2002) describes a somewhat different situation for Western Mono, where tribal members have limited access to the few remaining speakers and the community prefers an English-based orthography. While linguistic symbols are used for sounds not present in English, these caused confusion among language learners when their sounds could not be explained using English examples in the pronunciation guide, and learners have a tendency to pronounce them using the closest available English sounds. This suggests that differentiating symbols drawn from linguistic notation may not in fact prevent phonological convergence. In response to these challenges, Kroskrity describes a strategy for language revitalization that draws on technologies of "postliteracy" to develop multimedia pedagogical materials that will allow tribal members to use recordings of speakers to learn pronunciation and speaking styles associated with traditional genres of oral performance.

Romaine (2002) addresses similar issues in an article on signs for place-names in Hawai‘i, where Hawaiian and non-Hawaiian residents of the islands are anglicizing the pronunciation of common Hawaiian words. Believing that the widespread public use of

an English-based missionary orthography for writing Hawaiian contributes to anglicization, language activists have responded by rewriting signs and place-names in a phonemic orthography that marks glottal stops and vowel length with diacritics. By more clearly differentiating Hawaiian and English orthographies, activists hope to correct anglicized misspellings and mispronunciations, which are for them "a constant reminder of the erosion of the political and cultural importance of Hawaiians and the Hawaiian language in their homeland" (2002:194). These spelling reforms are controversial among Hawaiians themselves, however, since the remaining native speakers prefer the missionary orthography and know when to insert glottal stops and long vowels. Second language learners, in contrast, rely on a phonemic orthography to maintain phonological continuity. While this "spelling pronunciation . . . is witness to the greater prestige of the written language and its power to exert influence on speech" (2002:210), Romaine also notes that

> There is no evidence to indicate that language change would be halted or eradicated by codification in writing of distinctions that the codifiers wished to maintain or promote. . . . Even in the absence of written norms, second-language learners of Hawaiian would tend to restructure the newly acquired language system in line with English and Hawai'i Creole English. Over time, ongoing phonological change will lead to divergence between all spoken varieties and the orthographies designed to represent them, regardless of how well designed the original writing system is and how faithfully it manages to represent a spoken variety. [Romaine 2002:211]

Ultimately, Hawaiian orthographic controversies reflect competing notions of authenticity and authority in a complicated context of language shift and revitalization where second language learners and nonspeakers outnumber the small community of elderly native speakers. "According to whose criteria," Romaine asks, "are some

pronunciations and spellings deemed more ‘authentically Hawaiian’ when the majority of those defining themselves as Hawaiian no longer speak the language?” (2002:209).

Doak and Montler, Kroskrity, and Romaine describe contexts where literacy and language socialization are intertwined because reading provides the primary means of accessing the heritage language. This intensifies pedagogical pressures on orthographies, which come to be seen as prescriptive formulas for future utterances rather than descriptive systems for prior utterances. These researchers note diverse attitudes among scholars and stakeholders about whether orthographies can promote or slow phonological convergence with dominant languages. Whether or not orthographies in fact contribute to phonological change, the notion of literacy ideologies situates different perspectives on orthographies, pronunciations, and language change as equally relevant social facts. Beliefs about both the causes of (mis)pronunciations (whether they are “blamed” on orthographies or attributed to other factors) and their significance or insignificance (whether they become symbols of political and cultural erosion or are seen as benign or positive manifestations of language contact and change) are interpretive positions with social implications. Such beliefs are literacy socialization ideologies—ideas about the linguistic, social, and cultural causes and consequences of learning a language through literacy as opposed to other means.

## Missionary Materials, Then and Now

Connections between orthography, literacy socialization, and enculturation are evident in early Chiwere writing systems. Baptist and Presbyterian missionaries in the 1830s and 1840s designed orthographies and printed Chiwere books in order encourage

Ioways and Otoe-Missourias to become participants in an anglophone American Christian culture.

The earliest books in Chiwere were developed by Moses Merrill, a Baptist missionary to Otoes and Missourias living near Bellevue, Nebraska, and printed by Jotham Meeker's Shawnee Baptist Mission Press using a transparent, phonetic orthography that followed the principles of what contemporaries called the "new system" (McMurtrie and Allen 1930b:25-30). Rejecting both English spelling conventions and the invention of new symbols, the distinguishing feature of the new system was the use of Latin characters (type for which was easily available) to represent one and only one indigenous language sound. Meeker and other prominent Baptist missionaries believed that new system orthographies made learning to read easier than alternatives by using characters to represent sounds rather than larger units like syllables or words and by eliminating the need to memorize arbitrary spelling conventions. These pedagogical advantages have long been claimed for alphabetic phonemic writing systems (Sebba 2007:18-23). Isaac McCoy, one of the most vocal advocates of the new system, described it as "the simple painting of speech upon paper" (1840:473) and argued that the ease with which it could be learned would facilitate religious instruction and conversion in the field: "Upon the new system, the missionary who would accompany a band of Indians on a buffalo hunt of three months, for the sake of improving himself in a knowledge of their language, could carry with him his tracts, and teach scores to read them, as they would be occasionally resting in their encampments" (1840:475). Merrill (1838) in fact attempted this very strategy, though with less success than McCoy envisioned.

Since the goal was to teach populations with no prior exposure to English literacy how to read and write their own vernacular, the assignment of letters to sounds was often rather arbitrary from the perspective of someone used to reading English: the Chiwere orthography, for example, uses <l> for [ɑ], <d> for [ɔ], <v> for [aʊ], <f> for [ŋ], <g> for [θ], and <j> for [ʃ] (Merrill 1835). Merrill had in fact come to Meeker in 1834 with his materials written using English spelling conventions, but Meeker convinced him to adopt the new system and printed large alphabets for school cards, a book of hymns, and a reader in the new orthography. While no known copies of the original 1834 Otoe-Missouria reader remain, the reader is extant in an 1835 printing commissioned by Presbyterian missionaries who worked with Ioways and recognized that Otoe-Missouria and Ioway were mutually intelligible dialects. The pages have Chiwere on one side and English facing, which would allow for literacy instruction in both languages, though Merrill's primary goal was to teach Otoes to read Chiwere and thereby reach them through their own language in the manner of the Apostles. In 1839, however, Merrill abandoned vernacular literacy instruction and agreed to open an English boarding school at the mission as a concession to Otoe leaders, who had advocated from the beginning that their children learn English and receive meals and clothing from the school (Knudson 2009; Schwartz 2012).

One notable feature of Merrill's reader is how it reflexively uses literacy to teach a culture of literacy, a set of practices and values associated with reading and writing. The third lesson, for example, includes as practice sentences "he reads" and "I write" (1835:7). The fourth lesson consists of a series of commands, each ending with the Chiwere imperative marker *re*: "You must not laugh. Look at me. Children, you must not

strike. Look on your book. Sit down. Read the book slowly. You must not talk. You must not go out. All must sit still" (1835:7). The primer's prescriptions gradually widen their scope from the immediate task of literacy to religious instruction and the broader transformations associated with civilization. By the tenth lesson, for example, students were reading, "We want the Otoes to be like the Americans. Americans raise plenty of corn, and wheat, swine, cattle, and horses. The men labor, and get money. They build houses. They fill them with good things. They send their children to school. They teach them to work. They have plenty of food and clothing" (1835:11,13). These lessons on literacy, education, religion, morality, and "the hardships and privations of a hunter's life" as compared to "the comforts and enjoyments of civilized life" were reinforced through oral instruction (Merrill 1838).

Schieffelin (2000) describes similar dynamics in her account of the introduction of literacy to Kaluli people in Papua New Guinea. She notes that a grammar sketch produced by the first missionary to the community gives special emphasis to lexical items associated with literacy and includes example sentences like "because I wrote badly, I'm rubbing it out" (2000:303). Most of these tokens were not, as a grammar sketch would imply, drawn from contemporary Kaluli language as spoken by Kaluli people themselves but were developed by the missionary as part of his effort to promote literacy in the community and instruct Kaluli people in behaviors associated with reading and writing. This emphasis continued in vernacular literacy lessons at the Bosavi mission school, where "a great deal of attention was paid to orienting students to the page. Kulu [the teacher] frequently reminded the class to 'hold the book carefully,' 'look at it,' using Kaluli imperatives" (2000:315). While in the Kaluli case this kind of instruction seems to

be emphasized in verbal interactions, Merrill included similar material in his primer, making reading a reflexive exercise of learning how to read in the double sense of pronouncing words on a page and exhibiting the proper behaviors associated with being a member of a literate culture.

Following Merrill, the next missionaries to produce Chiwere books were William Hamilton and Samuel Irvin, who established a Presbyterian mission and printing press near Highland, Kansas in 1837 (McMurtrie and Allen 1930a). Their Ioway primer, printed to be used in the mission school, begins by noting that "while, in preparing the following pages, the principal object has been to provide the Ioways with a system of letters by which they might learn to read their own language, pains have been taken to prepare the work for subserving, as far as possible, the important object of introducing the English Language among them" (1843:5). Hamilton and Irvin believed that by teaching Ioways how to read Chiwere, they could lay a foundation for teaching them English. In order to facilitate reading across languages, their Chiwere orthography maximizes correspondences with the English alphabet. "In arranging the Roman character[s]," they write, "care has been taken to alter the English sounds of the letters as little as possible, that those, who were able to read in one Language, might more easily learn to read the other" (1843:5). While their use of <v> for [aʊ], <x> for [ə], <f> for [ð] and [θ], and <j> for [ʃ] renders their success on this point questionable, their intention to design a transitional/transphonic orthography distinguishes their approach from Merrill's. Hamilton and Irvin's Chiwere orthography is essentially an instrument of English literacy and associated cultural transformations.

After lessons designed to teach students the sounds of the letters and how to read short words, Hamilton and Irvin's primer pursues a program of acculturation on matters ranging from subsistence to spirituality. The primer explains the uses and benefits of livestock, farm tools, and structures like churches, houses, and mills. A lesson on hogs, for example, contrasts Indians who hunt with white people who raise livestock and concludes that Indians "ought to quit hunting and go to work and farm and raise hogs, then they would not be always hungry" (Hamilton and Irvin 1843:39). The lesson on mills notes "if the Indians had mills they would do their grinding more readily" (Hamilton and Irvin 1843:47). In addition to introducing new animals, tools, and buildings, the primer also contrasts how Ioways and Americans treat species that both societies share: "Indians eat dogs. White people do not eat them" (Hamilton and Irvin 1843:41); "Indians are very fond of horses, but they do not treat them well. They ride them very fast. And in the winter, because they do not give them much to eat, they get very poor, and many of them die" (Hamilton and Irvin 1843:43). In addition to these socioeconomic and cultural lessons, the primer also includes a catechism that explains Christian doctrine on the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, sin and salvation, and heaven and hell (1843:74-79).

As anthropologists have observed in other contexts (Schieffelin 2000:304-310), missionary primers often socialize readers not only to literacy but also to a stigmatized identity that makes a narrative of progress through intertwined religious conversion and economic development compelling. Both Merrill's and Hamilton and Irvin's primers employ a similar strategy in trying to socialize readers to believe that by embracing Christianity and civilization, they will be more comfortable both in this life and the next.

As the earliest substantial records of Chiwere, missionary materials are of some historical interest to linguists today, but their orthographies and content compromise their value for current language revitalization efforts. Constrained by the pre-phonemic state of contemporary linguistics and the challenges of frontier printing, their orthographies are phonologically inadequate. And despite Hamilton and Irvin's intentions, they are not accessible to English-reading audiences due to the use of homoglyphs for different sounds in Chiwere and English. Especially jarring to modern community audiences are long, seemingly unpronounceable sequences of what look like consonants, which give the impression of gibberish. This is evident from the word for 'book' [wɑwɑgəxe]—spelled <wdwdklha> by Merrill and <wv-wv-kv-hæ> by Hamilton and Irvin—that appears in the Chiwere title pages of both readers and is thus one of the first words encounter in the text. In order to make missionary materials accessible to tribal members today, both the Ioway, Otoe-Missouria Language Project and the Otoe-Missouria Language Department have re-transcribed them using current orthographies.

In addition to orthographic obstacles, some tribal members also object to the content of missionary texts. In 1971, for example, Jimm attempted to re-elicit sentences in Merrill's reader from a Chiwere speaker who systematically refused to translate elicitation prompts that presented inaccurate or offensive messages about Otoes, such as those described above (Wayt 2015). Similarly, when the Ioway, Otoe-Missouria Language Project posted re-transcriptions of Merrill's Gospel translations and prayers on its website, a tribal member who usually supports the Project's work objected to it on the grounds that its language and content reflected a missionary rather than indigenous

perspective; for him, the whole point of language revitalization is to recover indigenous traditions, which he sees in opposition to missionary agendas.

Of course, many Ioways and Otoe-Missourias see no contradiction between Christian and indigenous traditions, whether because they identify as Christians themselves or because they participate in syncretic movements like the Native American Church. Jimm's only adjustment to a prayer in Merrill's reader before posting a re-transcription on his website was to change a line meaning "Thou dost not love bad people" (Merrill 1835:13) to "Thou dost not love bad things (deeds)" (Goodtracks 2005:1). Jimm characterizes the former as a "missionary view" and offers his alternative wording as "a more enlightened perspective, so that the prayer may be utilized for children and in more contemporary settings" (Goodtracks 2005:1 n. 5).

To take another example, efforts to document Chiwere in the 1970s resulted in recordings of a number of sermons and hymns by Otoe-Missouria Baptist preachers. In response to controversies like the ones just described, when Jimm reproduces those materials, he includes a disclaimer that such content "is presented here for the opportunity to hear the Ioway - Otoe - Missouria Language spoken by Native speakers, and does not represent any effort to promote any particular religious views or denominations" (Goodtracks 2004b:13). As this disclaimer suggests, materials produced by current Chiwere language revitalization efforts define themselves to some extent in opposition to those produced by missionaries, but the need for such disclaimers reflects underlying anxiety about their similarity. The current literacy-based approach to language revitalization and (re-)enculturation is in some ways a rather transparent translation of missionary efforts to use literacy as a tool of conversion and civilization.

**Elders, Siouanists, and the Ioway, Otoe-Missouria Language Project Orthography**

While it is unsurprising to learn that missionaries used literacy as a means of acculturating indigenous communities to American religious and socioeconomic expectations, it may be more interesting to consider how closely modern language revitalization materials mirror missionary texts in using literacy as an instrument of enculturation. Like Hamilton and Irvin's transitional/transphonic Chiwere orthography, which was designed to encourage an eventual transition to English, orthographies employed in more recent Chiwere pedagogical materials also assume a context of bilingual literacy, but the direction of transition is now reversed: native English-speaking tribal members will learn to read Chiwere and thereby rediscover their heritage language and "traditional" cultural practices and values.

Most current Chiwere orthographies are influenced both by the Siouanist tradition of Americanist phonetic notation developed by Boas and his students and by community concerns. The existence of a distinctive Siouanist tradition of phonetic notation is demonstrated in an exchange between Boas and Gordon Marsh, who produced extensive Chiwere documentation during fieldwork in Oklahoma funded by a grant Boas secured for him from the American Council of Learned Societies' Committee on Native American Languages (Schwartz 2014). After studying linguistics first as an undergraduate at Columbia with Boas and then as a graduate student in Europe, Marsh (1938) wrote Boas from France asking whether he should re-transcribe his Chiwere corpus using International Phonetic Alphabet notation. Boas replied, "I do not think it desirable to change your orthography to that of the International Phonetic Association

because practically all the Siouan material is written in the style you have used" (Boas 1938).

Most current Chiwere orthographies reflect the influence of this Siouanist style while also responding to community concerns. The Ioway, Otoe-Missouria Language Project employs a number of Americanist linguistic symbols in its orthography, such as <ŋ>, <ñ>, and <š>, but also seeks to make Chiwere accessible to readers of English. As a result, and in contrast to orthographies used for closely related Siouan languages like Winnebago, the Project uses the digraph <ch> rather than <c> or <č> for [tʃ] and uses a superscript <$^{n}$> following vowels rather than an ogonek to indicate nasalization. Jimm believes that these decisions make his materials more accessible to community audiences and legitimizes these choices by invoking conversations he had with "the elders," by which he means the last generations of native Chiwere speakers. As he put it in an email to a tribal member who printed Chiwere bumper stickers using ogoneks for nasal vowels:

> While I understand that the little tail under the vowel stands for a nasal vowel, not many others outside of those who study linguistics will understand that it is an indicator of a nasal vowel. I spent a good while with the late elders to work out an acceptable . . . orthography. So for those Elders, they were more comfortable using the superscript <$^{n}$> as in the word *Hi$^{n}$tágwa*. I support the idea of one symbol represents one sound. However, the accepted Greek letters representing, for example, the sounds of <dh> and <th>, the Elders felt would needlessly confuse the general community. They felt that a minimum of new symbols should be used as needed, and thus it was best to use regular English symbols that the people were already familiar with and can be readily found on the keyboard.

While making his orthography responsive to community concerns, Jimm also takes into account feedback from the Siouanists, the community of linguists involved in researching Siouan languages. In 2011, the Project applied to the National Science Foundation's Documenting Endangered Languages program for funding to support work

on a Chiwere corpus. Before the grant was awarded, however, the program director asked the Project to respond to a reviewer who noted that the orthography the Project employed in its dictionary conflated aspirated and unaspirated voiceless stops by using <p t ch k> for both series. This was considered problematic because the unaspirated voiceless stops are allophones of the corresponding voiced stops and thus contrast with the aspirated voiceless stops, as in [pʰa] 'head' or 'nose' and [ba] or [pa] 'snow.' Thus, the Ioway endonym has been written both as <Baxoje> and <Paxoje>, but the first syllable should always be unaspirated, which is natural for native English speakers to produce with the voiced stop but is challenging for them to produce with the voiceless stop. Similarly, the word <Chiwere> is derived from the Otoe endonym [dʒiweɾe] or [tʃiweɾe] but tends to be pronounced [tʃʰiweɾe] by English speakers. This reflects the fact that <Chiwere> is a loanword that is now part of a particular register of English, an example of linguistic jargon.[7]

After consulting with other Siouanists, the Project decided to use <p t ch k> for aspirated stops and <b d j g> for both voiced stops and their voiceless unaspirated allophones. Some colleagues used superscript <ʰ> to mark aspiration in other Siouan languages on the model of the superscript <ⁿ> used for nasal vowels. The Omaha Language Curriculum Development Project (2006) at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, for example, uses an orthography that distinguishes aspirated, unaspirated, and voiced stops as <pʰ tʰ chʰ kʰ>, <p t ch k>, and <b d j g>, respectively. The Ioway, Otoe-

[7] It could be argued that the Ioway endonym is undergoing a similar process and that the "mispronunciations" described in the opening anecdote reflect the fact that <Baxoje> and <Bakhoje> are part of tribal members' English lexicon. Romaine (2002:202-203) describes similar ambiguities surrounding whether some place-names are Hawaiian words or English words of Hawaiian origin.

Missouria Language Project decided not to add extra symbols to mark aspiration, however, in part because the Otoe-Missouria tribal language department had already rejected the use of superscript <$^{n}$> for nasals, and the Project did not want to contribute to more orthographic divergence (see below).

The Project's decision was also influenced by the fact that users of the materials would be native English speakers learning Chiwere as a second language, for whom it is natural to aspirate word initial voiceless stops. Thus, the Project's decision to write all unaspirated stops as voiced is a pedagogical accommodation to phonological influence from English. As the Project wrote in its response to the NSF program director:

> Since native American English speakers normally aspirate word initial voiceless stops and struggle to produce unaspirated word initial voiceless stops, the current orthography—when used consistently to mark aspiration as described above—aligns with the intuitive pronunciation of English-speaking language learners. The phonological influences of American English also make consistent production of the unaspirated voiced allophone successful. Introducing a separate grapheme for voiceless unaspirated stops would unnecessarily undermine Ioway and Otoe-Missouria laypeople in the already challenging task of learning and reviving a moribund language. Using the voiced allophones to represent the unaspirated stop series clearly distinguishes morphemes with the more familiar and accessible allophone, which is equally appropriate in the ancestral language. There is no phonetic inaccuracy in using the voiced allophones for the unaspirated series: they produce a perfectly correct pronunciation of the ancestral language. The only potential problem would be the loss of the voiceless unaspirated variant, which is the kind of change that could happen anyway in a natural language over time. However, this concern seems outweighed by the sociolinguistic and pedagogical advantages outlined above. [Personal communication, May 18, 2012]

In this case, a combination of feedback from other Siouanists and consideration of the anglophone audiences for Chiwere pedagogical materials shaped the Project's orthographic practices. Morgan describes similar influences on an orthography developed for Nakoda, another Siouan language. She writes that it "follows many accepted Siouan

orthographies" and "conventions that have been adopted for other Siouan languages" except that plain unaspirated stops are written as voiced and aspirated stops as devoiced. "The decision to write unaspirated stops as voiced consonants," Morgan writes, "reflects the [orthography] workshop participants' focus on the younger generation of speakers. Because all of the younger speakers use English as their primary language, they are not aware of aspiration as a contrastive element and often interpret the unaspirated stops of older speakers as voiced" (2009:224-225). While Morgan characterizes this aspect of Nakoda orthography as unusual for Siouan languages, its adoption for writing both Nakoda and Chiwere suggests that it may become more common over time as numbers of speakers decline and pedagogical materials accommodate native English-speaking tribal members.

To take another example of how the Project's orthography reflects a balance of linguist- and community-oriented considerations, Jimm's dictionary used to include English transliterations of Chiwere words as a guide to pronunciation until other Siouanists advised him that this practice undermined his efforts to promote his Chiwere orthography. Jimm's transliterations are still evident in some of his dictionary files, and the following examples are compiled from the file for English words beginning with <a> (Goodtracks 2007a):

> 'abdomen' *ñíxa* [NYEE khah]
> 'hurt someone by accident' *wa^ú$^{n}$xa$^{n}$šige* [wah - OOHN khahn shee geh]
> 'apricot' *ká$^{n}$jedhi* [KAHN jay THEE]
> 'armpit' *ró^thi* [DROH-thee]
> 'turn around' *ruwí$^{n}$xe* [droo WEEN khay]

As these examples indicate, Jimm used <kh> for [x], a hyphen for the glottal stop, <hn> following vowels to indicate nasalization (but not consistently), <dr> for [ɾ] (the alveolar stop positions the tongue in the proper place for the alveolar tap but the stop should not

be pronounced as in *dr-* initial English words), and <th> for [ð] and [θ]. While Jimm did his best to make his transliterations easy for English-speakers to read, the ambiguities of English phonology and the lack of symbols for a number of Chiwere sounds meant that they ended up contributing to mispronunciations. After consulting with other Siouanists, Jimm realized that consistent use of his Chiwere orthography was the best way to promote correct pronunciation. He also came to believe that such transliterations demeaned Chiwere: just as learners of Spanish, French, and other major world languages are obliged to learn their orthographies, so too should students of Chiwere (see Goodtracks et al. n.d.).

Jimm believed that transliterations were necessary in the first place because many community members expected them, in part because Franklin Murray, a respected Ioway elder and speaker, prepared influential pedagogical materials in that style in the 1970s (Kroskrity 2002:183 describes a similar expectation among Western Mono derived from pronunciation guides included in many English dictionary entries). Murray's introduction to his dictionary emphasizes speakers as knowledgeable authorities:

> My concern in writing this has been to help those who wish to learn to speak our language. It can be said that pronunciation is correct when it is in actual use by a number of speakers having the knowledge that is not obtainable elsewhere. I have worked out an alphabet by which the Iowa language is easily read and pronounced. You should listen carefully to the Iowa speaker and you will be able to learn the precise pronunciation of Iowa sounds and the proper accent on words. [Murray 1977:1]

While Murray claims that his orthography makes Ioway easy to read, he is also clear that speakers, who have "knowledge that is not obtainable elsewhere," are the ultimate authorities on language. The exhortation to listen to speakers for the proper pronunciation of various sounds reinforces their authority and mitigates the ambiguities of his English-based practical orthography. As in English, vowels have multiple possible sounds: <a>

represents both [ɑ] and [e] on the model of English words ‘father’ and ‘ale’; <e> represents [ɛ] and [i] on the model of ‘set’ and ‘eve’; <i> represents [i] and [aɪ] on the model of ‘machine’ and ‘ice’; <o> represents [ɑ] and [o] on the model of ‘not’ and ‘old’; and <u> represents [u] and [ə] on the model of ‘rule’ and ‘hunger.’ Murray uses <n> for nasal consonants and following nasal vowels, but only the former use is explicitly explained. While he uses one diacritic—an accent mark for stress—he employs no linguistic symbols, preferring digraphs like <ch>, <dh>, <kh>, <ny>, and <th> for [ʧ], [ð], [x], [ɲ], and [θ]. In the key, readers are exhorted again to listen to speakers for correct pronunciation: “Listen carefully to the Iowa speaker for the correct pronunciation of the gla and gle sounds used in numbers” (1977:3) and “listen to the Iowa speaker for the sound in kh” (1977:4). Recordings of the language classes that Murray taught in the 1970s reinforce the dictionary’s pedagogical emphasis on listening to speakers: most of the lesson consists of Murray saying a word or phrase, and the class repeating it. Because he uses English spelling conventions to write Chiwere, Murray’s dictionary cannot be used alone to learn accurate pronunciation, but that was never his intention—Murray assumes that readers also have access to native speakers.

In addition to promoting the pedagogical authority of speakers over texts, Murray’s dictionary promotes an ideology linking language and culture. As Muray writes in his introduction, “Our language is a living symbol of our cultural heritage. It is a valuable gift, a special way of looking at the world. When a language dies, the vitality of a way of living and thinking dies with it” (1977:1). The dictionary’s content reflects this connection between language and culture. After a word list dictionary, the numbers from 1-100, some basic phrases, days of the week, and seasons, there is a section on “Iowa

idioms," which include the Chiwere terms for 'give away' ("used in the Iowa tradition of giving away to friends such as a horse, blankets, shawls and small gifts"), 'thanking' ("used in various occasions such as prayers, gatherings"), 'leftover from feast,' and 'handgame' (1977:26). Following these culturally significant terms are a series of expressions related to handgames, such as "bring your chairs and dishes," reflecting the custom of bringing one's own chairs and dishes to such community events (1977:27). The dictionary concludes with an Iroshka song, reflecting the traditional importance of this dance society in Ioway culture.

Given how Murray subordinates textual authority to that of speakers, it is possible to appreciate how the lack of speakers since the 1990s presents something of an epistemological crisis for Chiwere language activists. One solution, adopted by the Iowa Tribe of Oklahoma, is to enshrine Murray's text as a kind of authoritative last word. This is evident from the Tribe's decision to post Murray's dictionary and recordings of his language classes on the language page of their website. The ongoing significance of Murray's work for the Iowa Tribe of Oklahoma in particular is evident from an accompanying biography, which reviews his involvement in various language revitalization efforts in the 1970s and concludes with a tribute to his language activism:

> In 1976-1977, Franklin taught a language class of the Iowa dialect to tribal members and other interested persons. He compiled a dictionary of said dialect which facilitates an easy understanding of the Iowa language. He assisted all people, student and professional, local and out-of-state, in publishing works of the Iowa people. . . . His legacy is the original written Ioway dictionary, by the use of phonetics, for future generations to come. He wanted our tribal language to live on. [Iowa Tribe of Oklahoma n.d.]

The Tribe also continues to follow a number of Murray's orthographic conventions, including the use of <kh> for [x] in their web domain name (http://bahkhoje.com) and in

various tribal enterprises, such as the Bah Kho Je Gallery & Gift Shop, the Bah-Kho-Je RV Park, and the Bah Kho-je Xla Chi (an eagle aviary and rehabilitation facility).

As described above, however, Jimm's engagement with the Siouanists and acceptance of funding from academic sources such as NSF mean that his orthography must balance community accessibility with linguistic standards. Like the Iowa Tribe of Oklahoma, Jimm presents himself as carrying on Murray's work but through selective entextualization rather than wholesale reproduction. Before we consider how Jimm creates continuity between his own project and deceased speakers like Murray, it is necessary to consider competing orthographies promoted by two of the tribes for whom Chiwere is a heritage language.

## Orthographic Variation in Chiwere

Despite Jimm's efforts to make his orthography accessible, many tribal members find Project materials unreadable. As Sky Campbell, the Otoe-Missouria tribal language coordinator explained to me:

> He uses that <ŋ> character. That throws people off. They don't know what that is. They prefer the <ny> like in *canyon* as opposed to the <n> with the tilda. . . . They prefer just an apostrophe as opposed to that caron for the glottal stop. . . . People said that they'd look at his stuff online and . . . just get confused. The <s> with the little deal over the top which means [s] or [ʃ] [is] perfect for somebody like me looking at it because I know what I'm looking at. But somebody [else] looking at it [thinks], "What is this?" So we try to keep all our diacritic marks to a minimum. [Personal communication, October 31, 2013]

Due to his desire to be accessible to the Otoe-Missouria community (who employs him), Sky digraphs <ng>, <ny>, and <sh> rather than Jimm's <ŋ>, <ñ>, and <š>. As a result of his diacritical minimalism, however, Sky provides English transliterations next to Chiwere words to help readers accurately pronounce features such as stress, which would normally be expressed by diacritics. Thus, even though both Jimm and Sky designed their

Chiwere orthographies to be accessible to readers of English, they also felt compelled to provide English transliterations for community audiences.

Making written Chiwere as familiar as possible to an audience with preexisting English literacy skills can promote pronunciation problems, however, especially when readers assume that homoglyphs represent the same sound in Chiwere and English. Sky explained to me that they now use ogoneks under nasalized vowels rather than <n> following them because people tended to pronounce even superscript <$^{n}$> as a nasal consonant. He said, "a word like 'sing' [jɑ̃we], they would read it in a book . . . spelled <yanwe>, and they'd pronounce it [jɑnwe]. Well, there's no real hard <n> as in 'Nancy' in there, but they don't know that." Interestingly, Sky inserts the superscript <$^{n}$> in his transliterations, in contrast to <ð> and <x> which he makes no effort to transliterate, as in: "Where is the clock – Biguⁿðe tąndana? (bee-GOO$^{n}$N-ðay tah$^{n}$n-DAH-nah)" and "Where is the book – Wawagaxe tąndana? (wah-WAH-gah-xay tah$^{n}$n-DAH-nah)" (Otoe-Missouria Language Department n.d.a). Thus, there remains deep ambivalence regarding the ogonek vs. superscript distinction: while the ogonek eliminates mispronunciations of nasal vowels as vowels followed by nasal consonant [n], readers who ignore the diacritics pronounce all vowels as oral vowels, thus making it necessary to reinsert the superscript in the transliterations.

Similarly, Sky began using <ð> rather than <dh>—an exception to his preference for digraphs—because readers tended to pronounce <dh> as [d], which led to confusion when a tribal member told Sky that his Indian name was [tʃedi]. Sky recognized the first syllable [tʃe] as the word for 'buffalo' but said he didn't recognize the second syllable [di].

"You don't know?" the tribal member said.

"No, sure don't," Sky said.

"Yellow Buffalo," the tribal member said.

As he told me the story, Sky let out a sigh at the punch line: 'yellow' is traditionally pronounced [ði] not [di], though it is often written using the digraph <dh>. "'A' for effort," Sky said. "Somebody looked it up. Whoever named them got it, but they read it in a book. Didn't know what the <dh> meant."

As texts have become the primary source of heritage language knowledge for tribal members, Chiwere language educators have come to see pronunciation (and mispronunciations like [bɑksodʒe] or [bɑkodʒe], [jɑnwe], and [tʃedi]) as a function of orthography. As Sky notes, the confusion surrounding the tribal member's name came from somebody looking it up in a book without having access to a speaker who could tell them how the name is supposed to be pronounced. Readers tend to respond to homoglyphs in such contexts by anglicizing their pronunciations of Chiwere words. Orthography thus becomes a means of controlling the distance between Chiwere and English not only in terms of how the language looks on the page but also how it sounds in the world.

One solution to the problem of anglicized orthographies and pronunciations is to emphasize orality over literacy. Lance Foster, the Tribal Historic Preservation Officer of the Iowa Tribe of Kansas and Nebraska, believes that Chiwere is an oral language, but he is also forced to acknowledge the de fact conjuncture between language revitalization and literacy. As he explained to me in an interview:

> I'll tell you one stumbling point that a lot of people mention to me is the spelling system. There's so many different spelling systems. . . . Some

> people still say [bɑksodʒe] so they struggle with that. . . . They'll be like, "Lance, Lance, how do you spell this?" I'm like, "Dude, it doesn't matter. Listen to it. Say it. Then spell it however you want to say it. Whether it's [bɑɑkoodʒe] doesn't matter to me. Whatever helps you. Just so we understand each other." But they just want *a* right way. And there's not. It's an oral language. [Personal communication, December 23, 2013]

Here Lance admits that his variationist view of Chiwere as an oral language for which spelling "doesn't matter" is at odds with the majority of tribal members who "just want *a* right way" of spelling and pronouncing words.

Another alternative to anglicization is to emphasize alterity over accessibility. Even though Sky endorses diacritical minimalism, he also recognizes by his use of ogoneks rather than <n> or <$^{n}$> for nasal vowels and <ð> rather than <dh> that it is possible for orthographies to be too accessible: writing systems must be made strategically strange for readers to produce proper pronunciations. In the Siouan context, the Osage Nation is the most notable example of a community inventing a new alphabet for their language. Sky told me that Otoe-Missouria tribal members had expressed an interest in doing something similar, inspired by the Osage, Old Norse runes, and documented indigenous traditions of pictographic communication. As an example of the latter, Sky cited a booklet authored by the missionary Samuel Irvin, who included a sample of "strange hieroglyphics" representing various martial accomplishments carved into a tree near where an Ioway chief had been buried. Irvin wrote that while he could not decipher the symbols, "the Interpreter said they were plain and intelligible, and could be read by the passing Indian as easy as we could read English" (1871:4-5). Irvin also reported similar "hieroglyphical representations" in Ioway medicine bundles (1871:12).

Sky told me that discussions among tribal members about developing an orthography based on these principles referenced its utility for carving, rather than

writing or printing, the language. The notion of designing an engravable alphabet raises questions about the locations and functions of Chiwere texts in Ioway and Otoe-Missouria communities. What media, contexts, contents, and purposes are associated with—and considered appropriate for—heritage language use? What role does written Chiwere play in broader projects of intergenerational socialization and cultural transmission? In the following section, I examine how Chiwere inscriptions promote a nostalgic notion of traditional culture based on recursive entextualizations and recontextualizations of the elders' words. Chiwere literacy is enlisted in an effort to encourage current tribal members to develop distinctive Ioway and Otoe-Missouria identities by learning to read across the temporal, linguistic, and cultural divides that separate them from their Chiwere-speaking ancestors.

## Entextualization and Enculturation

Concerns about anglicized orthographies and pronunciations reflect broader concerns about promoting appropriate contexts for Chiwere language use and maintaining continuity with previous generations in a time in which texts have superseded elders as authoritative sources of linguistic knowledge. Just as missionaries such as Hamilton and Irvin embedded Chiwere in contexts rich with American Christian symbols and concepts to promote conversion and acculturation, modern language revitalization efforts associate Chiwere with "traditional" practices and values in order to encourage Ioways and Otoe-Missourias to rediscover their cultural heritage. As described above, Franklin Murray promoted a similar view in his dictionary by linking language to "cultural heritage," "a special way of looking at the world," and "a way of living and

thinking" and by focusing lexical content on activities like giveaways, prayer meetings, handgames, and Iroshka society dances.

Another influential pedagogical resource—a series of two books Sky cites as a source of confusion about the pronunciation of [jə̃we]/<yanwe>—was produced around the same time as Murray's dictionary by Jimm and linguist Lila Wistrand-Robinson, who worked with a number of speakers including Murray. Like Hamilton and Irvin's primer in reverse, the book begins with a transitional orthography designed to teach English-readers Chiwere and proceeds to use literacy to communicate traditional worldviews and lifeways. An introduction by Wistrand-Robinson notes that "the learner is assumed to have reading proficiency in English but to lack this skill in Iowa and Otoe language," and "since the majority of Iowa and Otoe people are non-speakers of the language, writing is often phonetic rather than phonemic, to aid in pronunciation" (Otoe and Iowa Language Speakers 1977:6). In the first book, words are accompanied by English transliterations to help with pronunciation—although Sky's experience suggests that tribal members do not use the transliterations. While the book's orthography uses <n> following a vowel to indicate nasalization, the transliterations underline nasal vowels as in "gletun (gray-t<u>oo</u>) 'hawk'" (Otoe and Iowa Language Speakers 1977:36). Since the transliterations include no characters that would be pronounced as nasal consonants in English, tribal members who pronounce such words with nasal consonants must only read the word in the book's orthography and disregard the transliteration.

The assumption that readers have a background in English literacy and are not Chiwere speakers goes hand in hand with the assumption that they lack important cultural knowledge. Jimm makes this explicit in his forward, which states, "Indian youth must

become aware and seriously reconsider their Indianness in terms of the original native character. A rekindling of the spirit provides an alternative to the ever-increasingly less satisfying 'Western Civilization' lifestyle model. It is not the[ir] fault that Indian young people have lost their culture, but it is their fault if they do nothing to regain it" (Otoe and Iowa Language Speakers 1977:3). The vision of culture referred to is specific, incorporating "tribal gatherings and ceremonies" and "Indian knowledge" as passed on from elders to younger generations (Otoe and Iowa Language Speakers 1977:3). Jimm also reproduces Murray's quotation linking language and culture discussed above and notes that the goal of the books is to "keep knowledge of the language and culture on record for future generations" (Otoe and Iowa Language Speakers 1978:iii).

The images included in the texts contribute to a nostalgic mood—a common feature of language revitalization materials (Debenport [2015], drawing on Hill [1998] and Kroskrity [1998]). Throughout the texts, Ioways and Otoe-Missourias are depicted wearing late nineteenth and early twentieth century fashions. For example, the first book includes a short story about a man going deer hunting. As depicted in the book, the protagonist has braids and a feather in his hair, wears a fringed buckskin shirt, leggings, and moccasins, and hunts with a wooden bow and a quiver full of arrows (Otoe and Iowa Language Speakers 1977:52-56). While deer hunting is a traditional means of subsistence that continues today, it has not been practiced by hunters wearing buckskin and using wooden bows and arrows since the early twentieth century at the latest (Skinner 1926:287-288). Even stick figures illustrating pronouns and postpositions are shown wearing feathers, which tribal members may still wear as part of their dance regalia for powwows or Iroshka society dances but not on an everyday basis (Otoe and Iowa

Language Speakers 1977:33, 1978:11). Photographs included in the books are from the late nineteenth and early twentieth century and show Ioways and Otoe-Missourias in traditional dress from that period. The books are also interspersed with examples of traditional bead- and ribbon-work designs. There are images of people wearing more contemporary clothing styles but "nostalgic" styles predominate.

Similarly, traditional gender roles are reinforced by example sentences that associate men with working and hunting and women with cooking and sewing (Otoe and Iowa Language Speakers 1978:16-17). Traditional domestic architecture is represented by numerous images of tipis and example sentences like "you used to live in a teepee" (Otoe and Iowa Language Speakers 1978:28). During my fieldwork, I only saw tipis put up for Native American Church services and for marketing purposes outside of tribal casinos. As with Murray's dictionary, a number of example sentences focus on activities such as feasts and handgames (Otoe and Iowa Language Speakers 1977:79) or promote traditional values such as helping elders (Otoe and Iowa Language Speakers 1978:46). Example sentences drawn from myths sometimes include additional information to help readers contextualize them as such: "'Then all the grasshoppers wanted to take tobacco from men' (grasshoppers were the 'villains' in the story)" (Otoe and Iowa Language Speakers 1978:56).

The books emphasize religion as an appropriate domain for Chiwere language use, reflecting a collective sense that traditional Ioways and Otoe-Missourias are spiritual and humble. During my fieldwork, I often heard tribal members describe themselves, and especially their elders, as a "spiritual" or "praying people" (e.g., Goodtracks 2004c:25). Jimm writes in the forward to the second book: "In spite of problems in the broken

cultures of our Indian people, many desirable values are still retained. . . . Above all, the Indian cultures continue to stress that Our Father Above is truly at the basis of all of life" (Otoe and Iowa Language Speakers 1978:iii; see Davidson 1997:146 on the use of "father" as an address form for God in Chiwere prayers). I have already mentioned sermons and hymns by Otoe-Missouria Baptist preachers above, but the books include other Christian religious material such as John 3:16 translated into Ioway and Otoe (Otoe and Iowa Language Speakers 1978:94). Native American Church practices are also emphasized. A number of the historical photographs feature Native American Church roadmen and their assistants posing with their ritual instruments. A dialogue about a morning routine depicts a modern bedroom, on the wall of which is a picture of a waterbird rising from a tipi toward a crescent, a Native American Church symbol (Otoe and Iowa Language Speakers 1977:76). The Native American Church is one of the last domains in which Chiwere can still be heard, especially in the form of prayer songs (Davidson 1997). The emphasis on religion as an appropriate domain for using Chiwere is also reflected in example sentences such as "god is the best doctor" and "we will go to the prayer meeting" (Otoe and Iowa Language Speakers 1978:17,56).

A link between Chiwere and religion is also evident in the emphasis on prayer as a speech genre. The books contain a number of personal prayers, including one by Murray. Murray begins by comparing "the way they [the elders] did long ago" and "the way they [the elders] have been" to the present where "Everything is lost. Today we don't know what to do, and do not know which way to look. The language is lost and we do not hear it anywhere we go." He then begins to pray: "I pray for my tribe going into the future two or three generations. I am sitting here praying for them. The elders told

that the tribe might be prosperous and be healthy. I, at the last, am trying to say (though poorly) what the Ioway did long ago. We are trying to say the right thing. We can't beat what they [the elders] said. I pity myself. That is what I am saying now" (Otoe and Iowa Language Speakers 1978:68).

Murray here raises a central issue related to knowledge transmission and Chiwere language revitalization: the role of the elders. As in many Native American societies, Ioway and Otoe-Missouria elders have long been respected as authoritative sources of traditional knowledge and intergenerational continuity (Schweitzer 1987, 1999). "The elders," however, are a deictic reference point, which shifts depending on where speakers fall in the series of generational succession. Here, Murray, an elder himself at the time of his prayer, is talking about *his* elders. He traces a narrative of decline based on a recursive sense that his predecessors are more legitimate sources of linguistic and cultural knowledge. While those who compiled the book included Murray's prayer because they looked to him as an elder, Murray himself looks further back to his own elders, who had more knowledge than him and exemplified the best way of living and speaking. Murray denigrates his own speaking abilities compared to his elders: he can only speak "poorly" of former days, and nobody in the present can exceed what the elders said.

While the books draw from contemporary documentation like Murray's prayer, they also include archival material, such as an account of cheloniaphagy that Gordon Marsh elicited from Robert Small in 1936. The story translates: "The girls went fishing today. They caught three fish and a turtle. They cooked the fish and the turtle to make them good. It is said that turtle is a different kind of meat" (Otoe and Iowa Language Speakers 1977:84). The final sentence ends with *áñe* 'they say' or 'it is said,' a Chiwere

genre marker for what Kroskrity, writing about Tewa, calls "speaking the past," that is, emphasizing the "secondhand nature and traditional character of what is said" (1998:105-106). This text was already speaking the past when it was first collected in 1936 and doubly does so in a pedagogical resource published forty years later. In addition to this use of an unattributed reported speech marker, other content involves direct quotation. For example, the book includes a prayer recounted by Alice Sine quoting her grandmother: "Early in the morning, before the sun was up, Grandma would pray. 'Every day you go along by yourself on this earth, so I pray outside, and I cry,'" (Otoe and Iowa Language Speakers 1978:64-65). Sine continues the prayer, quoting her grandmother until the prayer is finished.

To modify Kroskrity's phrase, we can say that "speaking the elders" is one of the primary speech genres included in Chiwere pedagogical materials. Speaking the elders is a recursive genre: by quoting speakers like Murray, Small, and Sine, the books enact speaking the elders even as the content of what these elders say involves speaking their own elders. Notions of entextualization, decontextualization, and recontextualization, as discussed by Bauman and Briggs (1990), are crucial to understanding this genre. Bauman and Briggs define entextualization as "the process of rendering discourse extractable, of making a stretch of linguistic production into a unit—a *text*—that can be lifted out of its interactional setting. A text, then, from this vantage point, is discourse rendered decontextualizable. Entextualization may well incorporate aspects of context, such that the resultant text carries elements of its history of use within it" (1990:73). Pedagogical materials from the 1970s entextualize discourses of the elders, who themselves

entextualize discourses of their elders in order to create a sense of accumulated history, linking past and present across current linguistic and cultural divides.

Jimm continues to employ this strategy in more recent pedagogical materials, selectively entextualizing and recontextualizing from Murray's work to present his own work as consistent with the elders' wishes. As shown below, Jimm systematically extracts texts from Murray's dictionary and from his interactions with Murray and other speakers, relying on the elements of history carried within them to legitimize his Project as an extension of the elders' intentions.

Besides drawing on the elders as a source of legitimacy and authority to justify his Chiwere orthography (as described above), Jimm also includes extensive biographies of elders who have contributed content to Project materials in order to emphasize connections between them and his own work (Goodtracks 2004c:18-25). The mission statement of the Ioway, Otoe-Missouria Language Project likewise emphasizes a link between the Project's goals and the elders:

> The work of the IOM Language Project seeks to preserve traditions, cultural knowledge, oral history and language from the late IOM elders for succeeding generations. The CD recordings allow the voices of the elders to continue to teach the present and future generations on the sounds, intonation, rhythm and accent of their native IOM language. . . . While the naturalistic values and spirituality of the traditional IOM old people will never fully be restored, they have left behind a great heritage, which they desired to continue for the benefit of the present and future generations. To this end, it is the purpose of this web site and accompanying language project to share in part the elder's desire to continue their language and traditional culture and knowledge. Ultimately, it is the role of each descendent to continue it further among their own family and relations. *Ho, Nawo Pi ramañisge taho.* (May you walk a good road!) [Goodtracks n.d.]

This mission statement firmly links the Project's work with the intentions and voices of the elders. The concluding exhortation, elsewhere characterized as "an elder's admonition

and blessing" (Goodtracks 2004a:5), appears on a number of Project materials and is often credited to Murray (2004c:24). Project materials also reproduce a section of the introduction to Murray's dictionary, where Murray writes: "I do not want the Ioway language to be lost. May the Lord give us wisdom and strength and direct us in our effort to preserve it. My desire is that the children use their language and get good out of it and that the language lives on" (Murray 1977:1; quoted in Goodtracks 2004b:19). In the context of Murray's dictionary, this passage serves as a justification for the text. Reproduced in Jimm's materials, the quotation suggests that the Project is working to continue Murray's legacy of trying to preserve Ioway language.

Perhaps Jimm's most telling quotation attributed to Murray—in terms of charting an epistemological shift from speakers to texts—is the following:

> In my youth, nature was our university. . . . Then came the time when the white man forced his way of life upon us and in this way tried to defeat us, but we have proved him wrong. Now, today, I have lived to see that the younger generation, my grandchildren and great-grandchildren attend big universities and learn from books to gain knowledge in order to live in today's world. This is good – for this time – young people must compete with others – get a good education to exist on Mother Earth. Many times the young still come to the elders in the tribe to seek their wisdom, and this [is] good, too, they have not forgotten us and our ways. [Goodtracks 2004c:17]

In this passage, Murray contrasts his younger days when "nature was our university" with contemporary times when tribal members look to books for knowledge. He concludes by emphasizing the ongoing importance of seeking out elders for their knowledge—even in an age of books and universities. Jimm's entextualization and recontextualization of this passage his own pedagogical texts suggests ambivalent interpretations. On the one hand, it could be read as reminding readers that they should supplement their textual study by going to elders. On the other hand, there are no elders who are recognized speakers today.

The voices of elders such as Murray can only be accessed through texts. In this context, the pronominal shift in the last line from third person ("the young still come to the elders in the tribe to seek their wisdom") to first ("us and our ways") hints at the fact that Murray and his generation are—as a previous generation of elders and the last generation of speakers—in some ways paradigmatic elders. In order to seek out the wisdom of these paradigmatic elders, one must turn not to the current generation of elders but to the texts that contain the entextualized and recontextualized words of preceding generations.

The sense that texts contain more traditional knowledge than current elders is reinforced by two related contemporary discourses. The first asserts that "everything is lost," "the old ways are all gone," "they [the elders] took it with them [when they died]," "it's buried with them," "it's in the cemetery," etc. The second discourse involves criticism of those who claim to have traditional knowledge, especially when the perception that they possess such knowledge increases their social status. After all, how can someone living today claim to have traditional knowledge when everyone knows that all that was lost long ago? The entextualization of twentieth-century Chiwere speakers as paradigmatic elders may undermine the authority of current and future elders in Ioway and Otoe-Missouria societies as tribal members turn to texts rather than living elders to recover their heritage.

In addition to using entextualization and recontextualization to emphasize continuity with the intentions and voices of the elders, Jimm also embeds language tokens in contexts rich with symbols of traditional culture. For example, the Project designed and printed a tee shirt that includes a beadwork-inspired floral design; the Chiwere endonyms for the Iowa, Otoe-Missouria, and Winnebago peoples; an image of

an elder and a child wearing ceremonial dance clothes; and a sentence in Chiwere that translates, 'The language honors our elders and teaches our children.' The Project also designed mugs that include the Chiwere phrase for 'I love my coffee' with the image of an Oneota-style ceramic vessel superimposed over a medicine wheel.[8]

In both cases, these objects were designed to set up educational interactions through question and answer routines. Since both objects include only Chiwere and no English text, those who do not know Chiwere have to ask someone who does if they want to know what the tee shirt or mug "says." When I have modeled the tee shirt at powwows and been approached by curious tribal members, Jimm has used the opportunity to explain the shared histories of the Iowa, Otoe, Missouria, and Winnebago peoples and to discuss the aesthetic principles and symbolism of floral designs. Similarly, when I have witnessed interactions surrounding the coffee mug, Jimm has explained that the Chiwere word for 'coffee,' *máka$^{n}$thewe*, literally means 'black medicine,' just like the word for 'tea,' *xámimáka$^{n}$*, literally means 'herb medicine.' This often leads into a discussion of traditional notions of medicine, healing, substance abuse, etc.

Many other materials produced by the Project also seek to surround language tokens with signs of ancestral culture. Like the pedagogical texts described above, the Project has published calendars with the names of the months in Chiwere that contain historical photographs from the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and images based on traditional bead- and ribbon-work designs (Goodtracks 1985). The Otoe-

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[8] *Oneota* refers to an archaeological culture ancestral to a number of historical groups, including the Iowa and Otoe-Missouria. Some tribal members claim elements of Oneota culture as part of their cultural heritage, e.g., in Oneota-style ceramics by Ioway artist Reuben Kent (n.d.; Rundle and Rundle 2007). Members of related Siouan groups, such as the Omaha, also see themselves as descendents of Oneota communities (Buffalohead 2004).

Missouria Tribe recently published a similar calendar (Otoe-Missouria Language Department 2014). Many pedagogical materials produced for Siouan languages qualify as culturally rich to the extent that their content addresses traditional themes (e.g., Hartmann and Marschke 2010; Kanza Language Project 2010). For example, a board game produced by the Kaw Nation language department, *Wajípha$^{n}$yi$^{n}$*—which Jimm and I adapted for Chiwere and played with his grandson and other relatives—encourages players to imagine themselves as camp criers, who move among the traditional moieties of the tribe answering vocabulary questions to accumulate clan counting sticks (Kanza Language Project 2004).

To take a more humorous example, Jimm's license plate says <DAGWISA>, which means 'What did you say?' in Chiwere. When people approach him to ask about his license plate, a typical dialogue goes something like this:

"What does your license plate mean?"

"What did you say?"

"I said, what does your license plate mean?"

"What did you say?" etc.

While in this example, the Chiwere language token does not appear in a culturally rich context, it is still designed to promote an interactional context involving Jimm, who uses the opportunity to impart grammatical and cultural knowledge.

While the Project associates Chiwere with a nostalgic conception of traditional culture through the recursive entextualization and recontextualization of elders' discourse, Jimm is all too familiar with the opposite possibility: that Chiwere can be used in contexts far removed from traditional practices and values (see Chapter 6 for further

examples). This is a concern that many current elders share. Once Jimm and I were approached by an elder who objected to Chiwere language lessons being posted on YouTube by a tribal member whose account also included music videos that contained suggestive and violent imagery. The elder was also concerned that the language lessons, which included the voice of a deceased relative of hers, were now publically available to an unrestricted audience. Of course, younger generations, particularly those who live far from tribal reservations, may appreciate the increased access to their heritage language that online platforms like YouTube provide, and they may have no qualms about viewing a Chiwere language lesson followed by a popular music video.

Similarly, linguists have noted on the Siouan List that some community members reject games as productive learning activities in language classes because the language is "sacred" or oppose colorful pictures and contemporary vocabulary in pedagogical materials on the grounds that these elements are not "traditional" (de Reuse 2014b; Ullrich 2014a, 2014b). Comparable or even more restrictive attitudes have been described for other Native American languages. Moore (1988:463-464), for example, notes that everyday talk in Wasco has become "mythologized" and subject to restrictions once applied only to a specific set of myths. One of his consultants "treats all connected speech in Wasco as 'mythological' or 'myth-recital-like'" and "refused to provide anything more than single words during . . . summer conversations, claiming that Wasco should be spoken only in wintertime" (1988:463-464).

As these examples demonstrate, heritage languages can be used for or associated with a wide variety of activities that are seen as inappropriate. The recontextualization of heritage languages in revitalization contexts is one of the central ironies of language

preservation, which has the potential to produce versions of heritage languages divorced from the cultural contexts that motivate their revitalization in the first place. Other scholars have observed this phenomenon in Alaska Native languages (Dauenhauer and Dauenhauer 1998), Apache (Nevins 2013; Samuels 2007), California Indian languages (Ahlers 2006), Kaska (Meek 2010), and Pueblo (Debenport 2015, Whitley 2003).

## Conclusion

In Siouan communities with many speakers, orthographic controversies seem to follow different contours than those described here. Speakers in such situations may leverage their authority to promote writing systems that diverge from linguistic standards (e.g., Dahlstrom 1987; Powers 1990) or contest whether their indigenous language should be written at all (Morgan 2009). As described above, current Chiwere orthographies are products of collaboration between linguists, language activists, and community members, and the notion that Chiwere is "an oral language" encounters resistance from the majority of tribal members, who rely on literacy to learn the correct way of spelling and pronouncing words.

Rather than exemplifying conflicts of authority between speakers and linguists, Chiwere orthographic controversies revolve around pedagogical strategies for accommodating or challenging the anglophone backgrounds of heritage language learners. These strategies reflect deeper ambivalence about whether Chiwere literacy should accommodate or challenge the practices and values of current tribal members. Now that Chiwere texts have superseded Chiwere speech as the medium of language transmission, orthography is the primary means of access not only to literacy but also to broader aspects of linguistic and cultural heritage. As a result, conversations about

writing systems express different ideas about creating and cultivating indexical connections between language and culture, and orthographic issues scale up rather quickly to questions of what kind of person—what "way of being in the world" (Kulick and Schieffelin 2004:349)—Chiwere literacy socialization is supposed to create.

The rise of literacy in European and American societies has been credited with personal and national transformations (Anderson 2006; Graff 1979), and there are many examples of literacy contributing to social and cultural change in indigenous communities. Duranti and Ochs (1986), for example, argue that literacy instruction socializes Samoan children to Western interactional conventions and notions of accomplishment that prepare them for participation in global economies. This process of socialization begins the *Pi Tautau*, a chart in which each letter of the alphabet is associated with an illustrated example word (1986:217-218). According to Duranti and Ochs:

> When a Samoan child is first exposed to literacy instructions he or she is taught something more than the alphabet. From the very first day of school, literacy is accompanied by an attention to a world of objects and values that either are removed from the immediate context of the child's everyday life or suggest Western alternatives within a range of possible choices that would include more traditional objects and values. [1986:218]

Similarly, Schieffelin (1996, 2000) notes that while literacy instruction draws from Kaluli language socialization strategies, the authority of printed materials promote new styles of monologic interaction between participants and novel regimes of knowledge about selves and others. In a North American context, Morgan (2009) argues that the role of literacy as an instrument of colonization in the early reservation period helps explain continued resistance to writing Nakoda in the Fort Belknap community.

While these examples demonstrate literacy's transformative effects on indigenous societies in contexts of colonialism and missionization, there are also examples of American Indian communities that have appropriated literacy to reflect their own styles of transmitting heritage languages and associated cultural knowledge. Cowell (2002), for example, describes Arapaho bilingual curriculum materials that index personal relationships between speakers and language learners and reflect traditions of oral performance. Debenport (2015) describes how Pueblo language documentation and revitalization materials enact local preferences for veiled and indirect communication about language and associated cultural knowledge.

Whether literacy is implicated in rupture or considered an instrument of continuity is ultimately relative to social context. Duranti et al. (1995) provide a compelling demonstration of this dynamic in their comparison of the *Pi Tautau* in a Samoan village and a Samoan American community in Los Angeles. While the *Pi Tautau* promotes transformative socialization practices in Samoa, the same chart is used in Los Angeles to teach Samoan as a second language as part of a community effort to connect children with their Samoan heritage and identities. What the authors "had previously analyzed as a vehicle of westernization has been transformed into a symbol of tradition and an instrument for cultural continuity" (1995:71). In this chapter, I have described similar dialectics of cultural transformation and reproduction in relation to Chiwere literacy over time as orthographic issues scale up to larger questions about interactions across and between languages and cultures in a context where the written word provides the primary form of access to heritage language.

Previous research on reading and writing in indigenous societies suggests that literacy is a productive practice for exploring ideologies about one of the classic questions raised by linguistic anthropology—the relationship between "language" and "culture." Schieffelin, for example, notes a contrast between how anthropologists and missionaries have approached Kaluli language:

> The two groups had very different ideas about how the language would be used and its relationship to local culture and cultural practices. For the anthropologists, language and culture were integrally linked symbolic systems used to index local aesthetics, a sense of place, social memory, and cultural identity. For the missionaries, the vernacular could be separated from cultural practices and used quite independently. It could be expanded, contracted, and changed in myriad ways, and it could express ideas that were foreign, while still being considered 'the same' language. It had one function: effective evangelization. [2000:304]

Here, Scheiffelin highlights an ideological divide between anthropologists, who saw language and culture as "integrally linked," and missionaries, who used the vernacular to introduce foreign ideas that would transform Kaluli subjectivities. In this chapter, I have described a case of ideological overlap between missionaries and language activists, both of whom recognize that Chiwere language can be separated from traditional contexts and purposes. Missionaries seized on this quality of written language to decontextualize Chiwere from settings familiar to their students and to recontextualize the language in settings that introduced new practices and values to nineteenth-century Ioways and Otoe-Missourias. The missionary effort to use literacy as a means of acculturation and assimilation to the dominant society is mirrored by language activists like Jimm, who work to recontextualize Chiwere as a means of enculturating current language learners to a nostalgic conception of traditional culture derived from the experiences and voices of his elders and elders' elders. In this way, learning to read Chiwere is designed as a lesson in cultural differentiation for future generations of English-speaking tribal members.

# Chapter 5

## Words and Worldviews: Morphology, Lexicography, and Culture

Anthropologists involved in language documentation have long noted that their consultants seem particularly aware of and interested in words but relatively unaware of and uninterested in the grammatical structures that are the focus of formal linguistic description. Boas, for example, believed an advantage of linguistics over ethnology was that "linguistic classifications never rise into consciousness, while in other ethnological phenomena, although the same unconscious origin prevails, these often rise into consciousness, and thus give rise to secondary reason and to reinterpretations" (1911:67, 70-71). In contrast to unconscious grammatical structures, Boas notes that "when we try to think at all clearly, we think, on the whole, in words" (1911:71). He argues that native metalinguistic awareness of words as units of sound and meaning available as stimuli for conscious reflection give them a cultural influence that grammatical structures lack. Thus, he cites the example of a Chinook myth that revolves around the fact that the words for 'dancing' and 'catching with a net' are homophones and suggests that certain ritual practices stage literal readings of metaphorical expressions (1911:71-73). In Boas's view, native awareness and interpretations of words, in contrast to other elements of language, give them a role in shaping cultural practices.

Similarly, Sapir cites grammatical structures as his primary example of unconscious patterns of behavior (1928:44-45). He writes that "the radical and grammatical elements of language, abstracted as they are from the realities of speech, respond to the conceptual world of science, abstracted as it is from the realities of

experience," but "the word, the existent unit of living speech, responds to the unit of actually apprehended experience, of history, of art" (1921:33). Whorf (1956:135-137) provides some empirical support for Sapir's conviction in examples of how names for situations can engender incendiary behaviors. After demonstrating the effects of such "single words, phrases, and patterns of limited range" on thought and behavior, he proceeds to consider "a much more far-reaching compulsion from large-scale patterning of grammatical categories." This task is complicated by the fact that such categories have a "background character" that can only be revealed by comparative linguistic analysis (1956:137-138). Whorf's presentation, in other words, assumes that words are accessible—and grammatical structures inaccessible—to nonspecialists, i.e., those who are not comparative linguists.

More recently, Moore (1988) and Collins (1996) have discussed word-focused language ideologies they encountered doing documentary and descriptive research on endangered Native American languages. In an article on Wasco-Wishram language loss in Oregon, Moore (1988) describes how younger speakers and semispeakers who produce a form of the language locally known as "broken Wasco" have a tendency to lexicalize inflected forms as stems available for further inflection. Linguistic analysis reveals that such speakers struggle with the inflectional system rather than with remembering stems, but community members' understanding of language shift "fetishizes verbal and nominal stems and their specific denotations, seeing 'language loss' as the process by which such lexical forms are forgotten" (1988:462). Moore traces this misrecognition of language shift to local notions of wealth and value. Like personal name-titles, words have become elements of inherited wealth, which can be validated through appropriate display—in

linguistic elicitation sessions, for example. It is in part precisely because semispeakers are unable to parse complex inflections, giving words "a culturally valued connotation of 'hidden, archaic meaning,'" that previously prosaic words—and not just personal name-titles—have become valuable objects (1988:467). Since words are such culturally salient units of local wealth, community members are inclined to see language shift as a process of losing words rather than a process of diminishing facility with inflection.

During fieldwork documenting Tolowa language in northern California, Collins discovered that community members also focused on words but for different reasons. Collins noticed that consultants' responses to elicitation prompts designed to produce information about grammatical structures revealed "a consistently different orientation to language. Simply put, they were interested in words, not grammar" (1998:260). Inviting comparison with Basso's (1996) work on Western Apache place-names, Collins explains that words are especially significant for Tolowa people because they are "indexes of stories and situations . . . embedded within and associated with the art of remembering" (1998:262). And in contrast to his own research on grammar, Tolowa language activists focus on collecting words, especially "old words" or "lost words" gathered through kinship networks and other close social relations (1998:262). To develop Collins's insight in a Boasian direction, we could say that if scientific research on language finds paradigmatic expression in the form of a grammar, lexicographical projects like word lists and dictionaries may be the natural expression of native metalinguistic awareness and action.

While Moore and Collins develop ethnographic understandings of why words matter in particular places, words in general seem—as Boas, Sapir, and Whorf

suggested—to be "the folk linguistic object par excellence" (Niedzielski and Preston 1999:266). Drawing on Whorf, Silverstein (1979, 1981) provides an influential theoretical explanation for the widespread wordiness of native metalinguistic awareness. In Silverstein's view, Whorf develops an account of native theories of reference, in which na(t)ive notions that link lexical units with worldly objects contrast with the deep semantic structures revealed by comparative linguistic analysis. As Collins puts it:

> Silverstein has analyzed semiotic constraints on language awareness, arguing that it is the continuously segmentable, referring, and contextually presupposing elements of language that are most salient to consciousness (1981). Thus, it is words that stand forth. They are segmentable (relatively identifiable chunks of form/meaning); they are referential (words are most numerously "content words," depicting some thing, event, or state of affairs); and in most uses they are contextually presupposing (the interlingual question "How do you say 'X'" presumes a shared 'X,' a preexisting, presupposable reality that words and utterances simply describe or tell about). [Collins 1998:261]

In this chapter, I delve into the ethnographic particulars of why Chiwere words are important to those who work with them, and I examine the implications of their word ideologies for Chiwere lexicography. Like Moore and Collins, and in contrast to Silverstein, my goal is not to contribute to a general theory of why people seem to be more aware of words than other elements of language. Rather, my aim is to explicate a native theory of why words matter, with the caveat that my "natives" are neither speakers nor academic linguists but community linguists, language activists, and educators involved in Chiwere documentation and revitalization—some of whom are tribal members and some of whom are not. I focus on the word ideologies of three consultants: Sky Campbell, language coordinator for the Otoe-Missouria Tribe; Lance Foster, Historic Preservation Officer for the Iowa Tribe of Kansas and Nebraska; and Jimm Goodtracks, director of the Ioway, Otoe-Missouria Language Project.

While Sky, Lance, and Jimm are not speakers or academic linguists themselves, their understanding of words is informed by their relationships with (ancestral) speakers and linguists. Sky, Lance, and Jimm draw on linguistics—especially morphological analysis (the linguistic study of word composition)—to parse words into their meaningful constituent parts. The component morphemes are then interpreted to reveal the experiences and worldviews of previous Chiwere-speaking generations. In contrast to Moore's analysis of Wasco-Wishram words, Chiwere words are valued not because their meaning is hidden and esoteric but because their meaning can be decoded through morphological analysis. And in contrast to Collins, who emphasizes a disjuncture between linguistic and native approaches to language, I describe collaborative interactions between linguists and community members. Furthermore, while Collins focuses on the capacity of words to index stories, my consultants emphasize a different "art of remembering": words provide access not so much to mythological or historical narratives as to ancestral worldviews, the "actually apprehended experience" (to borrow Sapir's phrase) of previous generations. Basso's (1996) consultants describe something similar when they discuss how evocative names let them visualize a place as their ancestors saw it, but whereas Western Apache place-names are associated with stories that are used to teach moral lessons, my consultants emphasize the ways in which words, rather than narratives, provide access to the sensory perceptions and worldviews of previous generations.

I characterize such discourse—whereby Chiwere words' component morphemes are interpreted to reveal ancestral experiences—as a metalinguistic, and more specifically metalexical, speech genre. Such discourse is not, of course, exclusive to Chiwere

language activists; there are many other hermeneutic traditions concerned with making meaning from pieces of words—folk and lexicographical forms of etymological discourse and rabbinic and kabbalistic methods of *gematria* and *notarikon* in Judaism, for example. My focus here is the role of Chiwere metalexical discourse in language documentation and revitalization with an emphasis on lexicography. I propose that metalexical discourse produced by community linguists, language activists, and educators seeks to imbue Chiwere with social and cultural significance for the activists themselves as well as the constituencies they serve. This speech genre is in fact one of the primary ways in which the importance of Chiwere is presented to Ioway, Otoe-Missouria, and broader audiences.

## The Rhetorical Whorf

Before proceeding, it is necessary to introduce a caveat regarding linguistic relativity: namely, that I take no position here on the many fraught issues associated with linguistic relativity, including the relationship between "language and worldview," the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis, and the like. Note that this does not preclude my consultants from taking positions on these issues; indeed, their positions on these issues are the focus of this chapter. We shall see below that Sky, Lance, and Jimm believe that language has the capacity to shape perception, cognition, and behavior—or at least that language provides epistemological access to the experiences of previous generations by encoding ancestral perceptions, thoughts, and behaviors. Furthermore, they and others occasionally label their views "Whorfian," which reflects the fact that some of the topics my consultants address—the influence of grammatical categories on concepts of time and the effects of color taxonomies on perception—have a basis in Whorf's corpus ("The

Relation of Habitual Thought and Behavior to Language" and "Science and Linguistics," respectively [1954:134-159, 207-219]). But the veridicality of my consultants' views—whether they are in fact consistent with Whorf's own ideas—is beyond the scope of this chapter. The issue is complicated by the significant reinterpretations and reevaluations Whorf's work has undergone over the years (e.g., Hill and Mannheim 1992; Silverstein 1979, 1981) with the result that it is not entirely clear what exactly Whorf was saying; or rather, there are multiple possible Whorfs to choose from.

To the extent that this chapter engages with a Whorf, it deals with a rhetorical one rather than the historical one. This is to say, I am more interested in interpreting a discourse identified by consultants as "Whorfian" than with interpreting what Whorf wrote. This approach has also been taken by Gómez de García et al. (2009), who seek to explain the sentiment—heard in a number of indigenous communities in New Mexico—that English is spiritually and expressively "dead." They suggest that this sentiment may be "an epiphenomenon of linguistic and anthropological research on Native American languages," research which is "enthusiastic about the metaphysical and conceptual systems implied by the morphosemantic strategies of these 'exotic' languages" (2009:109). Gómez de García et al. cite Whorf's work in this respect:

> An obvious example of this perspective comes from Whorf, who says that "linguistics is essentially the quest of meaning. . . . [I]ts real concern is to light up the thick darkness of the language, and thereby much of the thought, the culture, and the outlook upon life of a given community, with the light of this 'golden something,' as I have heard it called, this transmuting principle of meaning" (1956:73). This notion formed the basis for his writings on the relationship of language and culture, especially with regard to the metaphysics expressed by the Hopi system of temporal and modal expression. In Whorf's work we see a clear illustration of the notion that different languages reveal different conceptual systems, a notion that has been misinterpreted and abused in subsequent years of research on Native American languages. [2009:109]

As their concluding clause suggests, Gómez de García et al. are somewhat suspicious of how Whorfian notions have been used to emphasize the "exotic richness" of Native American languages or the ways in which they "express conceptual systems linked to a more harmonious and spiritual worldview" (2009:109). They suggest that such scholarly representations are an "appropriation" of Native American languages and their significance to speakers (2009:110). Drawing on Hill (2002), they identify these rhetorics as examples of hyperbolic valorization— an advocacy strategy that presents endangered languages as "priceless treasures" worth saving.

Whereas Hill (2002) suggests that "expert rhetorics" have the potential to alienate indigenous stakeholders, Gómez de García et al. suggest that Native American language activists in New Mexico have re-appropriated academic discourses that present (or exaggerate) the value of Native American languages in Whorfian terms. "If this new rhetoric has connections to Native peoples' experience with academics, it is an interesting, perhaps unconscious, accommodation by Native people to the theme of hyperbolic valorization," they write. "Although this valorization of language as a treasure may not have originated within indigenous communities, it resonates with the needs and beliefs of community language activists, and they have worked to promote this view within the community." Gómez de García et al. continue:

> It is important to note here that community language activists, like the ones we work with, lead the discussion on indigenous language policy and planning both within their own communities and in conferences on language revitalization. These leaders have very often received academic degrees and have studied the works of writers like Hinton and Hale, Sapir and Whorf, and others in the college classroom. These activists, and others in the community as well, have come into contact with statements valorizing Native languages not only within the academic literature but also in applications for language program funding and on Web sites devoted to language revitalization. [2009:112]

This rhetorical fusion may not simply be a function of community language activists' academic experiences and connections, however. Gómez de García et al. offer a second, morphological explanation for why some Native Americans in New Mexico say that English is "dead." The authors suggest that polysynthetic languages with synthesis, fusion, and verbal affixing—features shared by many indigenous languages spoken in New Mexico—allow speakers to visualize the referential content of speech in particularly evocative ways, as compared to a relatively isolating and analytic language like English. "It is possible," they write, "that the rich morphological and semantic content of single words, particularly single verbs, in these languages encourages the notion that the languages themselves are more descriptive than other types of languages" (2009:115). (Basso [1996] provides further evidence for this point in his discussion of Western Apache place-names in neighboring Arizona.)

Rather than searching for the origins of discourses that associate Native American languages with exotic conceptual systems and worldviews—rather than, in other words, trying to identify whether they are in fact "an epiphenomenon of linguistic and anthropological research on Native American languages," or whether such research itself is an epiphenomenon of preexisting local language ideologies within indigenous communities—I am more interested in examining the social significance of such discourses, which clearly involve interaction between researchers and community members. As will see, Chiwere language activists are enthusiastic about the evocative capabilities of polysynthetic words and are also exposed to academic discourses through their own educational experiences and interactions with linguists who study Siouan languages.

## "Whorfian" Aspects of Chiwere Language Activism I

Compared to words in Chiwere and other Siouan languages, English words feel whole: they rarely come apart; or if they do, even native speakers tend to find the parts obscure and rely on dictionaries for information about their composition and etymologies. As Sapir pointed out, morphological typological distinctions are ever relative—they depend on which languages are being compared—but when it comes to English and Chiwere, English is more isolating and analytic while Siouan languages are more synthetic, even "mildly polysynthetic" (1921:150). This means that Chiwere words tend to have more morphemes and inflectional possibilities than English words. Indeed, one criteria Jimm uses to measure the eloquence of Chiwere speakers is whether they are able to produce long, inflected words composed of many morphemes. He presents this ability as characteristic of the "classical style" of early twentieth-century monolingual speakers in contrast to the "simplified" style of the last generations of bilingual Chiwere speakers, for whom English was also a native language (see Chapter 6). Furthermore, what inflectional morphology English does have is relatively fusional, while Siouan inflections are more agglutinative. This means that the morphemes in Chiwere words tend to be more visible than morphemes in English words. The result is that English communicates more at the level of the sentence than the word, while Chiwere communicates more at the level of the word than the sentence. As Sapir puts it, "in an analytic language the sentence is always of prime importance, the word is of minor interest (1921:135). Chiwere morphemes form words as English words form sentences: both are like pieces of a puzzle coming together but on different scales. The fact that Siouan words have relatively more—and more visible—morphemes than English words makes Siouan morphology

linguistically interesting. Chiwere language activists and educators also draw on the polysynthetic and agglutinative qualities of the language when they use morphological analysis to reveal how words contain ancestral worldviews.

One example of Whorfian perspectives among Chiwere language activists comes from a post to the Siouan List—an online discussion forum for linguists and language activists involved in Siouan language documentation, description, and revitalization—by Sky Campbell, the Otoe-Missouria tribal language coordinator. He wrote to share an online news article with the headline "No One Could See the Color Blue Until Modern Times" (Loria 2015). The article discussed the relationship between color taxonomies and perception, specifically reporting that many ancient languages lack a word for blue, which may explain references like Homer's "wine-dark sea." "The idea behind this article is that even though we have the same biology and capability of these ancient peoples, that 'without a word for a color, without a way of identifying it as different, it's much harder for us to notice what's unique about it,'" Sky wrote. "This point really gets hammered home in an experiment done with the Himba tribe (Namibia) who have 'no word for blue or distinction between blue and green.'" Sky's extensive commentary is worth quoting here at length:

> Naturally that caught my attention since in Otoe-Missouria, you find historical references to there being no distinction between blue and green and [that] use the same word for both (*to*). The experiment they did showed a circle of green squares with one blue one. Most of them couldn't see the blue one and those that could had trouble with it. Then the tables were turned and it was pointed out that they have more words for green than we do in English. So they made another circle of green squares with one a slightly different shade of green. The members of that tribe could immediately point it out. They show that image in the article, and I sure couldn't figure out which one it was until you scroll down and get the answer. But it seems like they could identify it as easily as we can pick out the blue square.

> This really hammered home to me the idea of "language is culture." Sure, I have a somewhat decent grasp on that concept due to the nature of my work but this has me examining it in an entirely new way. And it also really highlights how when a language is lost, a way of perceiving the world is also lost. This article (or its ideas) might be old news to some of you but it is new to me, and I am finding it incredibly fascinating.
>
> So with Otoe-Missouria looking to be somewhat in the same boat as the Himba tribe, I have to wonder . . . if the [classification] pattern shown in that article was repeated here with Otoe-Missouria (and perhaps other Siouan languages) and if perhaps *to* originally referred to 'green' and the reference to 'blue' is a modern attachment to that word. Nowadays, we simply have *to* for 'blue' and modify it to distinguish it from 'green' (*xato* or *xatothge*, which roughly translates to 'like the color of grass' or 'like the green of grass').
>
> So thinking about this, two things came to mind. First is [the] way Merrill referenced gold in his *History of Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ* (1837). I'd expected to see something like 'yellow metal' or perhaps 'yellow silver' but instead we got *mąðethka suje*, which translates to 'red silver' (silver is rendered as 'white metal'). I always found that strange and never knew what to think about it. But after reading that article, I'm thinking about it again.
>
> The next thing that came to mind was Otoe-Missouria having the same word for 'sweet' and 'salty' (*xgu/thku/sku*). I also have a transcription of an interview with an elder talking about how sweet and salty are pretty much the same. So now I am wondering if this same phenomenon is happening here but with the sense of taste instead of the sense of sight. When I first saw the same word used for both sweet and salty, I was blown away. But in light of this new information, I'm rethinking it.
>
> So all of that with a few examples sprinkled in is to ask you guys if this is something you've noticed in your respective languages, and if so, what have you noticed? I'm definitely interested to learn more about this sort of thing and how it works. [Campbell 2015]

While Sky himself does not identify his views on these questions as Whorfian, the linguist who posted the first reply to Sky's message began by noting that the question of whether language shapes perception is "an ancient problem in the Whorf hypothesis literature." Most of the linguists on the Siouan List were familiar with research on this question and were skeptical that lexical gaps or richness in color terminology can affect

color perception in the way that Sky suggested. One response from a linguistic anthropologist pointed out that Sky's interpretations may involve fallacies related to translation. For example, while 'sweet' and 'salty' are more or less adequate rough and ready glosses of *xgu/thku/sku*, those words could in fact mean something more like 'intensely flavorful,' which could encompass but still preserve a distinction between 'sweet' and 'salty.' This is a classic problem in ethnoscience and comparative semantics: there are no objective taxonomies in comparison to which all others can be evaluated, and so there are always issues of translation involved in comparing words and categories in particular languages.

Regardless of the persuasiveness of Sky's interpretation, it is important to emphasize his methods and goals, which involve using lexical analysis to recover the sensory perceptions of previous generations. While today *to* refers to 'blue' and *xato* or *xatothge* to 'green' (*xa-* 'grass' *-to-* 'blue' *-thge* 'like'), Sky uses historical sources that refer to *to* as meaning both 'blue' and 'green' to propose that *to* originally meant 'green,' not 'blue;' and indeed, that previous generations, lacking a word for 'blue,' did not in fact see blue in same way as we do. Sky's proposal also rests on an analogy between nineteenth-century Otoe-Missourias and other ancient and/or tribal peoples, who tend to lack a word for 'blue.' Whether or not Sky is correct about the original semantics of *to*, I simply wish to highlight here Sky's goal, which is to recover the original meaning of the word and show what it reveals about how previous generations perceived the world.

This is also evident in Sky's other examples. One example is drawn from one of the earliest printed Chiwere texts, Moses Merrill's (1837) Chiwere translation of selected Gospel passages. The term Sky expected to find used for 'gold' was *madhé dhí* 'yellow

metal' or *madhéhka dhí* 'yellow silver' (*madhé-* 'metal' *-hka* 'white' can mean 'silver' or 'money'), which are the terms Jimm lists in his dictionary for 'gold,' Instead, Sky found an archaic term *mąðethka suje* 'red silver' or 'red money.' As discussed in Chapter 4, most tribal members do not have much to do with early missionary documentation because their orthographies are counterintuitive for English-speakers and because some community members object to their content. Sky, however, is deeply interested in these missionary texts because they are the earliest extensive documentation of Chiwere and contain archaic or historical terms that are nowhere else attested. Sky uses these sources to discover, for example, that nineteenth-century Otoe-Missourias may have seen gold as closer to red than yellow. These considerations "really hammer home" for him the importance of Chiwere, the idea that "language is culture" and that "when a language is lost, a way of perceiving the world is also lost."

**"Whorfian" Aspects of Chiwere Language Activism II**

In Sky's case, linguists on the Siouan List pointed out that his conception of Chiwere's significance has Whorfian roots. I now consider an example of a self-identified Whorfian, Lance Foster, who deconstructs words in order to find out how previous generations perceived the world and to establish a closer connection with his ancestors. Lance is an Ioway artist and scholar with graduate degrees in anthropology and landscape architecture. He currently works as the Tribal Historic Preservation Officer for the Iowa Tribe of Kansas and Nebraska. In that capacity (and as a result of a longstanding personal interest), Lance has been involved with a number of language revitalization activities on the reservation, including leading language classes at what is referred to in local parlance as "the stone building," a community building near the tribal casino that

serves as a library, archive, and classroom for language and beading classes. Gómez de García's description of language activists as those who "lead the discussion on indigenous language policy and planning . . . within their own communities" and "have very often received academic degrees and have studied the works of writers like Hinton and Hale, Sapir and Whorf, and others in the college classroom" fits Lance well (2009:112).

The following excerpt is from an interview I did with Lance, in which he explains to me how the language itself helps him understand how they thought "in the old days." The interview begins with me asking Lance if he could elaborate on something he said during a previous conversation, when he identified himself as a "Whorfian when it comes to language":

> SS: So last time, [when] we were just visiting, you said that you were a Whorfian when it comes to language.
>
> LF: Yeah, I mean, I went to school in the 70s and 80s so...
>
> SS: But could you just maybe elaborate a bit on what you mean by that?
>
> LF: Well, ok, for example, the way I understood it during my time in undergrad and grad school was that just as your thinking shapes your language, your language shapes your thinking, which seems self-evident, but I guess there's tussles over it all the time about how far it goes and all that. For me, one aspect of *Báxoje* language that I am interested in is how can you almost understand the thinking of the people in those days based upon the language itself. Can you kind of time travel in a way by incorporating and really understanding these things?
>
> I teach [as] best I can the language over here at the stone building. Yesterday, Sunday, we had a bunch of people. So, for example, I was saying, "*í, í* is 'mouth.'" But then you go, "ok, *íha* is 'lip.'" A lot of people learn it as *í, íha*—they just kind of memorize it. But for me, I need to be able to understand it a little more. So, like, we know *tá* is 'deer,' *táha* is 'deerskin.' So, *í*, *íha*: *íhá* is 'mouthskin,' which kind of helps to remember these things.

Of course, I told people it doesn't always work out that way, that morphemes can be broken up like that, but it can help you. Like, for example, *má$^{n}$*. *Má$^{n}$* refers to the earth, as opposed to *má*, 'arrow.' So *má$^{n}$ha* is 'mud' or 'soil'—that's the skin of the earth: *má$^{n}$-ha*. Ok. *Má$^{n}$ya$^{n}$*, 'the land,' the earth as we know it spread out far and wide, comes from *yá$^{n}$*, 'to lay out, to be horizontal.' So it's *má$^{n}$ya$^{n}$*, 'the land, the earth laid out' in a way. So for me it helps memorize these things.

Now, do I absolutely know that that's how they thought of it? No, I don't think they do. I mean, I also know about deconstruction and all that, so to know that sometimes we're kind of attributing our own thinking onto something, then I try to be self conscious about that and say why I think something like that. I told them before, one of the first things I said was "*mína ne*," you know, to 'sit down' in a polite way as opposed to *mína re*, which is 'hey, sit down!' So when I said "*ayá$^{n}$*," I said, "now look we've had this word for bed, *ayá$^{n}$*, 'to lay on, something you lay on.' Remember the word *mína*? *A-mína*, 'something you sit on.'" So instead of just saying "*amína* means 'chair,' *ayá$^{n}$* means 'bed,'" I try to help them kind of incorporate the thinking.

So that's one aspect, to start seeing how the core of the language to me seems to be the verb, it seems to be the motion, whereas a lot of times people think first thing they learn is nouns, and it's the easiest thing because they're concrete. Really, if you want to get to the heart of how people thought, you're starting to see that maybe the idea of motion, of movement, of being and doing, is the core of what it meant to be that way in the old days.

Another example is tense. Now I know the simplified version for, like, *máñi* 'to walk or to move along, to go somewhere,' you know, *máñi* is present tense but also past. And this is kind of what we were talking about last time, I think. Whereas you have a future tense, *máñi hñe*, ok, but you don't have a difference between present and past tenses, *máñi*. You can say something 'was,' like 'yesterday, they walked,' or whatever, but there's no form of the verb that I know of that's like a past tense. . . . It's not [even] necessarily merged because it just was never split. In English and a lot of European languages, there's all this present, past, perfect, plu[perfect]—all this stuff, and I did see some allusions to that in the missionaries' work, but the way the language ended up being spoken was mostly: there's a single tense for past and present, what we think of as past and present, and a future tense. Now what's the future tense? It really means that it's the possibility of something. It doesn't happen for sure. However, if you have something like *máñi*, something that's going on and something that's past, then you can see that if something was before, it's kind of still going on, and if there's something that happened at one time, it's still kind of going on, but it's still also existing, so it's truly existing. *Máñi* is something that exists whether it's in the past or today, but there's

> no division, in a way, between the past and now. It just is. Whereas *hñe* just adds the potential. It could, it might, it might not. You don't know.
>
> So for me it's like the two parts that get at that as a Whorfian is that the language can tell you, one, that they thought more in terms of you're defined not by what you are but by what you do, in a sense, and as all things kind of are defined that way because you can make a lot of verbs into nouns just by adding *wa-* in front of it, so there's that, the centrality of the verb. And then the other part is that, in kind of a mystical sense, things that were before are still going on, and things that are now had a root in the past somehow, and the only thing that's not exactly real is things that haven't come yet, things that aren't here—we don't know those things. Again, I'm not saying that's how they thought, but being inspired by some of Whorf's work with Sapir and the Hopi and all that, I just [think], "Wow, what can you do? What can you try to understand about maybe how they thought?" And what it does for me is it not only helps me bring me closer to them in a sense but also it helps me kind of puzzle out the life we're living now. You know, so it doesn't seem like what's gone is gone but that it's still going on.

In this excerpt Lance begins by breaking apart words into their component morphemes, illustrating how *há* 'skin' can be joined to various other morphemes to form words like *í-ha* 'lips' (from *í* 'mouth'), *tá-ha* 'deerskin' (from *tá* 'deer'), and *mãⁿ-ha* 'dirt, soil' (from *mãⁿ* 'earth'). He then goes on to show that many Chiwere nouns are derived from verbs. So, for example, the word for 'bed' *ayãⁿ*, consists of the locative prefix *a-*, which indicates a position 'on top' of something, and the verb *-yãⁿ* 'be lying down or horizontal;' the word literally means something like 'lie on it.' Similarly, the word for 'chair' *amína* consists of the same locative prefix *a-* joined to the verb *-mína* 'sit' and literally means something like 'sit on it.' Chiwere also possesses a nominalizing prefix *wa-*, which can be used to turn many verbs into nouns (Lance does not cite examples of this but a common one is *warúje* 'food' from *rúje* 'eat;' 'food,' in other words, is literally 'something eaten'). From these examples of the centrality of verbs as the basis for most Chiwere words, Lance derives the principle that "the idea of motion, of movement, of being and doing, is the core of what it meant to be that way in the old days." Lance then

goes on to discuss the lack of tense marking on Chiwere verbs: *máñi* could mean both 'he walked' or 'he walks,' depending on the context. Lance takes comfort in this ambiguous overlap of past and present because it gives him hope that there is a kind of continuity and ongoing dialogue between past and present: "it doesn't seem like what's gone is gone but that it's still going on." In this way, Chiwere helps Lance feel closer to his ancestors and shows how the language remains important for "puzzl[ing] out the life we're living now."

It is also important to emphasize that Lance does not only produce this kind of discourse in interview settings. As he explains, this speech genre is also how he teaches language classes for tribal members at the stone building. Rather than encouraging tribal members simply to memorize words, he "tr[ies] to help them . . . incorporate the thinking" by explaining some of the morphology behind the construction of Chiwere words. Thus, Lance's understanding of the language's significance not only enriches his own personal connection to his ancestors but is also a discourse that he produces for community members in order to emphasize the importance of learning Chiwere.

So far, I have started to outline the contours of a speech genre—common among Chiwere activists—that uses morphological analysis to decompose synthetic Chiwere words into their component parts, which can be interpreted to reveal something about ancestral experiences. While some Chiwere words have stories associated with their etymologies (such as the endonyms discussed below), what is usually revealed about previous generations does not involve narrative at all but is rather something related to sensory perception and worldview. Words reflect what previous generations saw and how they described their experiences. Furthermore, this speech genre is the one of the primary

discourses language activists produce to explain why they think Chiwere is important and to communicate its significance to community members. Morphological analysis is not always a straightforward process, however, as we will discuss in the following section. Any given interpretation may have to compete with alternatives, but even alternative interpretations participate in the discourse I am describing.

**The Many Meanings of Chiwere Words**

Jimm Goodtracks, director of the Ioway, Otoe-Missouria Language Project, also says that seeing how a word is composed tells you how the old people were thinking. Two examples have been discussed in Chapter 4: the Chiwere words *máka$^{n}$thewe* and *xámimáka$^{n}$* mean 'coffee' and 'tea,' respectively, but analyzed into their component parts, they literally mean 'black medicine' (*máka$^{n}$-* 'medicine,' *-thewe* 'black') and 'herb medicine' (*xámi-* 'herb,' *-máka$^{n}$* 'medicine'). Jimm believes that this reflects how these substances were viewed by previous generations, who treated them as special beverages to be consumed for healing purposes rather than as daily habits. As he puts it in the example sentence for 'tea,' "Long ago, they only gave tea to someone to drink when they were sick, like for [a] cough [or] fever" (Goodtracks 2010:3).

To note another of his favorite examples, *namáñi* 'car' comes from *na-* 'wood' and *-mañi* 'walking, moving, or traveling.' Originally used to refer to a wagon, it was later applied to automobiles as well. But other terms for 'car' were developed during the period when wagons and cars co-existed, and it became necessary to distinguish between the two modes of transportation. The example sentence for the dictionary entry for 'rubber' (*p^á$^{n}$p^a$^{n}$je*) gives a history of wagon/car terminology. The English translation that accompanies the Chiwere example sentence reads as follows:

> At first, they have the word for wagon [*namáñi*], literally, 'wood walking.' Then when motor cars appeared, literally, 'the one that packs on its back wagon' [*éwak^i$^{n}$^i$^{n}$ namáñi*], they called it. And then they made rubber wheels, so they gave the car a new name, 'bouncing wagon' [*namáñi p^á$^{n}$p^a$^{n}$je*]. And again they began to say: 'wagon goes by itself' [*namáñi kiwáre*]. Today there are no more horse-pulled wagons, so they just call it again a wagon [*namáñi*]. [Goodtracks 2009:5]

If you know how the words are composed, you can observe the introduction of these technologies as they were seen by previous generations, Jimm says. You can see what aspects of technological form or function they focused on: a wagon as wood in motion; a car's ability to carry people and property on its back; rubber tires with their flexible texture; the capacity for automobility; and then, in the absence of wagons in the changing economy of reference, the application of the original unmodified term for wagon to car. During my fieldwork, I heard Jimm explain the story of *namáñi* many times, including in a presentation to the tribal council of the Iowa Tribe of Kansas and Nebraska, with whom he was collaborating on a grant from the National Science Foundation's Documenting Endangered Languages program to prepare a Chiwere dictionary. In other words, this example is one of the primary discourses Jimm produces when called upon to communicate the importance of Chiwere (and his own documentation and revitalization work) to consequential audiences.

It is important to realize, however, that all of these etymologies and translations are interpretations. Consider the translation of *éwak^i$^{n}$^i$^{n}$ namáñi* in the example sentence as 'the one that packs on its back wagon.' This is based on an analysis of *éwak^i$^{n}$^i$^{n}$* as composed of *ewa-* 'the one who/that' and *-k^i$^{n}$*, a verb meaning 'carry, wear, or pack, especially on one's body or back;' elsewhere in the dictionary, *éwak^i$^{n}$^i$^{n}$ namáñi* is rendered 'self-moving wagon' or, literally, 'automobile.' This is based on an analysis of *éwak^i$^{n}$^i$^{n}$* as *ewa-* 'the one who/that' and *-ki*, a reflexive affix (as in *namáñi waré* 'a

wagon goes from/to,' *namáñi kiwáre* 'a wagon goes by itself from/to' or 'automobile'). The dictionary defines *éwaki* as 'by oneself, on its own, automatic, electric' as in *éwaki wathú$^{n}$je* 'sewing machine' (from *wathú$^{n}$je* 'sew'), or as in (elsewhere translated in other terms) *éwak^i$^{n}$^i$^{n}$ namáñi* 'automobile.'

These inconsistencies between entries are not, as one might think, errors. Within the dictionary, there are errors, certainly, which Jimm looks for and corrects as he recursively revises his files (as Debenport [2015] has shown, dictionaries are prototypical examples of continuously perfectible texts—in other words, a dictionary is never done, as lexicographers like to say). Rather than being errors, Jimm knows that these variations exist within the dictionary, and he believes they enrich his text. "You know," he said, "sometimes the Chiwere entries say more than the English ones. Sometimes it's the other way around. The two sides are different, but I like it that way. If you want to look something up, you kind of have to read around. You look it up on the Chiwere side, you look it up on the English side. And maybe on the English side it tells you to see another Chiwere word. Or maybe you see a different word near the one you're going for, and you read that one and say, 'Hey, that's interesting, I just learned something I never knew before.'" Jimm sees differences under corresponding Chiwere and English lemmas as an important part of the dictionary's design, one that encourages readers to move around in the text from entry to entry (and perhaps become distracted in an educational way) rather than just extracting the definition of whatever word they intended to find. His dictionary is intended to be read rather than simply used as a reference. After all, the history of wagon/car terms appears as an example sentence not, as one would expect, for the lemmas 'wagon' or 'car' or '*namáñi,*' but for 'rubber.' It is in a place readers could really

only stumble upon or find by following the clues and cross-references from entry to entry as in a treasure hunt.

As the example of *éwak^i$^{n}$^i$^{n}$ namáñi* shows, analyzing Chiwere words is tricky even (or especially) with Jimm's dictionary. There is no comprehensive, authoritative reference like the *Oxford English Dictionary* for Chiwere. There is Jimm's dictionary, and Sky's dictionary, and dictionaries for related languages, and a *Comparative Siouan Dictionary* (2015), which is a guide to Proto-Siouan and the proto-languages of its various branches—languages hypothetically spoken hundreds or thousands of years ago and reconstructed from the historically recorded and existing Siouan languages that they became. But reading these dictionaries can lead to more questions than answers because morphological analysis is often a matter of interpretation.

Perhaps the morphological discussions that provoke the most controversy revolve around varying interpretations of endonyms, a reflection of their ongoing emblematic significance for Ioway and Otoe-Missouria identities even though the process of language shift seems more or less complete (though, of course, reversible). *Báxoje*, for example, has been glossed as 'grey snow' according to the analysis *ba-* 'snow' and *-xoje* 'grey.' This is the official translation of the Iowa Tribe of Oklahoma and is connected to a story about the burning of an Ioway village:

> In the Iowa language we call ourselves Baxoje (Bah Kho-je), meaning People of the Grey Snow. The story of our name has been handed down from generation to generation. It was told that at one time the Iowa Tribe was '1100' strong, meaning the warriors or men numbered that many. When men had to leave our village, upon their return, they looked down from a rise and they saw that our village had been burned. At this point, we had lost some of the translation to the story – it could have been another tribe or others that had burned it. But it appeared as though the village was covered with "Grey Snow, " even though the winter season was not upon us. For you see, the ashes had settled over the village site

> and all that was visible to the warriors were the burned remnants of what used to be our homes. Other versions of this story have been printed, but this is the one that we have been told. [Iowa Tribe of Oklahoma n.d.]

Some of Lance's writings present an alternative translation and story:

> We called ourselves *Bakhoje*, a name we got from related tribes long ago. It seems that during our travels in prehistoric times along the larger rivers, we were camped on a sandbar during the winter. The Ioway were traveling with our close sister tribes the Otoe and Missouria. Suddenly a great gust of wind blew a mixture of the ashes from our many campfires over our lodges and all over our heads, causing our heads to become gray with the mixture. As a joke, the Otoe-Missouria called us *Bakhoje*, translated "Gray Heads," "Ashy Heads," or sometimes "Gray Snow." [Foster 2000:143-144]

Sky provides additional possible translations in his dictionary, noting that *Baxoje* can mean 'dusty nose/head' or 'gray snow.' In his dictionary, Jimm declares 'grey snow' the correct translation. These different translations and the stories that justify them are based on alternative translations of the first syllable as either *ba-* 'snow' or *pa-* 'head/nose' and the rest of the word as either *-axoje* 'ash' or *xoje* 'gray,' either of which have also been glossed as 'dusty.' The resulting matrix leaves four possibilities: 'ashy snow,' 'gray snow,' 'ashy head/nose,' and 'gray head/nose,' each of which are associated with different stories.

The Missouria endonym *Ñut^áchi* provides a similar example. It is said that there is a recording in which an Otoe-Missouria elder, Truman Dailey—who participated in a number of language documentation and revitalization efforts in the 1970s and 1980s—glosses the term as 'they died in the water' and connects this translation to a story about a 1798 attack on a Missouria village by a rival tribe. The Missourias fled their village toward the river, where they were pursued and killed by their attackers, thus 'they died in the water.' The survivors joined a number of neighboring tribes, including the Otoe, which is why there is a combined Otoe-Missouria Tribe today. This is a common gloss

and story. Others, including Jimm, insist that this translation derives from a mispronunciation of the name and that *Ñut^áchi* means 'they live where the water forks' (or as Sky has it: 'those who build a town at the mouth of a river') in reference to the location of a historical Missouria village by a river fork or mouth. These different glosses are based on differing interpretations of morphemes and morpheme breaks.

In addition to morphological ambiguities that allow Chiwere words to be interpreted in multiple ways, there are also limits to how far one can go in analyzing words. One time, when I tried to break down the word for 'dictionary' *wích^e wawágaxe*—literally, 'word book'—I tried to analyze nearly every syllable: *wa-ich^e wa-wa-gi-a-xe*. Though the Proto-Siouan dictionary lists two morphemes ***ká-xE*** underlying *gáxe*, I proposed three: *gi-a-xe* 'by.striking-on-scratch' or 'to scratch on by striking.' When I shared this idea with Jimm, he recommended leaving *gáxe* unanalyzed and said he himself would not go beyond *wa-ich^é wa-wa-gáxe* 'something-spoken something-by.pushing-made.' "I think you may be trying to make more out of it [than it is] with further analysis," he said.

I persisted, however, and posted my analysis to the Siouan List. Bob Rankin, an emeritus linguistics professor at the University of Kansas, also focused on my analysis of *gáxe*. He warned: "It's always tempting to try to decompose polysyllabic words so that every syllable is a morpheme. We all do it, but it is often a mistake. I don't think we can do it with /gaaɣe/" (2013a). Nevertheless, responding to my provocation, he speculated that /gaaɣe/ was a contraction of the dative form /gi-gaaɣe/. Or, the underlying */ká-/ of the term, he said, could be the instrumental prefix for 'striking,' and the rest, *-xE*, could be the root for 'dig.' I can see it now, an image that makes more sense than mine:

hundreds (thousands?) of years ago, a stone tool striking and digging into wood, giving rise to the word *gáxe*, originally 'scratch, carve, engrave,' later 'to make, produce,' modified to form *wa-gáxe* 'write' and *wa-wa-gáxe* 'something written, a book.'

However, Bob also pointed out an embarrassing grammatical mistake in my original analysis. He reminded me that "any locative prefix, /aa-/, would normally come *outside* an instrumental /ka-/, so the whole analysis of /ka-aa-ɣe/ as 'to scratch ON by striking' would be essentially ungrammatical" (2013a). I knew that locatives precede instrumentals so that **gi-a-xe*, which would contract to *gáxe*, is ungrammatical; it would have to be **a-gi-xe*, which wouldn't contract at all. I just got so carried away with the morphemes that I forgot the grammatical rules for how morphemes form words.

My motivation to analyze words down to the syllable, as a typical mistake, was an ethnographic success of sorts. After all, making an error that natives recognize and find familiar, one they see themselves and each other making, is evidence of a kind of mutual understanding. The execution of my analysis, however, was way off: I had forgotten a basic rule of Chiwere grammar related to the Siouan verb template, which is clearly described in a number of published sources I have read (Whitman 1947; Greer n.d.), as well as related pedagogical materials I have studied. If my (over)analytical impulse was recognizable, my skill at the task at hand was embarrassingly inadequate and exposed me as a novice at best.

So far, we have considered examples of morphological analysis that involve alternative interpretations of where morpheme breaks are located, and therefore what morphemes a given word contains. Determining what a Chiwere word means based on its morphemes also involves other kinds of complications, however. It is possible, for

example, to produce multiple accounts of what a Chiwere word means even when the component morphemes are stable. Sky has developed a typographical solution to semantic ambiguities that can arise when the contextual clues that clarify the meaning of words in oral interaction are no longer available. He represents what he calls "concepts" as single words composed of multiple morphemes, but for "descriptions" he de-lexicalizes the morphemes into independent words.

In the following excerpt from an interview I conducted with Sky, he begins by discussing English transliterations of Chiwere words that he includes in his materials to help tribal members with pronunciation. Due to his diacritical minimalism (see Chapter 4), Sky uses uppercase letters in his transliterations for stressed syllables. Before the following excerpt begins, he explains that he only marks primary stress in a word, and thus there is usually only one uppercase syllable in a word. In the beginning of this excerpt, he notes an exception to this pattern, whereby he also marks secondary stress using uppercase syllables in compound words.

He then moves into a discourse that explains his typographical solution to semantic ambiguity arising from multiple possible interpretations of the relationship between morphemes and words. Namely, since many words are compounded from smaller meaningful units, words can have both relatively literal and relatively figurative interpretations; that is, a word's semantics can be compositional (the sum of its parts) or noncompositional (more, or other, than the sum of its parts). In this passage, Sky uses the word *chéxga* as his example. *Chéxga* most commonly means 'cow,' but it is a compound word composed of two morphemes: *che-* 'buffalo' and *-xga* 'white.' There is thus the potential for ambiguity whenever *chéxga* is used: does it mean 'cow' or 'white buffalo'?

Sky's solution involves writing *chéxga* as one word <chexga> when it refers to 'cow' (a noncompositional "concept") and as two words <che xga> when it refers to 'white buffalo' (a compositional "description"):

> About the only other time that we would put another uppercase syllable would be if it's a mash-up of two words, where it's thrown together. Because we spell one concept, one word, as a general rule. . . . If I said something like *chexga* to say a 'white buffalo,' in the context of a conversation you're going to know what I mean. "Hey, we're going to go up to the such and such farm in Montana, I hear they've got a white buffalo up there.' I say it, then you know. But if I'm out here, you and I are driving in the car, and I point and say ***chexga***, you're going to know it means cow. It's not so clear if it's written. So what we do . . . is if it's one concept, 'cow,' both words are spelled together [with] no space, but if it's two separate concepts talking about something, a buffalo that is white, then we'll keep it as two words . . . to separate them because with this language being so descriptive, we've got to be able to make a determination between a phrase or a word that's been developed or created to convey a concept versus just a description of something, a white buffalo versus cow. Most of the time we follow that convention, but if it's too long and unwieldy, we'll break it up because seeing a foot-long word, people's eyes glaze over and get the deer in the headlights look. It's easier to digest those pieces if they're broken down into more manageable ones.

In this excerpt, Sky presents this interpretive problem as particularly associated with literacy. "In the context of a conversation," he says, "you're going to know what I mean." When words become decontextualized from conversation and recontextualized in writing, however, they can become separated from the contextual cues that would otherwise make their pragmatic meaning clear—thus, Sky's "one word = one concept" rule, as he refers to it on the Otoe-Missouria Language Department (n.d.a) website.

While Sky's discourse here does not reproduce the metalexical speech genre described above, it is nonetheless informed by it. The typical Chiwre metalexical speech genre focuses on reducing concepts to their component descriptive parts: thus, Lance's example that the morphemes of the Chiwere word for 'bed' *ayá*$^{n}$ literally mean 'lie on it' shows that previous generations were more verb-oriented and thought more in terms of

motion and movement. For Sky, it is precisely this "descriptive" quality of Chiwere that gives rise to the need to distinguish between words that express concepts and those that convey descriptions. Sky's decision to represent noncompositional concepts as synthetic words and compositional descriptions as isolated words in fact creates conditions conducive for the word ideologies and metalexical discourses described above. It ensures that words with noncompositional semantics will be maximally polysynthetic—with the caveat that Sky makes an exception to his own "one word = one concept" rule when that would lead to a "foot-long" word that would intimidate language learners. Thus, he may break up a particularly long word by writing its component morphemes as independent words in order to make them more "manageable" and "easier to digest." This is in fact the opposite of the process that Moore (1988) describes for Wasco-Wishram, in which semispeakers and younger speakers lexicalize and re-inflect already inflected words. In this case, words are de-lexicalized into their component morphemes so that they are more accessible to language learners. While linguists and language activists may value Siouan words precisely because they are synthetic, Chiwere language learners who are used to an isolating language like English may need to have morphemes pre-decoded into separate words in order to make the language approachable.

To the extent that Siouan language documentation and revitalization requires writing languages down, one of the fundamental issues practitioners confront is what to represent as a word as opposed to a multiword phrase (Rudin 2011). There are a variety of (sometimes conflicting) linguistic criteria available for determining word boundaries—phonological, morphological, semantic, etc.; Sky's "one word = one concept" rule is an application of the word ideologies and metalexical speech genre, described above, to the

problem of how to write a word in Chiwere. I now consider an example of how this speech genre shapes an area of Chiwere documentation and revitalization that is especially concerned with words: lexicography.

## Morphology and Lexicography

As described above, Chiwere language activists tell me that the language enables them to see the world through the eyes of previous generations. When they give me examples of how this process happens, they draw on Chiwere's synthetic and agglutinative character: they bring up a Chiwere word and begin to analyze its component morphemes. The component morphemes—once spelled out as a morpheme-for-word/word-for-sentence calque into English—reveal something about the signified that a word-for-word translation into English does not.

This speech genre also permeates Jimm's dictionary. One instance—an example sentence for the lemma 'rubber' that traces the evolution of Chiwere car and wagon terminology—has already been discussed. A more elaborate example can be found in the entry for *mihxóge*, which is nearly identical to the entry that appears under the English lemma 'homosexual.' The entry for *mihxóge* begins by giving a range of more or less word-for-word English translations for the term: "blessed person; a spiritual person or intermediary; gay, lesbian, homosexual, bisexual; two spirits person; transvestite; transsexual; berdache" (Goodtracks 2008:6). Following the standard definition field is a long note beginning with a definition of the word based on morphological analysis:

> NOTE: Those who were blessed by holy spirits. The term is derived from: *miŋe* ([which indicates a] feminine quality) + [a contraction of] *xóñita*$^{n}$ ([which refers to something] of sacred origins [or something] holy, blessed, or mysterious) + *-ge* (a suffix indicating a natural state or quality which is a continuous and regular feature). Thus, the word refers to an individual who has some natural female-like aspect of their character,

> personality or nature, which is of a mysterious divine origin. [Goodtracks 2008:6]

The note goes on to frame this analysis as a reflection of a traditional understanding of homosexuality associated with the elders: "The Mihxóge were respectfully treated as a special class of religious leaders. Among the late Baxoje, Jiwére-Ñút^achi elders, the Mihxóge were still regarded with awe for their spiritual connection and consecrated role in harmony with the Holy Grandfather spirits" (2008:7). The note includes supporting quotations from elders ("They are '*waxóbri*$^{n}$' [holy], and they kinda know that and use it;" "They're not crazy. They just got that born in them. Born in their nature" [2008:7]), which are then interpreted for readers in relation to current social conditions. The note contrasts the elders' traditional views with Judeo-Christian attitudes, in which homosexuality may be seen as a choice or sin: "The Elder's statements imply that Mihxóge Wan^shige were aware that their sexual orientation was the result of a special divine ordination and not the result of their own conscious choice or personal failing, defect, imperfection or 'sin'" (2008:7). The note goes on to critique modern gay culture and social movements for ignoring the spiritual nature of *mihxóge*: "the present day evidence suggests that the Mihxóge lifestyle is no longer realized nor understood in its original cultural context and role" (2008:7). The note also suggests that returning to this traditional understanding of homosexuality would enable contemporary *mihxóge* to cultivate once again "their dormant 'medicine powers' and abilities, that could well benefit their Native Peoples, if not, indeed, all people throughout the land" (2008:7). The note concludes with a final quotation from an elder who gives instructions on how to behave toward *mihxóge*: "Talk to them, be good to them and that's all. But don't hurt them—it'll come back on you. They got medicine" (2008:7).

Thus, through a series of metapragmatic framings—beginning with an act of definition and concluding with a reflection on the significance of that definition in the context of current social conditions—the dictionary identifies the semantics of *mihxóge* (as reflected in its morphological composition) with its ancestral and potential future pragmatics. In order to reveal the meaning of *mihxóge*, Jimm engages in the metalexical speech genre described above: he analyzes the word into morphemes that refer to feminine, sacred/blessed, and natural/inherent qualities, which he ties to an ancestral understanding of homosexuality. The word's semantics, derived from its component morphemes, are assumed to reflect its ancestral pragmatic use, which in turn reflects the traditional beliefs and behaviors of previous generations. In defining the word *mihxóge*, the dictionary teaches readers a set of attitudes and behaviors associated with the elders. Jimm's decision to include information that readers could use to *live* the language in this way—a desire that reflects his commitment to the needs of community audiences as well as linguists—explains some of the dictionary's unconventional formatting.

Linguists and anthropologists have recently begun to explore cultural variation in lexicography as communities engaged in language documentation and revitalization prepare dictionaries to preserve their heritage languages (Frawley et al. 2002; Rice 2009:50-54). As Debenport puts it:

> Comparing the methodologies, functions, resulting texts, and possible implications of lexicographic projects reveals the error in considering dictionaries to be a single type of work. Although there are historical, generic, and ideological similarities among works classified as lexicons and such similarities can be usefully manipulated to accomplish certain goals, detailing the differences between dictionaries helps to point to the specific conditions of their production. [2015:87]

Like Debenport, I have found that a community dictionary project reproduces ideologies, discourses, and speech genres that circulate in the broader community. In this case,

Jimm's Chiwere dictionary contains numerous examples of metalexical discourse that exemplify a speech genre common among Chiwere language activists and educators, who believe that morphological analysis can reveal the experiences and worldviews of previous generations.

## Conclusion

Meek (2010) and Samuels (2006) have both noted that presentations of indigenous languages in revitalization contexts tend to focus on the referential functions of language and erase indexical associations with distinctive cultural practices and values. Samuels refers to this phenomenon as "semantic purification," which he defines as "a process whereby utterances are disarticulated . . . or separated from the indexical and iconic associations that are the historical sedimentation of cultural relations and meaningful interactions" and "become collections of lexical units that are arbitrarily associated with referential meanings" (2006:531).

This indexical erasure is accomplished in part through translation: words in indigenous languages are presented as transparent equivalents of words in English. Thus, Samuels notes an emphasis on "translated nursery rhymes and songs"—such as "Old MacDonald" and "The Star-Spangled Banner"—in Apache language classes. He writes:

> In many Apache speakers' view (and mine as well), these songs presented the children with a purported transparency between English and Apache. Why, I wondered, were Apache children's songs not taught, songs that would give the children exposure to the poetic resources of Apache, rather than the false idea that Apache does exactly what English does, but just in a more difficult way, as if *bikeyaa* were the same as 'had a farm'?" [2006:536]

In a similar vein, Meek argues that "[school] routines and artifacts reduce aboriginal languages to a compilation of nouns and token phrases, emphasizing the referential aspects of language while downplaying all other indexical dimensions, and thereby

diminishing their sustainability as complex systems of and for communication" (2010:126). She finds that native languages are minimized and subordinated to English through "the selection of terms (nouns, simple verb words) and their translations, *glossing the aboriginal terms and phrases in a word-to-word or word-to-phrase style, with no morphological analysis*" (2010:124, emphasis added). This creates the illusion that Kaska words are simply translations of—or transparent equivalents to—English words. One of Nevins's consultants raises a similar objection when he tells her: "They might be using some Apache-sounding words, but what they are really teaching the kids is English. They think they are teaching the kids the Apache word *nakih*; but they don't teach the kids *nakih*. Instead, they are teaching '*nakih* means two'" (2013:69).

As Samuels notes, "the question of transparency between Apache and other languages has become a key ideological issue among Apache speakers who wish to revitalize indigenous ways of speaking among young people" since "if semantic values are independent of particular languages, why does it matter if people speak Apache?" (2006:550). Samuels describes a view among older speakers that translational models of instruction prevent students from understanding idioms. He mentions an older speaker who cites two examples of Apache language that students struggle to comprehend because they have been socialized to understand words and phrases according to their literal referents:

> One older speaker told me that *hotaałihí* could be used to mean 'highway'. A "literal" translation of the word would amount to 'the place where you kick it', and his sense was that this refers notionally to riding horses, and, through metaphorical extension, to putting your foot to the gas pedal. Similarly, the phrase *Nikee yaa zhi' goz'aa néh?* might "literally" mean 'Is there space at your feet', but idiomatically it is asking 'May I spend the night?' Young speakers, according to this older man, were unable to respond to idiomatic phrases such as these because they became mired in

> thinking through the literal referents of the words in the phrases. [2006:551]

In this chapter, I have presented a contrasting discourse produced by Chiwere community linguists, language activists, and educators, who use morphological analysis to challenge notions of transparent equivalency between Chiwere and English and thereby make a case for Chiwere's distinctive social and cultural value. While *ayá*$^{n}$ can be rendered 'bed,' and *máka*$^{n}$*thewe* 'coffee,' and *mihxóge* 'homosexual,' such word-for-word translations obscure the deeper significance of the Chiwere words. When the component parts of Chiwere words are identified and calqued morpheme-by-morpheme, they are distinguished from their English "equivalents" and shown to encode ancestral experiences.

Throughout the chapter, I have described this metalexical speech genre and its role in Chiwere documentation and revitalization in multiple contexts, including community advocacy, language classes, pedagogical materials, and lexicography. I have suggested that this discourse is a product of interaction between Whorfian academic language ideologies and community word ideologies (with no judgment about origin)—both of which involve an appreciation for the expressive potential of synthetic words. Words matter in the Chiwere context in part because of a pervasive discourse that employs morphological analysis to reveal how words contain the worldviews of previous generations. This discourse affirms the value of Chiwere preservation for practitioners and is one of their primary means of communicating the importance of language documentation and revitalization to broader audiences.

# Chapter 6

## Translating Chiwere: Interlingual Dimensions of Language Preservation

The previous chapter introduces a particular form of translation as one of the primary ways that community linguists, language activists, and educators like Jimm, Lance, and Sky infuse Chiwere words with social and cultural import. Morphological analysis reduces words to their component parts, which are then translated. This morpheme-by-morpheme translation reveals underlying noncompositional semantics, which produce a significance missing from the compositional equivalence. It is important to emphasize that this discourse draws from the irreducibly interlingual environment in which Chiwere documentation and revitalization take place (see Chapter 4). To say only that *máka$^{n}$thewe* and *xámimáka$^{n}$* mean 'coffee' and 'tea,' respectively, presents a false equivalence between Chiwere and English terms. It is the substitution of (Chiwere-)morpheme-for-(English-)word translations such as 'black medicine' and 'herb medicine' for word-for-word translations such as 'coffee' and 'tea' that reveal formerly obscured levels of meaning within the words, which can then be seen to reflect the perceptions and practices of previous generations.

This and others chapters develop the notion that translation is a common practice in Chiwere language preservation. However, translation is a little-discussed topic in linguistic literature on language documentation and revitalization. I propose that disciplinary differences between sociocultural and linguistic anthropology, on the one hand, and documentary linguistics, on the other, help account for the relative prominence of translation in visiting ethnographers' accounts of language preservation compared

those produced by linguistic practitioners. While anthropologists have long thought of what they do as a form of translation—reflecting a tradition of writing for specific intended audiences of ethnographic readers presumed to possess linguistic and cultural backgrounds different from those of the ethnographic subjects written and read about—documentary linguists are more focused on creating archival resources that will stand the test of time and be maximally useful to diverse but underspecified audiences, including current scholars, community members, and other contemporary stakeholders, but also unknown (and by definition unknowable) future audiences. In short, the different role that the category "translation" plays in the professional identities of anthropologists and linguists helps account for its varying visibility to researchers socialized in distinctive disciplinary styles of fieldwork.

After elaborating this argument, I examine translation practices I encountered during my fieldwork. I focus first on translation requests as a domain for controlling the connotations, circulation, and cultural associations of Chiwere and other Siouan languages, developing themes raised in Chapter 4. I also analyze the strategies Jimm employs to translate Chiwere literature into English while preserving features he associates with the "classical style" of Chiwere narration. Focusing on his translation of a Trickster tale, I show how Jimm's combination of intertextual comparison, compilation, calquing, supplementation, elision, and selective untranslation blur distinctions between originals and translations. In a sense, Jimm's strategies use translations to produce originals as much as they use originals to produce translations. His translations become a way of (re)imagining, (re)creating, and (re)circulating Chiwere literature and narrative styles for English-speaking tribal members and broader public audiences. Jimm's

investment in translation reflects his goals, which exceed documentation in a narrow sense and include broader possibilities for linguistic and cultural transmission and revitalization. I conclude by considering the implications of Jimm's translation strategies for conversations and controversies surrounding the politics of language in indigenous literature.

## "Translation" in Anthropology

Concomitant with its comparative orientation, combined interlinguistic and cross-cultural translation has been central to modern anthropological self-understanding. The notion of anthropology as an exercise in translation emerges from the British tradition of social anthropology as developed by Malinowski. In *Coral Gardens and Their Magic*, Malinowski writes that the task of the anthropologist is "to translate the native point of view to the European" by "effectively bringing home the realities of native language to English readers" (1935:xxi-xxii). For Malinowski, "language is the ethnographer's most important tool" because practical knowledge of the vernacular enables anthropologists to communicate effectively with informants, whose discourse requires ethnographic interpretation and commentary in order to be made intelligible to (presumed European and American) readers. "It is a long way from the mouth of the native informant," Malinowski writes, "to the mind of the English reader" (1935:4).

Malinowski provides guidance on how to carry meaning across this distance and offers his two-volume tome, a composite of annotated corpus and ethnographic explication, as a demonstration of his method. In a section titled "The Translation of Untranslatable Words," Malinowski writes: "Our paradoxical heading . . . is obviously based on a two-fold use of the term 'translate.' If we understand by 'translate' the finding

of verbal equivalents in two different languages, this task is impossible" (1935:17). Inadequate word-for-word "equation" contrasts with "translation in the sense of *defining a term by ethnographic analysis*," which Malinowski describes not only as possible but also as "the only correct way of defining the linguistic and cultural character of a word" (1935:17). Given that the anthropologist's aim is to "translate the native point of view to the European," and translation is characterized as "defining a term by ethnographic analysis," Malinowski's recursive definitions create an identification between anthropology and translation. Thus, when he says that the goal of anthropology is translation, he is not (as may seem on first reading) using translation as a guiding metonym or metaphor for ethnography. The relationship is not figurative but literal: translation is cultural interpretation and vice versa.

This equation is rooted in Malinowski's pragmatic theory of language in which speech becomes meaningful by its practical effects in particular interactional contexts. Malinowski's statement that "translation must always be the re-creation of the original into something profoundly different" (1935:11-12) evokes the same sense of simultaneous mimesis and transformation (mimetic because transformed) as Benjamin's formulation of "the task of the translator," which involves "finding that intended effect upon the language into which he is translating which produces in it the echo of the original" (Benjamin 1968:76). And just as Benjamin emphasizes that the target language may be transformed by this encounter with another (1968:80-81), so too does Malinowski, noting that, "at times it becomes necessary to use an English term with Trobriand implications, that is, a word from our own language in a native sense" (1935:21); thus when readers see the word *garden*, for example, they envision not "a

cabbage patch with a border of geraniums or pansies," but "the fence enclosing yam vines, taro, some bananas and a patch of sugar-cane" (1935:19). This semantic transformation through translation mirrors the personal and social transformations that follow from coming to an understanding of another (Malinowski 1922:25).

Following Malinowski, influential British social anthropologists expounded on the notion of anthropology as translation (Evans-Pritchard 1951:61, 81-82, 1965:11-14, 109-110; Lienhardt 1953), which their own ethnographies exemplified, though they abandoned Malinowski's practice of including corpora in favor of foregrounding key words. One can think here of Evans-Pritchard's (1956) explication of *kwoth*, Lienhardt's (1961) deployment of "passiones," or even entire ethnographies devoted to elaborate translations of one or two native terms. In other words, the translation (Maranhão and Streck 2003; Rubel and Rosman 2003), mistranslation (Keesing 1985, 1989), and "interpretation" (Geertz 1973) of native perspectives have long been central to how anthropologists understand ethnography, for better or worse (Asad 1986).

For purposes of comparison with documentary linguistics, it is necessary to stress two related aspects of Malinowski's notion of translation. First, Malinowski's approach involves a specific intended audience, in his case "English readers." Second, his approach produces transformations in the target language such that a word like *garden* is decontextualized from English indexical associations and recontextualized in Trobriand terms. In contrast to Malinowski's concrete readers and openness to interlingual influence, we will see that documentary linguists produce materials for temporally and socially broader (but less specific) audiences and characterize interlingual influence as unwanted interference. Rather than pursuing the "re-creation of the original into

something profoundly different," linguistic practice focuses on preserving distinctions both between languages and between originals and translations.

## "Translation" in Documentary Linguistics

From a translation studies perspective, much of what documentary linguists do could be considered translation: digital audiovisual recordings "translate" light and sound waves into binary codes; transcriptions "translate" sound waves into various writing systems; glossing "translates" morphemes into grammatical categories; dictionaries and grammars "translate" corpora into lexemes, paradigms, and structural patterns. From an anthropological perspective, however, it is necessary to begin with native points of view as expressed in the vernacular. Tracking translation through methodological discourse in documentary linguistics reveals how linguists understand the role of translation in their techniques of data collection and analysis.

While some linguists recognize translation as a pervasive dimension of their work—Foley, for example, notes that "all language description and documentation is an exercise in translation" (2007:100)—this recognition is tempered by the fact that the translation practices of most of their colleagues are based on "unarticulated assumptions" informed by an "inadequate," "misguided," and often unexamined theory of meaning (Foley 2007:116; see also Woodbury 2007). In other words, most documentary linguists think of translation as marginal rather than central to what they do; Foley's view that "all language description and documentation is an exercise in translation" receives little uptake among other practitioners.

In general, translation is framed in narrower terms and appears especially in linguistic literature on data collection and analysis in connection with forms of elicitation

and interlinear annotation. Elicitation is a structured interview, in which linguists use questions or other instruments to encourage speakers to produce data in a relatively controlled and systematic fashion; it is one of the primary methods of data collection in linguistic fieldwork. Linguists recognize two modes of elicitation: "translational" and "non-translational" (Samarin 1967:77; Mosel 2011:81-84).[9] In translational elicitation, the linguist poses a term or phrase in a contact language; a bilingual speaker responds with a translation from the contact language into the target language. In non-translational elicitation, informants produce data without translating from a contact language; this method may or may not be monolingual depending on whether the contact language is utilized for communication. As Mosel puts it, "non-translational elicitation does not generally exclude the use of the contact language, but only avoids the direct translation of single sentences from the contact language into the target language" (2011:82). It is the difference between asking a speaker of X language who understands English: "How would you say 'Nice to meet you'?" vs. "What do you say when you're introduced to someone?" The second question could also be posed in X language for monolingual elicitation.

Among elicitation methods, non-translational elicitation is considered more reliable than translational elicitation. Translational elicitation is generally discouraged due to "manifold problems" related to interference from a contact language; Mosel recommends "a non-translational approach even in the initial stage of fieldwork" in order to "avoid all the flaws of translation elicitation" (2011:82). Sakel and Everett (2012:32) also note the lack of interference from a contact language as an advantage of carrying out

[9] Sakel and Everett 2012 prefer discussing "bilingual" and "monolingual" fieldwork contexts.

monolingual fieldwork. In general, linguists are advised to learn the target language as well as they can and use it to communicate with consultants in the field. The monolingual fieldwork ideal seems to be based on an assumption that monolingual environments are the natural environments of language, a question to which we will return.

In any case, given that the goal of linguistic fieldwork is to record naturalistic speech, all forms of elicitation data—translational and non-translational—are considered less reliable than corpus data; even monolingual elicitation involves interference not from a contact language but from the linguist. While elicitation is recognized as essential when beginning fieldwork and later on when filling in incomplete paradigms, documentary linguists ideally fade into the background during their fieldwork and unobtrusively record what consultants would be saying if they were not there. As Mosel puts it:

> Since "linguistic elicitation is artificial even under the best circumstances" (Samarin 1967:59), any grammatical analysis and description should in the first place be based on a good text collection, while the elicitation of data should only be used at the very beginning of the project or as a means of filling gaps in the data as they usually occur in inflectional paradigms. . . . Correspondingly, the examples illustrating grammatical categories and constructions in a grammar should as much as possible be quotations of naturally occurring utterances. [Mosel 2011:85]

It is important to note that not all linguists accept this view. Davis et al. (2014), for example, have recently defended formal, (generative) hypothesis-driven endangered language fieldwork in which targeted elicitation is a central method. They argue that such research "is more efficient at uncovering grammatical generalizations than traditional corpus-based methodologies (including their modern computer-enhanced incarnations)" and that targeted elicitation produces "kinds of data that are either impossible or extremely difficult to extract from textual material, no matter how extensive" (2014:181). They point out that fieldwork with endangered languages, in which limited time and

numbers of speakers can make the preparation of extensive corpora impossible, intensifies the drawbacks of corpus-oriented methodologies. In the case of endangered languages, "targeted elicitation is critical; it is no good waiting till the relevant utterances turn up in texts, because in all likelihood they never will, and certainly not in the systematic way necessary for syntactic and semantic investigation" (2014:218). Of course, Davis et al. are only compelled to defend elicitation in comparison to corpus collection because most documentary linguists consider corpora to be better data. Without ignoring the views of those like Davis et al., I think it is fair to say that the most documentary linguists view corpora as superior to elicitation data because the former are more objective and naturalistic.

The second place in which translation enters methodological discourse in documentary linguistics is to specify a particular kind of annotation in the apparatus that constitutes a corpus. Again, while all interlinear annotation may look like forms of translation, a distinction between transcription and translation is central to how linguists understand documentation. Linguistic field methods training focuses on recording and transcription technologies—issues like what audiovisual recording equipment to use and when to use phonetic or phonemic transcriptions. When translation is mentioned at all, it is typically given cursory attention. As Schultze-Berndt notes: "Translation is a skill (many will say, an art) which, if undertaken to professional standard, usually requires a lot of training, and is fraught with methodological problems. It seems highly unrealistic to burden documenters or annotators with the expectation that they ought to provide translations that meet the standards of professional literary or scientific translation" (2006:234). Noting that documentary linguists may not possess fluency in the languages

translated from or into, she concludes that "all users and potential users of language documentations should be discouraged in the strongest possible terms from using the free translations which are provided as part of the annotation as more than a clue to the meaning and analysis of the documented utterances" (2006:234).

Schultze-Berndt positions translation beyond the professional pale of documentary linguistics. In part, this lack of attention to translation reflects the archival orientation of practitioners. Language documentation has been defined as "a lasting, multipurpose record of a language" in the sense that "the goal is not a short-term record for a specific purpose or interest group, but a record for generations and user groups whose identity is still unknown and who may want to explore questions not yet raised at the time when the language documentation was compiled" (Himmelmann 2006:1-2). "The goal," Himmelmann continues, "is to create a record of a language in the sense of a comprehensive corpus of primary data which leaves nothing to be desired by later generations wanting to explore whatever aspect of the language they are interested in" (2006:3). Himmelmann is clear that this is not an a- or anti-theoretical project. "While language documentation is based on the idea that it is possible and useful to dissociate the compilation of linguistic primary data from any *particular* theoretical or practical project based on this data," language documentation does have its own theoretical apparatus focused on "the methods used in recording, processing, and preserving linguistic primary data" and "the question of how it can be ensured that primary data collections are indeed of use for a broad range of theoretical and applied purposes" (2006:4). In this framework, "theory" is not only something to which data contributes but also something that contributes to the collection of data that will be useful beyond any particular theory. For

example, documentary linguists follow elaborately theorized standards for data and metadata formats and archiving protocols designed to prevent "'data graveyards,' i.e. large heaps of data with little or no use to anyone" (2006:4). The goal of theory is to inform "best practices" designed to ensure that data remains accessible to current and future users.[10]

In this view, the goal of language documentation is to produce enduring archival material that will be accessible and useful both to current stakeholders and unknown future audiences, a view with negative implications for the status of translation as a professional practice. As Evans and Sasse point out, the vernacular text is the "archival object, in the sense of being a time-bound, continuous, tangible and fixed 'capturing,' though to the extent that the recording additionally contains the informant's translation or discussion of the text this is also part of the primary archival object." They continue:

> In other words, *in all cases the primary archival object is simply what you can hear*. The process of working up a translation, on the other hand, is much more fragmented and open-ended, pointing both backward to earlier recordings, analyses, and insights, and forward to questionings, analyses and attempts at translation that may continue to be worked through for a considerable and in principle unbounded time after the recording of the original vernacular text. [2007:11]

Here, Evans and Sasse note that translation may be part of the "primary archival object," but only if the *informant* provides a translation on a recording intended to capture "the original vernacular text." That is, the documentary linguist's translation is never part of the primary archival object. To view it as such is to subscribe to "the subtitling illusion,"

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[10] Lederman (in press) describes a contrasting situation in anthropology, where there are few guidelines for data formatting or protocols for archiving fieldnotes. From a comparative disciplinary perspective, anthropologists stand out as being particularly resistant to sharing or archiving fieldnotes due to confidentiality concerns and a sense that fieldnotes are not in fact primary data.

which Evans and Sassse define as "the view that somehow the English version comes into existence in a similar way to the vernacular version" and thus that "the vernacular and English languages have equivalent status as primary archival objects" (2007:11). As will be discussed in Chapter 7, views like those of Evans and Sasse are amplified in advocacy settings in which, in order to make the case for policies supporting Native American language preservation, linguists and community activists argue, for example, that "translations . . . are not the same as the original and the original can never be replaced by a translation" (S. Hrg. 102-809 [1992]:16).[11]

Evans and Sasse's sharp distinction between "original vernacular text" as "primary archival object" and English translation as something else—and related advocacy arguments for language preservation from the impossibility or inadequacy of translations—contrasts with the role of translation in more folkloric or ethnopoetic text collections, which may on their face seem similar to corpora produced by documentary linguists. For example, the Dauenhauers, who have produced numerous collections of texts in Alaska Native languages (formatted with English translations on the facing pages rather than interlinear glosses), write:

> The trick is to make enough explicit in the English translation that the reader can follow the story with the same ease that a listener could follow it in the original. For most readers, the impact and power of the story will not come from the Tlingit or Haida original, but from the English translation. The hard thing for the translator is to accept the translation as

[11] In addition to examples from the following chapter, see discussions regarding what dimensions of culture are "lost in translation" and whether some cultural elements are "untranslatable" (Crystal 2000:39, 122; Dauenhauer and Dauenhauer 1998:74; Jocks 1998). A related conversation concerns whether particular languages afford speakers expressive resources unavailable in other languages. See, for example, work by Dorian (2002:138) and Woodbury's arguments concerning "form-dependent expression" (1993, 1998).

> the "new original." The original always haunts the translator, but for the English reader, the translation becomes now the original. We hope that the facing bilingual format will lead some readers back to savour some of the richness of the original language text, but in order to do this, the translation must have the power to stand on its own with clarity, power, and appeal. [Dauenhauer and Dauenhauer 1999:19]

To the extent that documentary linguists understand themselves to be archiving a vanishing "original" for all time and all audiences, they perpetuate a sharp distinction between originals and translations. The Dauenhauers, however, recognize that for English-speaking audiences, which include both Alaska Natives and non-indigenous readers, the English translation becomes a new original and thus must be able to "stand on its own " and "reproduce the impact and power" of the original. The Dauenhauers' perspective thus approaches anthropological translation practices, which are based on an analogous recognition that most ethnographic readers lack unmediated access to the original experiences and interactions being described. This view differs from linguistic discourses that seek to separate archival vernacular originals, on one hand, from relatively vestigial translations into languages with wider circulation, on the other.

In short, documentary linguists are primarily concerned with recording and archiving naturalistic monolingual speech. Their goal is to produce an "archival object" that transcends immediate instrumentalities in order to address distant and unspecified future audiences. As a result, translation is a marginal method in linguistic fieldwork. It is often viewed as a form of interference with regard to data collection and as peripheral to data analysis. To some extent, linguists define what they do in opposition to translation since the impossibility or inadequacy of translation provides one of the primary motivations for preserving original vernacular texts. This contrasts with anthropological and other folkloric or ethnopoetic text collectors who think of what they do in terms of

translation and who recognize—along with translation studies scholars (Bellos 2011:37)—that the process whereby a translation replaces the original is a social fact for certain audiences. I turn now to translation strategies I encountered in my fieldwork, focusing on Jimm's translations both from English into Chiwere and from Chiwere into English. As we will see, Jimm's translation practices are much closer to those of anthropologists and the Dauenhauers than those of documentary linguists.

**Translation Requests**

As previously noted, one of the ironies of language revitalization is that it can involve the "semantic purification" (Samuels 2006) or decontextualization of heritage languages from the socially and culturally significant settings motivating their revitalization in the first place. This phenomenon is driven in part by strategies for reversing language shift that involve expanding the domains available for heritage language use. Jon Reyhner's (1999:vii) adaptation of Fishman's (1991) Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale, for example, generally measures vitality according to whether a language is used in communal public spaces like educational and governmental institutions, businesses, and mass media. Jimm and his counterparts in tribal language programs try to raise awareness about language preservation by making Chiwere more visible in public places and encouraging people to use it more often. The last time I visited the Iowa Tribe of Kansas and Nebraska's offices, for example, Lance had put up signs in Chiwere identifying different offices and the restrooms. Sky has made similar signs for the Otoe-Missouria offices; stop signs in the tribal complex parking lot are also in Chiwere.[12]

[12] I am told that the Iowa Tribe of Oklahoma also has Chiwere signage in their offices.

While increasing Chiwere's public presence may be effective in raising awareness and encouraging everyday Chiwere use, it also increases the risk of recontextualization by associating the language with new interactional domains. Some communities, particularly in the Southwest, restrict the circulation of language materials in order to prevent the decontextualization of heritage languages from what are considered proper settings and forms of language use (Debenport 2015; Whitley 2003). Jimm's language revitalization strategies represent another approach to the problem of decontextualization: rather than limiting access to language materials, Jimm promotes the circulation of materials that associate Chiwere with other symbols of traditional Ioway and Otoe-Missouria culture (e.g., the tee shirt, mug, and pedagogical materials described in Chapter 4) and resists the circulation of materials that associate Chiwere with what he believes are dominant society practices and values.

Translation requests are one domain in which Jimm exercises discretion in order to control the cultural associations of Chiwere language tokens. Jimm often receives requests to calque English idioms, for example, "Go green!" (for a tribal environmental awareness program), "I ♥ boobies!" (for tribal breast cancer awareness bracelets), "Bigg Rigg" (for fans of Otoe-Missouria mixed martial arts fighter Johny "Bigg Rigg" Hendricks), and "They are in a Warthog" (a phrase used in playing the video game *Halo*; Warthog is a type of vehicle in the game). These requests are often met with ambivalence since they are seen as having no connection with traditional culture. Jimm often declines to provide translation services for efforts that would increase Chiwere language use if he believes that such use would undermine traditional values. Jimm's response to the request to translate "I ♥ boobies!" included a long description of traditional attitudes toward

sexuality, which he felt ran counter to the slogan's sexual innuendo. Jimm was also concerned by the request to translate phrases associated with *Halo*, which was intended to enable tribal members to communicate in Chiwere while playing the game. When I explained to Jimm what *Halo* is (a "first-person shooter," i.e., a rather violent video game), he expressed reservations that Chiwere be associated with it and replied to the request by saying: "If I cannot contribute to peace and harmony, what the old people called *wapána*, then I cannot contribute at all."

To take another example, a tribal member once sent Jimm a list of English terms that she wanted translated into Chiwere. The list focused on terms for genitalia and bodily functions that are considered "bad words" in English. Jimm declined to provide the requested translations since he felt that the corresponding Chiwere terms lacked the negative connotations of their English counterparts and worried that English speakers would project those connotations onto the Chiwere terms. Jimm and many tribal members also believe that there are no "bad words" in Chiwere, and they often extend this ideology to other Native American languages.[13] Thus, a presentation at the Siouan conference one year included translations of Lakota *wíŋkte* names[14] from the 1876 Red Cloud Agency surrender ledger (DeMallie 2012). These translations included words like

[13] This is a common language ideology across a number of Native American communities (e.g., Muehlmann 2013:162-164; Webster 2015:83).

[14] *Wíŋkte*, like Chiwere *mihxóge*, refers to an "effeminate man who adopts womanly behavior" or a "man who does not conform to the ordinary man's gender role" (Lakota Language Consortium 2014). The *New Lakota Dictionary* notes that "in traditional Lakota society the *wíŋkte* are not marginalized, but rather, they are considered to be individuals with special spiritual and other talents that fulfill some cultural and ceremonial needs of the community that other people could not fill; some people also apply this to homosexuals and transvestites; called berdache in anthropological literature" (Lakota Language Consortium 2014). *Wíŋkte* names are given by *wíŋkte* to children and are one of many names that a Lakota person could acquire over the course of their life.

'asshole,' 'prick,' 'bugger,' 'cunt,' 'snatch,' 'whore,' and 'shit' (e.g., in names like 'Soft Prick,' 'Snatch Stealer,' 'Eats Shit,' etc.). During the discussion, Jimm objected to these translations on the grounds that Native American languages have no profanities. Some of the linguists in the room sighed; they had heard this argument before and were unconvinced. In any case, swearing is one domain where there is considerable resistance to using Chiwere.[15] Jimm's responses to these translation requests reflect the attitudes of some tribal members who have strong views about appropriate and inappropriate contexts for Chiwere language use. Occasionally, mere proximity between Chiwere and objectionable content can trigger concerns such as the YouTube example discussed in Chapter 4.

The challenge of giving an endangered heritage language a wider public presence while maintaining its traditional cultural associations is faced by many who work to revitalize Siouan languages. For example, a request on the Siouan List to translate a line from *Alice in Wonderland* ("curiouser and curiouser, cried Alice") for a polyglot compilation produced multiple responses. While some found the intellectual challenge of translating a Victorian neologism into Siouan languages intriguing, others were less receptive to the request because of its perceived triviality and irrelevance to Native American communities. Bryan Gordon wrote: "It's a more distinguished request than pet names[16] and such, but it's not the kind of translation work I would prefer to spend my

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[15] For a description of an inverse situation, where an indigenous language is used almost exclusively to swear, see Muehlmann 2008.

[16] Requests, many from non-Native people, to translate names for pets and children or stock English phrases into Siouan languages are so common that John Koontz (2003a) posted his general responses to such questions on the FAQ section of his website. Once, he was even asked (presumably as a joke) for a Native American name for an RV; he responded in kind with *Hotanke*, an Anglicized spelling of the Dakotan word for

time on. Why don't people ask us to translate Microsoft Word or a K-12 curriculum or something important?" (Gordon 2014). Jimm concurred: "I have other priorities and am unclear on the need for [a translation of] the particular quote from a story which has nothing in common with Native American Culture. . . . To spend time on the translation of materials that have no immediate application to the language communities is nonsensical and, for my part, a waste of time" (Goodtracks 2014). Willem de Reuse shared his general guidelines for responding to such requests: "One has to pick and choose. If it is short and culturally appropriate, I generally agree to it. . . . Then other requests have to be nixed, like the set of 'Spring Break' phrases I once was asked to translate, things like 'I am so drunk,' and 'Where is the bathroom?'" (de Reuse 2014a). As de Reuse explained, part of the reason he objected to translating spring break phrases is because the translations could be circulated in a way that would trivialize indigenous languages; they could end up, for example "as 'curiosities' in some sleazy men's magazine" (2014b). In short, most Souianists face the question of what exactly constitutes a "culturally appropriate" application of heritage language and how to prevent indigenous languages from appearing in culturally inappropriate contexts. This is the other side of the coin of the materials described in Chapter 4, which embed Chiwere and other Siouan languages in contexts rich with traditional associations.

In short, while language revitalization seeks to expand opportunities for heritage language use by adapting languages to current social conditions, this quest for relevance is tempered by the recognition that codes can become disassociated from the traditional practices and values that motivate their revitalization. Assuming the objective of

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'Winnebago,' a brand of RVs that takes its name from the Winnebago Indians (Koontz 2003c).

language documentation and revitalization is not only preserving linguistic diversity (in the sense of grammatical structures) but also preserving distinctive *cultural* worldviews and lifeways, practitioners will have won the battle while losing the war if people are learning and using heritage languages primarily to participate in activities associated with the dominant society. As an Apache bilingual teacher remarks, if children are only learning how to use Apache to order a cheeseburger, what's the point? (Samuels 2006:551). Revitalizing Chiwere, Apache, and other endangered Native American languages seems to require a balance between enabling language learners to order cheeseburgers or play video games and encouraging them to pursue a deeper engagement with ancestral cultural traditions that they will simultaneously transmit and reinvent for future generations. Translation requests present this problem in a particularly condensed form. Recognizing the risks of recontextualization, Jimm and other Siouanists use such requests as an opportunity to exercise a gatekeeping function—controlling access to the language and what it is used for. In the remainder of this chapter, I discuss a more elaborate example of Jimm's translation strategies, focusing on his translation of a Chiwere Trickster story into English that seeks to preserve elements of what he characterizes as the "classical" style of Chiwere storytelling.

## The "Classical" Style

In our conversations, Jimm often referred to one text in particular as an exemplar of what he calls the "classical" style of Chiwere oral narrative. This text is *Hi$^{n}$kúñi* 'My Grandmother' and was collected in Oklahoma from Julia Small by Gordon Marsh in 1936. Julia Small was a monolingual Chiwere speaker, and Marsh transcribed and translated the story with the assistance of Julia's husband, Robert. In the introduction to

his own retranscription and retranslation of the text, Jimm notes that as a monolingual speaker, Julia Small "spoke the language in a classical style of former days" (Goodtracks 1998:2). He praises her "excellent narration," which "exemplifies the fine narrative skills of the older monolingual speakers, who accentuated proper grammatical form with syntax variation to provide an eventful and explicit view of life from the traditional . . . perspective" (Goodtracks 1998:2). Jimm associates the classical style with the monolingual speakers of "former days" and believes that subsequent generations spoke "a more simplified version of the language" as they shifted to English (Goodtracks 1998:2).

Jimm highlights some important features of Julia Small's style, especially her skill in producing complicated verbs. In Jimm's terms, "in classic Báxoje-Jiwére language, speech was customarily compounded and integrated into a single complex" (Goodtracks 1998:2). Like other Siouan languages, Chiwere is "mildly polysynthetic," to borrow Sapir's (1921:150) phrase, especially in its verbal morphology. All verbs mark subject and object person and number. The basic verbal element is the stem, which by itself expresses a third person singular subject for an intransitive verb and a third person singular subject and object for a transitive verb. Complex verbs are generated by adding additional elements to the stem. These include pronominal affixes and various applicatives; reflexive, reciprocal, possessive, and causative affixes; and suffixes expressing mood and aspect. The following example illustrates how adding the benefactive or dative prefix *gi-* to an intransitive verb enables it to gain a participant and be further elaborated (see Goodtracks 2002:5):

> ***yáⁿwe*** 'he/she/it **sings**'
> ***gí****ya*$^{n}$*we* 'he/she/it sings **to/for** him/her/it'

***ra****gíya*$^{n}$*we* '**you** sing to/for him/her/it'
*ragíya*$^{n}$*we****wi*** 'you **all** sing to/for him/her/it'
***wawá****ragiya*$^{n}$*wewi* 'you all sing to/for **us**'
*wawáragiya*$^{n}$*wewi****na*** 'you all **were** sing**ing** to/for us'

According to Jimm, one element of Julia Small's classical style is the presence of long complex verbs like these, which are compounded from many elements. Notably, Jimm does not try to preserve this feature of the classical style in his English translations. To do so would require a radical reimagining of English verbal morphology.

There are other characteristic features of the classical style that Jimm does seek to preserve in translation and that involve modifying English syntactic and aesthetic conventions: "The native narration style is kept in both the Otoe-Missouria and English texts," he writes, "by retaining frequent introductory terms, sentence repetitions and custom evidential statements. . . . At the risk of burdening the reader with unnecessary verbiage, it is hoped that a more accurate insight for the traditional oral rendering will be achieved" (Goodtracks 1998:2). Jimm employs similar language to describe his translation practices in other contexts. For example, in a published collection of translated Native American literature, he characterizes his translation strategy with regard to a different story as follows:

> I retained the Native narration style by including in a free English translation the traditional use of frequent introductory terms ("And then," "Again," "Then," "So then"), sentence repetitions, and formula evidential statements at the end of a unit episode ("it seems," "they say"). Thus, I followed the original rhythm and idiom in retranslating into the current English text and only edited and modified to facilitate comprehension for the English reader. [Goodtracks 2004x:411]

Thus, across a number of literary contexts, Jimm promotes a consistent characterization of the "native" or "traditional" style and demonstrates how it can be translated into

English in a way that preserves important features of that style. Below, I present examples from the *Hiⁿkúñi* text that illustrate these features.

One component of the classical style is the frequent use of discourse markers. Jimm refers to these as "introductory terms" because they are often used to begin sentences, but they can also appear elsewhere in sentences. Sometimes they are related to modality or information structure; at other times they may just be fillers. In the following example, the first sentence begins with a compound of *héda* 'and then' and *aré* 'it is.' In the second sentence, *nahéšge*, *šúⁿ*, and *nahé^šúⁿ* are translated as 'lo!,' 'even,' and 'indeed.'

1. ***Hédare*** *hiⁿkúñi wádàšhguⁿ.* ***Nahéšhge*** *tá wéhayiñe* ***šhúⁿ*** *tá* ***^šhúⁿ*** *warúje dagúre* ***nahé^šhúⁿ*** *wagíwaxuⁿñe.*

   '**And then it is**, my grandmother saw them, it seems. And **lo**, there was dried meat, **even** meat, whatever food **indeed**, they had poured out for them.' [Goodtracks 1998:4]

Jimm emphasizes "sentence repetitions" as a second characteristic of the classical style. On the one hand, this can refer to repetition across sentences as in:

2. *Ñí ráhdàšhguⁿ. Ñí gihdó ráhdàšhguⁿ. Ídare ñí ródadayàⁿšhguⁿ. Ídare háⁿwe thréje ñí ródadayàⁿšhguⁿ.*

   'She drank water, it seems. She drank a lot of water, it seems. And then, she laid down in the water, it seems. And then, all day she laid in the water, it seems.' [Goodtracks 1998:3]

These four consecutive sentences consist of two pairs, in which the second sentence in each pair repeats the information in the first with the addition of a quantifier. Thus, the second sentence reveals that she drank *gihdó* 'a lot' of water (but is otherwise identical to the first sentence), and the fourth sentence reveals that she laid down in the water *háⁿwe thréje* 'all day' (but is otherwise identical to the third sentence).

On the other hand, there is also considerable repetition within sentences. I focus here on two features that produce such repetition: first, the use of demonstratives and motion verbs to convey relative spatial locations and, second, strategies for emphasizing the topic or focus of sentences. Chiwere demonstratives mark spatial deixis with a prefix establishing a reference point and a suffix establishing the proximity of an object (whether it is 'here' or 'there') in relation to that reference point (see Hopkins 1990):

| **Reference** | + | **Proximity** |
|---|---|---|
| 1s 'me' *je-* | | *-gi* 'here' |
| 2s 'you' *se-* | | *-da* 'there' |
| 3p 'us' *i-* | | |

**Examples**
*jegi* 'here, by me'
*seda* 'there, by you'
*igi* 'here, by us'
*ida* 'there, away from us'

Motion verbs like 'come' and 'go' convey spatial deixis in a similar fashion. The following examples involve both demonstratives and motion verbs and thus produce repetition of spatial information in Jimm's English translations:

3. *Hi$^{n}$yúŋe tórigi rač^éda máya$^{n}$* ***jégi így****uwaragrí hñe ke.*

   'My daughter, in the future when you die, you will come back to **this** country **right here**.' [Goodtracks 1998:5]

4. *Idáre* ***ída*** *čhína gríašhgu$^{n}$ ^a.*

   'And then, she arrived back home **there** to the village, it seems.' [Goodtracks 1998:6]

Julia Small also uses repetition to emphasize the topic or focus of her sentences, especially to clarify subjects and objects. The following examples feature emphatic pronouns, which combine with the subjects and objects marked by the verb to produce repetition:

5. *Aré **ríre** rigráwa$^{n}$ ke; hawá$^{n}$ nahé^e.*

   ‘It was **you**, I was calling to you, when I called.’ [Goodtracks 1998:5]

6. *Ádare wóxre grína hi$^{n}$kúñi **éwa**na: “Wayé dírewi je.”*

   ‘And then, she caught up with them, and, my grandmother, **she** was saying: “Who are you?”’ [Goodtracks 1998:6]

In Example 5, *ríre* is the emphatic second person singular pronoun; it precedes a verb with an *ri-* prefix, which expresses a first person subject acting on a second person object. Thus, the second person is repeated (as it happens, this sentence also concludes with a relative clause reiterating the first person subject). In Example 6, the particle *éwa* is an emphatic pronoun for a third person subject. Notice in this example that since Julia Small’s grandmother just joined a larger group, there is potential confusion about who is performing the next action, which the emphatic pronoun clarifies.

Another means of emphasizing the topic or focus and clarifying subjects and objects involves the relation between Chiwere syntax and verbal morphology. Typologically speaking, Chiwere is an SOV language: subjects precede objects, which precede verbs. But since even verb stems already express subject and object person and number, a verb itself can be a complete sentence, given enough context to sort out the pronominal references. In this context, any explicit subject or object in the sentence, even in the proper syntactical position, is a form of repetition with emphatic functions.

7. *Ídare **hi$^{n}$kúñi** uxrégrà*šhgu$^{n}$.

   ‘And then, **my grandmother**, she followed him, going back home, it seems.’ [Goodtracks 1998:5]

   *‘And then, **my grandmother**, he followed her, going back home, it seems.’

8. *Ídare hi$^{n}$kúñi wárudhà*šhgu$^{n}$ ***warúje**.*

‘And then, my grandmother took some, it seems, **the food**.’ [Goodtracks 1998:4]

9. *Aré waxwáda$^{n}$ wíč^are ín$^{n}$grarà̱šhgu$^{n}$* ***wanáxi****.*

   ‘And pitifully I am speaking, (for) she thinks of me, (her) **spirit**, it seems.’ [Goodtracks 1998:7]

In Example 7, context determines whether *hi$^{n}$kúñi* ‘my grandmother’ highlights the subject or object of the sentence. Another syntactical means of clarifying an ambiguity involves placing a subject or object “out of order” at the end of a sentence. In Example 8, the sentence’s final noun makes the object explicit; in Example 9, it is the subject that is emphasized.

The third characteristic of the classical style that Jimm preserves in translation is consistent use of sentence-ending evidentials, which indicate the kinds of evidence a statement is based on. In the opening sentences of the text, each sentence ends with either *ašgu$^{n}$* ‘it seems’ or *áñe* ‘they say’ plus *ki*, the declarative sentence marker for female speakers:

10. W*atóhta págra$^{n}$da gixrárañ****àšhgu$^{n}$****. Čhé kújaràñ****ašhgu$^{n}$****. Hi$^{n}$kúñi mi$^{n}$táwe hí$^{n}$ka ihú$^{n}$ aré, čhimíiñeda wárux****ašhgu$^{n}$****. Gixrá$^{n}$ wóyoge-ráwa****šhgu$^{n}$****. Igrá$^{n}$ gratógre, nahéšhge wogíšhigu jínàŋena wahíreñ****àñe ki****. T^ámàñiñ****àñe ki****. Ídare háhda agúñ****àñe ki****. Hi$^{n}$kúñi mi$^{n}$táwe wáŋe gratógre wahírew****àñe ki****.*

    ‘The Otoes at the first went out hunting, **it seems**. They went to shoot buffalo, **it seems**. My grandmother, my father’s mother, married when she was a girl, **it seems**. They joined the hunt, **it seems**. She and her husband went with them when suddenly disease came and set in, and they were sick, **they say**. They were walking (as) dead, **they said**. And then, they (decided to) to come back, **they said**. My grandmother (of) mine, her man together with him those two were sick, **they say**.’

The particles *ašgu$^{n}$* and *áñe* are used to tell stories the narrator was told by another (in this case, her grandmother) and did not experience him or herself. If Julia Small were

telling a story about her own experiences, she would simply use the declarative sentence marker *ki*.

In this section, I have introduced what Jimm calls the "classical" style of Chiwere storytelling. Following Jimm, I have described the ways in which Julia Small's text exemplifies the classical style by identifying and illustrating three key features that he seeks to preserve in translation through creatively adjusting English syntactic and aesthetic expectations: 1) discourse markers; 2) repetition between and within sentences, including a) the use of demonstratives and motion verbs to repeat spatial information and b) topic/focus repetition using emphatic pronouns and explicit subject and objects; and 3) evidentials. The next section considers how the "classical" style informs Jimm's translation practice, focusing on the story of Trickster and Buzzard.

**Trickster and Buzzard**

I now turn to Jimm's translation of a story known as *Išji$^{n}$ki and Hége*, 'Trickster and Buzzard,' which he prepared for an illustrated collection of Trickster tales, in the style of a graphic novel or comic book. While other Native American tricksters are coyotes, ravens, and other animals, the Central Siouan trickster is usually represented as a man, but he is a shapeshifter and can also take other forms. In Chiwere, Trickster is known as *Išji$^{n}$ki* or sometimes *Wá$^{n}$ša Išji$^{n}$ki*, 'Old Man Trickster'.

Besides the text Jimm prepared for the illustrated collection (JG), there are two earlier versions of the story associated with Chiwere tellers that Jimm used to compile and translate his version. Alanson Skinner (AS) collected a version in Cushing, Oklahoma from Robert Small in 1922, while Skinner was working for the Milwaukee Public Museum. (This is Julia's husband, the same Robert Small mentioned above.) This

version was told for the most part in English with a few Chiwere words and phrases scattered throughout. The resulting text feels more polished than a verbatim transcription; presumably the final wording reflects Skinner's editorial hand.

The only extant Chiwere text (JDC) was collected at the Omaha Agency in Nebraska by James Owen Dorsey from Joseph La Flèsche in 1879, while Dorsey was working for the Smithsonian Institution's Bureau of American Ethnology. La Flèsche was a leader of the Omaha tribe in the latter half of the nineteenth century. The son of a French-Canadian fur trader and a Ponca woman, La Flèsche worked for the American Fur Company before marrying Mary Gale, the daughter of a U.S. Army surgeon and his Iowa wife.

La Flèsche was fluent in Omaha and proficient in a number of other languages, yet his Chiwere narration lacks many of the elements of the classical monolingual style reviewed above. Jimm associates this kind of simplification with multilingualism and language shift. Thus, while La Flèsche was proficient and perhaps even fluent in conversational Chiwere, his fluency in the narrative register associated with storytelling is open to question.[17]

Dorsey himself produced two translations of this text, an initial working draft and a revised draft intended for publication. The initial draft (JD1) is characterized by an extremely literal sensibility, exemplified by its rendering of *Išji$^{n}$ki* as 'monkey' (in Chiwere monkeys are named after Trickster, but while monkeys may be *išji$^{n}$ki*s, *Išji$^{n}$ki* himself is no monkey). The revised translation (JD2) provides more of a sense-for-sense

[17] The Omaha texts Dorsey collected from La Flèsche do include these "missing" features as does the Omaha version of "Trickster and Buzzard" that Dorsey collected from another informant (Dorsey 1890:74-78).

rendition. At the risk of confusing matters more, I have also included my own gloss (SS) as a guide to the Chiwere.

The translation strategies that produced Jimm's version are both more literal and more liberal than the sources from which it was compiled and translated. In Jimm's view, none of the source texts adequately capture the original text as it would have been narrated by a monolingual speaker. Thus, a new original had to be reimagined and retranslated. In a sense, Jimm's English translation is the most stylistically traditional version of the story, more traditional even than the 1879 Chiwere text, because it presents the story as it would have been told in "the classical style of former days."

## Trickster in Translation[18]

Consider the opening lines of Trickster and Buzzard:

> JG: **And so**, Ishjinki would go about wearing a robe of raccoon skins, **they say**. Ishjinki **arrived over there**, at a place where Buzzard was residing.
>
> AS: As Îshjî´nki was travelling he came to a place where he saw a buzzard flying above him.
>
> JD1: And the monkey wore a robe of raccoon skins. And when the buzzard was flying there, the monkey said, "Grandfather, pity me."
>
> JD2: Ictciñke wore a robe of raccoon skins. When saw the Buzzard flying, he said, "Grandfather, pity me!"
>
> JDC: *Áñe Išjiⁿki mína naŋášge miŋké ha xúha miⁿ k^íⁿ. Edá Hége idá git^áⁿ máñišge Išjiⁿki, "Hiⁿtugá, nat^úhiⁿdáⁿ re," é.*
>
> SS: 'Once, when Trickster was around, a raccoon skin robe he wore. Then when Buzzard there was flying, Trickster: "My grandfather, pity me!" he said.'

To start at the beginning, Jimm renders the discourse marker *áñe* 'and so.' By Jimm's own dictionary's definition, this is a very literal way of translating this word. In his

[18] For JG, see Goodtracks and Macheras 2010; for AS, see Skinner 1925:486-487; for JDC, JD1, and JD2, see Dorsey n.d.b, n.d.c.

dictionary, Jimm defines *áñe* as 'and' or 'then'; he also notes its function as a filler (like 'um'); finally, he notes: "it is used at the beginning of a topic or sentence, especially when relating an incident or telling a story; at such times it could be rendered as 'Once there was...' or 'Once upon a time....'" As an example sentence, the entry includes the first line of another story Jimm translated, in which *áñe* is given as "once there was" (2007b:6). While this discourse marker is included in JD1 (the "monkey" text) as 'and,' it is missing from Dorsey's revised text. No discourse marker is present in Skinner's English text. Unlike Dorsey and Skinner, Jimm considers it essential to include these particles since they characterize the classical style.

Alongside this literal rendering, Jimm also makes two additions in his translation, supplementing his source texts with classical features. First, he ends the opening sentence with the evidential *áñe*, 'they say,' which appears in no other version, including the Chiwere. Second, in contrast to Dorsey's text, Jimm follows Skinner in having Trickster travel to Buzzard (rather than Buzzard flying to Trickster). Jimm replaces Skinner's "he came to a place" with "Ishjinki arrived over there, at a place," inserting a demonstrative reflecting the classical concern with relative spatial relations and the repetition of spatial information. In other words, whether translating interlingually from Dorsey's Chiwere into English or intralingually from Skinner's English into his own, Jimm inserts classical elements unattested in the source texts.

The next few sentences display a similar pattern. In this scene, Trickster is talking to Buzzard, and the text is Trickster's quoted dialogue:

> JG: "**My** grandfather, when you fly, **surely**, up above **there**, **you, you** are enjoying yourself. There is nothing which will hurt you. In soaring high, you are seeing a lot of land. **My** grandfather, have pity on me. **I want to walk just as you walk**."

> AS: "Oh grandpa," exclaimed Îshjî´nki, "how you must enjoy yourself up there in the air. There is nothing that can hurt you and you can see everywhere. I wish I could get up as high as that, and see as far you as do!"
>
> JD1: "Grandfather, pity me. I wish to walk just as you walk" (i.e., "I wish to fly," or, "I wish to go with you." The monkey wished to get across a river. See the Omaha version of this fable).
>
> JD2: "Grandfather, pity me! I wish to go with you."
>
> JDC: *"Hiⁿtugá, nat^úhiⁿdáⁿ re," é. "Ramáñišna šáre igú^uⁿ hamáñi hagúⁿta ke," é.*
>
> SS: "My grandfather, pity me!" he said. "The way you travel, like that I travel, I want," he said.

The first three sentences of Jimm's text (until "pity me") have Skinner as their source. Jimm has added "*my*" in "my grandfather," "surely," and the subject repetition "you, you" to what he found in Skinner's text. In the "surely" and "you, you," we recognize an imported discourse marker and topic/focus reinforcement. "My grandfather," on the other hand, is a literal way of rendering *hiⁿtugá*, a compound of the first person possessive prefix *hiⁿ-* 'my' and *itúga* 'his/her/its grandfather.' In Chiwere, kinship terms are inalienable and thus always include a possessive prefix; there is no way to say 'a grandfather,' for example. Since Trickster uses *hiⁿtugá* as a form of address in the context of his conversation with Buzzard, both Dorsey and Skinner use just "grandfather." Similarly, when Jimm returns to the Chiwere text, he selects a very literal translation of *Ramáñišna šáre igú^uⁿ hamáñi hagúⁿta ke* as 'I want to walk just as you walk.' This translation is so literal that Dorsey couldn't even include it his initial draft without a parenthetical clarification and reference to a parallel Omaha text, and Dorsey completely removed 'I want to walk just as you walk' from his revised translation; it is essentially a kind of calque.

Examples could be multiplied, but Jimm's translation strategy remains the same: seeking to render the story in the classical style, Jimm translates his source texts literally (word-for-word rather than sense-for-sense), then inserts features from Julia Small's exemplar, including discourse markers, spatial deictic markers, topic/focus reinforcement, and evidentials.

Given that Jimm's version reflects both comprehensive compilation of source texts plus supplementation from a classical exemplar, it is perhaps surprising to observe what is left out. Most notably, the climax of the story is represented only by a visual illustration; the key line in the text is omitted. After Trickster convinces Buzzard to give him a ride, Buzzard tips Trickster off his back, down into a hollow tree. Trickster, trapped inside, hears some women passing by and pushes his robe's raccoon tails through cracks in the tree. The women chop a hole in the tree in order to get to the raccoons inside, only to find Trickster, who escapes. Trickster then plans his revenge. He pretends to be a dead elk and recruits some small birds to eat a hole in the carcass's rump, showing fat within. Buzzard joins the feast and pecks around. Enticed by the exposed fat on the rump, he puts his head deep inside the hole made by the other birds. Just then, Trickster springs his trap—the hole is his anus, which he squeezes tight, trapping Buzzard's head in his rectum. Trickster rises, and with Buzzard suspended from his buttocks, tells him that what goes around comes around. After a long time, Trickster releases Buzzard. When he finally emerges, his head feathers are gone. And that is why Buzzard's head is bald.

Here is a comparison of the story's climax in the different versions:

JG: [No text.]

AS: All at once Îshjî´nki closed the opening. "Now I've got you," he exclaimed, and walked off with buzzard dangling from his buttocks.

> JD2: When he [Buzzard] had put his head fairly in, up rose Ictciñke, squeezing the Buzzard's head.
>
> JDC: *Ugwé rešgé, náyina pá arúthaⁿje*.
>
> SS: 'When he [Buzzard] was entering, he [Trickster] stood and [Buzzard's] head squeezed.'

The word in the Chiwere text, *arúthaⁿje*, does not only mean 'squeeze.' In his archived notes on Chiwere lexicography, Dorsey defines the term as: "to pull together the fingers enclosing something between them, as in playing 'Crow's nest;' said of one riding a horse, when he brings his legs tight against the horse's side" (Dorsey n.d.a). This connotation of squeezing-while-riding may be significant: after all, the story begins with Trickster riding Buzzard but in a much different way. In any case, Jimm's version only hints at the climax visually and elides the text completely. How should we understand this elision?

**Untranslation, Translated**

In order to begin to interpret this elision, to translate this untranslation, it is necessary to say a word about genres of Chiwere stories. Traditional Chiwere oral narratives are divided into two categories: *wékaⁿ*, literally 'something sacred or holy,' and *wórage*, 'something told or recounted.' Broadly speaking, *wékaⁿ* are myths, while *wórage* are oral histories. *Wékaⁿ* are set in the distant past and concern immortal characters with extraordinary spiritual powers. *Wékaⁿ* comprises a number of different genres or cycles, including creation stories, clan origin myths, the Trickster cycle, the Rabbit cycle, etc. *Wórage* are set in a specific historical period and concern ordinary humans. The classical exemplar discussed above, Julia Small's *Hiⁿkúñi*, is a *wórage* since it is a story about Small's grandmother.

Traditionally, the social contexts for telling *wéka*$^{n}$ and *wórage* were distinct. While *wórage* could be told anytime, *wéka*$^{n}$ could only be told during the winter (or when snakes, *waká*$^{n}$, literally 'something holy,' were underground) and in response to a formal request involving a *wat^úna*—a gift, usually of tobacco—that precipitated the exchange of different kinds of ceremonial or otherwise restricted knowledge. Skinner reports that one of his informants told him that her own mother would only tell her these stories after a gift of tobacco and a meal (1925:426). In this connection, we can recall the circumstances under which Paul Radin obtained his text of the Winnebago Trickster cycle for his classic study *The Trickster* (1956). Radin's informant's father knew the myth but did not have the right to tell it to his own children. At Radin's instigation, his informant approached another individual, presented him with tobacco and other gifts and recorded the narrative in the Winnebago syllabary. Radin writes, "There were a number of reasons, into which I cannot enter here, why it was inadvisable for me to ask, the most important being that the myth was a sacred one and that I was a stranger and a white man" (1956:111-112).

Jimm would tell *wéka*$^{n}$ while we drove across the Plains in all seasons, but as he explained to me on one occasion, he would always leave out something since I never presented him with a formal request and *wat^úna*. In this way, he did not technically tell *wéka*$^{n}$ and therefore protected us both from potential harm (since spiritual knowledge is believed to be dangerous if is circulated improperly).

At the same time, however, Jimm and others cited these restrictions on the circulation of knowledge as playing a role in the decline and disappearance of Chiwere language and culture. Recent generations, even those interested in traditional culture and

language, did not know how to ask, and elders did not know how to tell them how to ask. Elders began taking their knowledge with them when they passed away. Jimm's willingness to share the Trickster and Buzzard *wéka*$^{n}$ in a publication is part of his broader program of publicizing Chiwere language and culture: instead of waiting until he's asked in the "proper" way, he shares without being asked in order to interest and educate tribal members and broader publics. Better to circulate, his thinking goes, than to let disappear.

By leaving out a crucial scene in his translation, however, Jimm is perhaps not only not technically telling *wéka*$^{n}$ but also retaining some control over the text in the face of the unrestricted circulation of the book, which can be purchased by anyone. This is ultimately, I want to propose, a kind of *moral* control. Making sense of Trickster's excess is not only an interpretive dilemma for anthropologists; it is also an interpretive challenge for those who tell and hear Trickster tales. Radin reports that while some traditional Winnebago saw Trickster as a hero, others (members of the then-recent Native American Church) saw him as the Devil—thus, the conventional interpretation of Trickster as, in some sense, uninterpretable. Trickster is essentially ambiguous, representing the ambiguity of life itself and the ambiguous potential within each individual.

Despite this ambiguity at the heart of interpreting Trickster, Jimm was concerned that casual readers could draw false and negative conclusions about Chiwere culture from episodes like the climax of Trickster and Buzzard, due to what he saw as a shift in worldview from the deceased monolingual Chiwere elders to today's monolingual English tribal members. Jimm often talked about how the "old folks" or "elders" of his generation would respond to Trickster's misadventures with a kind of "innocent"

amusement that contrasts with today's raunchy sensibilities. In particular, he remembers them laughing in this way at incidents involving Trickster's penis.

When Trickster was a boy, he had a very long penis, so long that his grandfather made a covering for it from a raccoon skin. When Trickster would set out on an adventure, he would wrap his penis in the coonskin and throw it over his shoulder, packing it on his back as he went along. His penis was so long that it once reached across a river to enter a woman swimming on the other side. Another time, when Trickster was sleeping, he had an erection; upon waking, his coonskin penis covering was hoisted so high in the air that he mistook the "flying raccoon" for a buzzard. Eventually, his penis is bitten down to normal human size by a ground squirrel; Trickster collects and names the pieces bitten off, which become various fruits: berries, grapes, plums, and acorns. Here, Trickster emerges in his culture heroic aspect (Skinner 1925:482, 485-486, 494-495).

While the image of Trickster slinging his penis over his shoulder and starting out on a journey was a source of innocent amusement for previous generations, Jimm believes that audiences today would misinterpret these images. I cannot claim to completely understand the distinction myself, but perhaps an observation from Radin comes close: "Laughter, humour and irony permeate everything Trickster does. *The reactions of the audience in aboriginal societies to both him and his exploits is prevailingly one of laughter tempered by awe*. There is no reason for believing this is secondary or a late development. Yet it is difficult to say whether the audience is laughing at him, at the tricks he plays on others, or at the implications his behaviour and activities have for them" (1956:xxiv, emphasis mine). This notion of laughter "tempered by awe" is perhaps the kind of respectful laughter Jimm remembers. Perhaps it is an

absence of awe (and even a certain contempt) that engenders a different kind of amusement in more recent generations, who take for granted ideas about bodies and sin derived from "outside" sources like missionaries and popular culture. This seems related to the belief that there are no "bad words" in Chiwere; words that seem bad only appear this way because of their English connotations. Elision, then, is a way of controlling interpretation in a context of uncontrolled circulation by obscuring potentially problematic material.

Ironically, one of the ways that Jimm does this is through Chiwere language itself. His version of Ishjinki and Shell Spitter, another *wéka*$^{n}$ that is part of the Trickster cycle, ends in this way:

> "Ishjínki, he kept right on singing with his hands raised upward, his mouth open to bolster his voice and song, while everyone continued to look upward. All at once, *Ichí*$^{n}$*doiñe Ishjí*$^{n}$*ki í*$^{n}$*je ayéthri-na héda inúha*$^{n}$ *mangrídagu*$^{n}$ *git^a*$^{n}$*^àšgu*$^{n}$*, Ichí*$^{n}$*doiñe*.[19] And then, indeed, the young servant rose skyward again until he was out of sight. And it is said that he went into the moon."

It would be relatively simple to decode this phrase from a semantic perspective with a grammar sketch and dictionary and the necessary linguistic background to use them. But clearly that is not what is at stake here. It is not the code but the code switching that needs decoding, requiring a pragmatic approach to language.

In some of his translations of traditional narratives, Jimm "masks" certain passages in Chiwere both to protect sensitive material from misinterpretation and to encourage readers to learn the language. By now, it may not be surprising to learn that this is not original, untranslated Chiwere showing through; this story is only extant in English texts. Jimm backtranslated from Skinner's English to create a Chiwere

[19] Skinner has "All at once the orphan servant evacuated right in Îshjî´nki's face and rose up out of sight" (1925:494).

"original": his strategic untranslation is produced by translation. The sentence also contains some elements of Jimm's signature rendition of the "classical" style, such as the evidential *ašgu*$^{n}$ 'it seems' and the final repetition of the subject, *Ichi*$^{n}$*doiñe* 'the young man.'

Jimm got this idea, he told me, from a missionary practice of leaving some parts of texts untranslated or written in Greek or Latin so that only others who knew the language would be able to understand what they were saying. By leaving one sentence "untranslated," Jimm transfers responsibility for being a cultural gatekeeper to the language itself—the operative assumption being that anyone who knows enough of the language to understand what is literally happening in the *wéka*$^{n}$ will also be able to understand it in an appropriate cultural context. Here language indexes cultural understanding, but in communities in which few people understand the language, language can be used to protect culture.

Jimm's translation practices blur the kind of rigid distinction between originals and translations found in documentary linguistics literature. His intertextual comparison, compilation, supplementation and synthesis, plus his calques, additions, and elisions, are all techniques grounded in an act of imagination—imagining what a Chiwere text of Trickster and Buzzard would look like if someone like Julia Small had told it, and then translating that imagined text into a Chiwere-influenced English to share with modern readers. Yet, as with the requests he receives to translate English words and phrases into Chiwere, there are some elements of Trickster myths that he refuses to translate, elides, leaves untranslated, or translates in order to make them appear untranslated. These practices are based on the idea that such passages cannot be translated into English with

their original connotations intact; they are too dangerous to circulate in an unrestricted way because they will be misunderstood. In this way, Jimm is both following a tradition and producing a tradition; he is creating a border by crossing it. This is, of course, the classic work of Trickster. From Paul Radin to Lewis Hyde, Trickster has been interpreted as ambiguous but also creative. Since Trickster is undifferentiated, as a symbol he "contains within itself the promise of differentiation," as Radin puts it (1956:168). Similarly, Lewis Hyde describes Trickster as a boundary-crosser and boundary-creator, "the god of the threshold" (1998:8). In translating Trickster tales, Jimm is something of a trickster himself.

## Conclusion: Translation and Indigenous Literature

Jimm's tricky translations reflect the fact that his goals exceed documentation in a narrow sense. Jimm is less interested in creating archival objects than in using archival objects as inspirations for promoting new possibilities for transmitting Chiwere language and culture. By way of conclusion, I sketch his style of presenting Chiwere oral literature in translation as an alternative to polarized debates surrounding the politics of language in indigenous literature.

In general, literature offers a particularly productive site for examining debates among indigenous people about the relation between language and culture. Ojibwe anthropologist, novelist, and literary critic David Treuer (2006) and Kenyan Agĩkũyũ author Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o (1986), for example, have both argued that Native American and African literatures, respectively, cannot be written in colonial languages like English and French; both authors have turned to writing in their heritage languages as a form of decolonization. Of course, these authors are only compelled to make these arguments

because others disagree: for every Treuer there is a Louise Erdrich, an Ojibwe author who writes predominantly in English. For every Ngũgĩ, there is a Chinua Achebe or Gabriel Okara; Achebe wrote of "a new English" capable of expressing his "African experience," while Okara wrote of "a Nigerian or West African English which we can use to express our own ideas, thinking, and philosophy in our own way" (quoted in Ngũgĩ 1986:8-9). Similarly, some Navajo poets insist that English is a Navajo language; thus Webster argues that "speaking and writing in a Navajo way . . . does not necessarily presuppose speaking something called 'Navajo'" (2011:63). Yet, many Navajos (as well as outsiders) consider the kind of Navajo English that Webster valorizes to be "a deficient and dysfluent way of speaking and writing" (2011:63). In short, for every author who believes that it is necessary to write in their heritage language in order to communicate their distinctive cultural experiences, there is another author writing in a similar context who believes that another language can be adapted to serve the needs of their unique cultural expression.

David Treuer grew up on the Leech Lake Reservation in northern Minnesota and studied anthropology and creative writing at Princeton before getting a PhD in anthropology from the University of Michigan. Currently a professor in the English Department at the University of Southern California, Treuer has published three novels, a nonfiction account of reservation life, and a collection of literary criticism. In *Native American Fiction: A User's Manual*, Treuer argues that "Native American fiction does not exist" (2006:195). Novels, he claims, are grounded in an artistic literary tradition that is separate from Indian cultural traditions, and instead of reading beyond the text and posing questions about whether writers describe authentic Indian experiences, we should

evaluate literature by Native Americans in the same way that we evaluate all other literature, which means focusing on style and its creative effects.

Treuer's own argument, however, leads him to make the very judgments about authenticity he claims to avoid (2006:4, 198). In order to show us that the novels he describes are derived more from a Western literary tradition than from anything Native, he commits himself to defending a notion of authentic Indian culture. His interpretations attend to the sophisticated techniques authors use to "create the convincing semblance of culture on the page" (2006:5,198) and insist on "a distinction between reading books *as* culture and seeing books as capable of *suggesting* culture" (2006:5). In other words, Treuer sees his role as distinguishing things that merely "look Indian or seem cultural" from things that really do come from Indian cultures.

Treuer dedicates his book to his brother Anton, also a Princeton alumnus, for his "efforts to save and promote the Ojibwe language." This clues us into Treuer's position that indigenous languages are essential for authentic Indian cultures. Indeed, Treuer's views on language and culture become clear in his discussion of Louise Erdrich's 1984 novel *Love Medicine*. Treuer's goal is to show us that Erdrich's novel possess only the "semblance of culture" and exhibits no real cultural resonance.

Treuer uses an oral Trickster myth in Ojibwe as his standard for traditional storytelling (2006:50-52), so it is unsurprising that he finds "the larger Ojibwe oral tradition incredibly remote from Erdrich's structure, style, and content" (2006:55-56). Treuer also analyzes Erdrich's use of Ojibwe in her novels. He finds that when her characters codeswitch, they make unrealistic mistakes that reflect Erdrich's lack of knowledge about the language (2006:57). He also finds that she makes "syntactical

concessions" to English (2006:60): she adds English articles to Ojibwe words that do not need them, and adds English locatives to Ojibwe words that already have them. He concludes that Erdrich uses Ojibwe words for "ornament" or "display" (2006:61-62); she focuses on "what it means to speak Ojibwe" rather than "what Ojibwe . . . means" (2006:202).

Since Ojibwe serves a *symbolic* function in Erdrich's work, Treuer argues that her novels are about the longing that is characteristic of a state of separation from culture. "What we have in *Love Medicine*," he writes, "is a brilliant use of Western literary tactics that create, in gorgeous English prose, a portrait of a culture. Instead of cultural desire what we have in *Love Medicine* is the desire for culture. Culture, as represented by Ojibwe words, is what the characters want. That they fetishize this or that word—and that those words don't communicate anything, rather they signify something—shows how culture is an idea that the characters don't possess but want to possess" (2006:65, 56).

Treuer has taken his argument beyond literature, arguing in an opinion piece in the *Washington Post*, for example, that Native American cultures depend on indigenous languages. Without their distinctive languages, "American Indian" becomes just another ethnicity, like Irish American, Italian American, etc. He writes, "at some point . . . a culture ceases to be a culture and becomes an ethnicity—that is, it changes from a life system that develops its own terms into one that borrows, almost completely, someone else's;" "to claim that Indian cultures can continue without Indian languages only hastens our end, even if it makes us feel better about ourselves" (Treuer 2008).

Of course, as Treuer notes, Ojibwe is one of the few Native American languages predicted to survive the coming century. It is impossible to ignore the interested position

from which he speaks, linking language to culture in a manner that threatens the cultural and potentially political integrity of other Native communities but not his own. After all, if English monolingual American Indians are only superficially different from Irish and Italian Americans ("instead of 'fry bread,' insert 'corned beef,' and instead of . . . 'smallpox-infested blankets,' say 'potato famine'—and you arrive at a completely different ethnicity" [Treuer 2008]), why should they possess a political and legal status that Irish and Italian Americans have no access to?

Treuer's writings illustrate how debates about the politics of language in indigenous literature can scale up rather quickly to fundamental issues regarding the politics of recognition for indigenous communities. Jimm's translations of Chiwere literature, however, would seem to trouble attempts by Treuer and others to construct an exclusive association between Native American literary traditions, cultures, and identities and indigenous languages. Jimm's translations, after all, "preserve" aspects of a style of storytelling that are not present in the "original." Jimm's translation strategies point toward alternative possibilities for linguistic and cultural transmission and revitalization that transcend original/translation distinctions and the "Herderian conceit in which glottonymically nameable languages map onto ethnonymically nameable peoples" (Webster 2011:63). Rather than seeking to isolate Native American languages from interlingual influence, authors and translators like Jimm and Erdrich show that linguistic hybridity, in forms like Chiwere-influenced English and English-influenced Ojibwe, can create cultural desire and transmit cultural traditions for members of Native American communities experiencing language shift. In the following chapter, I continue to explore these themes in relation to Native American language policy and advocacy.

# Chapter 7

## "Culture" and the Native American Languages Act

In 2009, the Otoe-Missouria tribal newsletter published an article by the tribe's language coordinator with the title "Moving Forward." The article reported that the Administration for Native Americans (ANA) had revoked further funding for the tribe's federal language preservation grant after an initial assessment found no fluent speakers in the community. "It is written in black & white and recorded that the . . . Tribe has no 'FLUENT' native speakers left," the language coordinator wrote. "I think everyone already knew this, deep in their hearts, but just didn't want to hear it" (Whitehorn 2009:4).

While Ioways and Otoe-Missourias continue to use Chiwere in certain contexts, most authoritative scholarly sources place the last fluent speakers in the 1990s (Lewis et al. 2013; Parks and Rankin 2001). Since fluency is in the ear of the hearer, other dates for the last Chiwere speaker can be found, but the lack of fluent Chiwere speakers has been published academic knowledge for over a decade and implicit knowledge in the relevant communities for some time. Nevertheless, linguists and tribal members continued to hope that more speakers would be located, and linguists chased rumors of surviving speakers in the Oklahoma communities in the early 2000s with no success. In the tribal newsletter, however, the language coordinator made the lack of speakers explicit, public knowledge as a result of tribal participation in a federal grant program and associated enumerative practices.

Congress approved federal funding for language preservation following the

Native American Languages Act of 1990 (NALA 1990), which made it "the policy of the United States to . . . preserve, protect, and promote the rights and freedom of Native Americans to use, practice, and develop Native American languages" (25 USC § 2901). The Native American Languages Act of 1992 (NALA 1992) implemented the 1990 policy statement by establishing the ANA Native American Language Preservation and Maintenance grant program, which until 2014 would not fund projects to revive languages without "living speakers" (Department of Health and Human Services 2013a:32, 2013b:42). Since the Otoe-Missouria Tribe was unable to identify any speakers, the ANA ended their grant after the assessment.

In this chapter, I discuss this event and its wider policy and community contexts in terms of the language/culture equation. Language/culture equations are statements that make language an essential part of culture or make language preservation a condition of cultural continuity; they are prominent in many advocacy and policy contexts related to endangered and minority languages (Jaffe 2007; Muehlmann 2008; Woodbury 1993:102-103, 1998). A typical example comes from the Enduring Voices project, a collaboration between National Geographic and Living Tongues:

> Language defines a culture, through the people who speak it and what it allows speakers to say. Words that describe a particular cultural practice or idea may not translate precisely into another language. Many endangered languages have rich oral cultures with stories, songs, and histories passed on to younger generations, but no written forms. With the extinction of a language, an entire culture is lost. [National Geographic 2014]

This is an example of a language/culture equation because it draws what Jaffe calls an "essentialist" connection between language and culture, in which their "content . . . and iconic relationships are seen as fixed, ascribed/natural and unproblematic" (2007:58). One consequence of such discourse is that language shift is equated with cultural loss.

The argument for language preservation from the inadequacy of translation is also widespread.

Taking NALA discourse as my primary example, I propose that intertextual strategies identified by linguistic anthropologists, in connection with performance and genre analysis (Bauman and Briggs 1990; Briggs and Bauman 1992), play a key role in producing consensus among diverse policy participants on language/culture equations. But language/culture equations can also alienate indigenous audiences, particularly those from communities without fluent heritage language speakers. I argue that "Moving Forward," which proposes that the tribe abandon language revitalization, represents a meaningful and productive response to language loss in the context of NALA discourse and implementation. I conclude by considering the cultural implications of the ANA's recent decision to remove the funding restriction on projects to revive languages without speakers. Now all tribes, including the Otoe-Missouria, are eligible to apply for federal language preservation funding; however, this new inclusiveness may stifle, under the guise of "preservation," the very forms of cultural creativity that sustain all living traditions.

## "Moving Forward"

At the time that "Moving Forward" was published, I was working with Jimm Goodtracks's Ioway, Otoe-Missouria Language Project. According to Jimm, previous generations of tribal elders wanted their language and culture to continue into the future, thus his Project works to "preserve traditions, cultural knowledge, oral history and language from the late . . . elders for succeeding generations" (Goodtracks n.d.). The Project's mission statement frames language preservation as an individual and family

responsibility: “it is the role of each descendent to continue it further among their own family and relations” (Goodtracks n.d.). In a sense, the desire of the last fluent speakers for their language to survive motivates and authorizes the Project’s work to promote proper intergenerational relations through language preservation (and vice versa); statements from the elders to this effect feature prominently in project materials (see Chapter 4). A language learning booklet, for example, ends with a prayer in Chiwere from a late elder that is translated into English as: “I do not want the Ioway language to be lost. May the Lord give us wisdom and strength and direct us in our effort to preserve it. My desire is that the children use their language and get good out of it and that the language lives on” (GoodTracks 2004:19). Thus, when “Moving Forward” reached the the Project, it was received with confusion and concern—not because it announced that there were “no ‘FLUENT’ native speakers left” (according to Jimm, the last fluent speakers died in 1996), but because it proposed that the Otoe-Missouria community abandon the Project’s primary goal of preserving Chiwere.

After reporting the results of the first and final phase of the ANA grant, the Otoe-Missouria language coordinator proceeded to outline a plan for the future. He proposed that the tribe approve a “Cultural/Language Protection Ordinance,” which he had drafted with the help of a tribal lawyer. The Ordinance included a Proclamation declaring, “‘traditional language’ is in the past and put to rest with dignity and respect.” The language coordinator explained that language revival would be unsuccessful without speakers since teaching Chiwere would involve “a linguistic format, where add-ons and mere guessing of interpretation is the norm.” He was also concerned that language documentation and revitalization could lead to the improper circulation and exploitation

of tribal heritage, especially ceremonial knowledge, and he reported that some tribal members disapproved of what was available online (Whitehorn 2009:4). The goals of the "Culture/Language Protection Ordinance," then, were twofold: 1) to discourage further revival efforts by declaring traditional language "in the past" and "put to rest" and 2) to prevent, in the author's words, "unintentional exploitation of any degree in any form about our cultural/language," which "could prove devastating to the true meaning of our heritage" (Whitehorn 2009:4).

The coordinator then considered how the community could "renew the sense of belonging to a very special tribe" by remembering "the struggles of our people, past to present, in which our God-given culture and beliefs guided us to our present day existence." He announced an event designed to promote this sense of belonging through collective remembrance and asked community members to bring in photos and other historic objects to share with the community. "Many times we look for Otoe history in museums we visit and find very little," he wrote. "All the history is probably in our own possession." A traditional supper, raffle, and hand game would follow the show and tell, and the event would end with a Native American Church meeting to "commemorate . . . tribal fellowship and [the] 'Traditional Language Proclamation.'" He concluded: "I believe we may be the only tribe to have such a respectful historic event in honor of our ancient language. Always remember that we still have our Otoe-Missouria songs and prayers" (Whitehorn 2009:4).

Until "Moving Forward," Jimm had seen the Otoe-Missouria language coordinator as an ally in his efforts. The previous summer, the coordinator had even invited Jimm to participate in language-related teacher training for the tribal Head Start

program. Following "Moving Forward," however, it was clear that the two organizations were diverging in methods and goals. For Jimm, "moving forward" meant language documentation and revitalization drawing on linguistic methods; for the language coordinator, it meant recognizing that Chiwere was "in the past and put to rest" since linguistic methods were illegitimate and could lead to the exploitation of tribal heritage. Regardless of the author's intention, those associated with Jimm's Project interpreted the coordinator's article as an implicit critique, wondering if his comment that tribal members disapproved of what was available online was an oblique reference to the Project's website. And why was a tribal lawyer involved in drafting the "Cultural/Language Protection Ordinance"? Would such a document have legal force? Could it be used to interfere with the Project's ongoing work?

The article even caused a minor stir at the following summer's Siouan Languages Conference. When a self-identified "white linguist" employed by a tribal language program used the phrase "making up words" to describe her efforts to create new terms for recent technologies, an Ioway tribal member in the audience responded: "Maybe you could say something like 'building words,' because when you say you're 'making up words' that gives people the wrong idea. You know, the Otoe language coordinator came up here last year, and now he's writing in the tribal newsletter that linguists just make it all up as they go. So it's important to be careful with what words you use to describe what you're doing." The presenter acknowledged that there are better phrases than "making up words" to describe lexical formation based on derivation or compounding.

For my part, the article led me to reconsider my own assumptions about productive responses to language shift. Because I was working with Jimm, I had

internalized some of his ideologies and discourses about language and culture. But in "Moving Forward," I encountered a radically different perspective. The way the author presented a "sense of belonging" as emerging from "God-given culture and beliefs" and particularly religious rituals reminded me more of Durkheim's (1995[1912]) work than anything I had read in the literature on language preservation.

Following a long process of domain contraction, Chiwere was used primarily in religious contexts by 1950 (Davidson 1997; Furbee and Stanley 1996, 2002). This resonates with my own observations since 2008. Besides interactions explicitly framed as language learning, I have seen and heard Chiwere used often for endonyms, salutations, valedictions, alimentation (especially water and common or traditional foods), elimination, kinship terms, personal names, and tribal programs. Some tribal members incorporate Chiwere into their personal or professional activities, especially if they are involved in art, music, or activism.[20] Like the Arizona Tewa (Kroskrity 1998), however, various religious settings are the most prestigious domains for Chiwere and other indigenous language use in Iowa and Otoe-Missouria communities today, including in Native American Church meetings, ceremonial dances, sweat lodges, and personal prayers.

"Moving Forward" places a particular emphasis on the Native American Church, a religion integrating Indian and Christian elements that reached the southern plains in the late nineteenth century. Indeed, the author of "Moving Forward" is descended from

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[20] Examples of tribal programs with Chiwere titles include the Otoe-Missouria tribal newsletter, *Wórage: Stories of the People*, and the Iowa Tribe of Oklahoma's eagle sanctuary, <Bah Kho-je Xla Chi> (*Báxoje Xrá Chí*). For examples of Chiwere use by individual tribal members, see art, essays, and websites by Lance Foster (1989, 1996, 1999, 2009, n.d.a, n.d.b, n.d.c), an album by artist and musician Reuben Kent (2004), Jones 2004, and Brett Ramey's (n.d.) website.

the first Otoe roadman (someone authorized to conduct Native American Church ceremonies), Charles Whitehorn; as anthropologist Jill Davidson observed in the 1990s, "the Whitehorn name still carries respect among the Otoes for Charles' leadership" (Davidson 1997:79 ff., 212).

While some peyote songs have Chiwere words interspersed between vocables, many participants do not know what these words mean, or else they memorize their meanings. In 1990, in the course of her research on Chiwere peyote songs, Davidson was given a list of songs glossed in English that one of her consultants used "as an aid for learning the meaning of songs." "This is . . . interesting," Davidson writes, "since it shows that there was a need for providing accurate glosses for a middle-aged Otoe-Missouria man who had become very interested in all tribal things, including the language" (1997:520). Once I heard of a meeting where, when it came time to sing the morning song, one participant, confused by an unfortunate pair of English homophones, began singing a mourning song instead. "If these younger ones knew some of the language," I was told, "that wouldn't happen." Nevertheless, as these examples demonstrate, it is not necessary to know Chiwere in order to participate in meetings or sing peyote songs that include Chiwere words.

This is a relatively common phenomenon in communities where language shift leads to the contraction and concentration of heritage language use in religious domains, e.g. the role of Latin in the Catholic Church or the way many American Jews memorize or read (in the sense of sounding out) Hebrew for ritual purposes without understanding what the words mean. The emphasis "Moving Forward" places on the Native American Church, then, is entirely compatible with keeping traditional language "in the past and

put to rest" as a language of profane communication. Indeed, in the view of the language coordinator, it is precisely the association of Chiwere language with ceremonies that makes documentation and revitalization inappropriate. [21]

Given that the lack of fluent speakers makes language revival impossible, "Moving Forward" presents shared traditional religious beliefs and practices as a replacement for heritage language. Religious beliefs, in lieu of Chiwere, cultivates "the sense of belonging to a very special tribe." Collectively "put[ting the language] to rest with dignity and respect" becomes an opportunity to display everything else that brings the community together: the "struggles of our people," "God-given culture and beliefs," "history," and "songs and prayers." Though Otoe-Missouria songs and prayers may include some Chiwere language, the clear emphasis of "Moving Forward" is on moving community identity away from Chiwere language use and toward shared historical experience, cultural practice, and religious ritual. While I continue to work with Jimm on Chiwere documentation and revitalization, I have also come to believe that leaving a heritage language "in the past" and cultivating other sources of solidarity is a meaningful response to language loss, especially in the context of Native American language policy in the United States today.

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[21] It is worth noting that anthropologists like Davidson (1997) are not the only ones circulating Chiwere peyote songs. Iowas and Otoe-Missourias themselves do so, including in commercial contexts. For example, McClellan, Robedeaux and Stoner (2005, 2006, 2008) have released three albums of Native American Church songs on Canyon Records that include sixteen Otoe peyote songs. Native American Church participants recommended this group to me because their recordings sound more or less how songs sound in the tipi, in part because the only instruments they use are water drum and gourd. Other commercial recordings can sound overproduced or include extra instruments like flutes, signs for some community members that they are intended for New Age, rather than Native, audiences. According to their albums' liner notes, Jeff McClellan is part Iowa and part Otoe, and Kyle Robedeaux is part Otoe.

## Intertextuality and Policy

Despite the Official English movement, the United States has never declared an official national language and lacks elements of language policy common in other multilingual countries. Some have questioned whether the United States really has explicit language policies at all since legislation on language is usually subsumed within other issues such as immigration, civil rights, and education (Schmidt 2000; Spolsky 2004). Unlike citizens elsewhere, from Quebec to Papua New Guinea, Americans are not used to thinking in terms of language policy at all.

In this context, it is remarkable that one of the clearest examples of U.S. federal language policy does not concern English or Spanish or other languages of recent immigration but rather indigenous languages. The Native American Languages Act of 1990 (NALA 1990) makes it "the policy of the United States to . . . preserve, protect, and promote the rights and freedom of Native Americans to use, practice, and develop Native American languages," which are defined as "the historical, traditional languages spoken by Native Americans" (25 USC § 2901). To that end, NALA 1990 endorses exceptions to teacher certification requirements for Native American language instruction, the right to use Native American languages for conducting tribal government and as mediums of instruction in federally funded schools, and comparable curriculums and academic credit for Native American and foreign languages in educational institutions.

A number of contexts have been proposed for understanding the history and significance of NALA 1990. The Act acknowledged that federal policies and institutions played a role in promoting Native language loss and made language preservation a matter of national responsibility. It also reversed the goals of federal Indian education from

assimilation to the maintenance of distinctive indigenous identities, and it was continuous with the federal policy transition in the 1960s and 1970s from tribal termination to self-determination. Finally, the law emerged from contemporary activism supporting bilingual education and language revitalization in opposition to the Official English movement (Arnold 2008; Hinton 2008a; Reyhner 1993; Warhol 2009, 2011).

Following this landmark legislation, advocates worked to secure federal funding to implement the 1990 policy statement. The Native American Languages Act of 1992 (NALA 1992) (Pub. L. No. 102-524; see 42 USC § 2991b-3)—developed from a bill (S. 1595, 102nd Cong. [1991]) introduced the previous year to fund Alaska Native language preservation (137 Cong. Rec. [1991]:34605)—established an ANA grant program to support "the survival and continuing vitality of Native American languages." These grants fund community language projects, teacher training, pedagogical materials, indigenous language television and radio broadcasts, and oral narrative documentation.

Beginning in 2000, a series of bills were introduced to increase funding for language nests and immersion schools (S. 2688, 106th Cong. [2000]; S. 575, 108th Cong. [2003]; H.R. 4766, 109th Cong. [2006]; S. 2674, 109th Cong. [2006]; H.R. 522, 109th Cong. [2006]). Following the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, there were also concerns about the effects of increased English medium standardized testing on immersion education (e.g. H.R. 522, 109th Cong. [2006]). The Esther Martinez Native American Languages Preservation Act of 2006 (EMNALPA 2006) established a separate ANA grant program for language nests and immersion ("survival") schools (Pub. L. No. 109-394; see 42 USC § 2991b-3).

Larisa Warhol (2009:159-161, 289) notes that equations between language, culture, and identity are a prominent feature of NALA discourse. NALA 1990 itself establishes an indexical connection between these terms, presenting Native American languages as an essential part of and medium for indigenous cultures and identities: "the traditional languages of Native Americans are an integral part of their cultures and identities and form the basic medium for the transmission, and thus survival, of Native American cultures, literatures, histories, religions, political institutions, and values;" and, "languages are the means of communication for the full range of human experiences and are critical to the survival of cultural and political integrity of any people" (25 USC § 2901).

The following discussion describes the origin and elaboration of this language/culture equation in NALA discourse—the notion that there is an indexical, iconic, or otherwise essential connection between indigenous languages, cultures, and identities. I suggest that the uptake and recontextualization of entextualized discourses through reported speech plays an important role in creating and displaying consensus between stakeholders and policymakers. I explore these issues using various legislative texts, including transcripts of congressional hearings and speeches, which are performed not only for those physically present but also "for the record," in which speakers' words are preserved for posterity. While these texts are not transcripts in a conventional anthropological or linguistic sense, they are (like all transcripts) selective representations of speech produced in and for particular social settings and purposes.

A sense of the representational complexities of these records can be gleaned from a 1991 Senate Hearing on S. 1595, Sen. Murkowski's bill to fund Alaska Native language

preservation, which developed into NALA 1992. Consider the following depiction of the opening turns between Sen. Murkowski and James Nageak:

> Senator MURKOWSKI. So we move next to James Nageak, Chairman of the Board of the Fairbanks Native Association.
> MR. NAGEAK. Thank you.
> Senator MURKOWSKI. Jim, we are going to keep doing well on the 10-minute time, so please proceed.
>
> **STATEMENT OF JAMES NAGEAK, CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD, FAIRBANKS NATIVE ASSOCIATION**
>
> Mr. NAGEAK. Thank you very much. My name is James Mumigaaluk Nageak. Aasiivvauvana qaikama quyanaagukkikpin uqaqtitchuminaqluna. Inupiat kaniqsillavluna qanuq uqaqama aasiitaimma kaniqsikaminna iglanaagutimignik qaitchivlutin.
> Senator MURKOWSKI. Our court reporter is going to have a little problem with that.
> Mr. NAGEAK. I just wanted to make a point—
> Senator MURKOWSKI. You did.
> Mr. NAGEAK. [continuing]. That there are people out there that can still understand me, fortunately. [S. Hrg. 102-557 (1991):11]

As this sample shows, the initial turns between Sen. Murkowski and Nageak set up but are not themselves included within Nageak's formal statement, which is metapragmatically framed by formatting and a title that identifies Nageak as both the author of the statement and a representative of an organization. This sample also gives a sense of the conventions for identifying participants, distinguishing turns, and even representing interruptions. In general, the transcripts include some but not all of the information that anthropologists and linguists interested in communication would expect to be represented. For example, the texts preserve the sometimes convoluted syntax of actual speech but not features such as fillers and pauses.

Ironically, for a hearing to fund Alaska Native language preservation, the transcript generally does not preserve what was said in Native languages unless the

speakers themselves translated their remarks into English during the hearing or provided a copy of what they said in a Native language after the hearing. For example, Nina Olsen of the Kodiak Area Native Association, twice used Alutiiq in the course of the hearing. The transcript records the location of codeswitching in the stream of English discourse with "[Remarks in native language.]" (S. Hrg. 102-557 [1991]:27) and "[Song sung in native language.]" (S. Hrg. 102-557 [1991]:47) but neither identifies the new code as Alutiiq nor represents the content of was said. Olsen, however, did go on to sing the song in English, and those lyrics are recorded. Sen. Murkowski's seeming non sequitur in the sample quoted above, when he responds to a few lines in Inupiat that are included in the transcript by saying "our court reporter is going to have a little problem with that," is explained by the fact that Nageak provided his own transcript of his Inupiat remarks after the hearing (S. Hrg. 102-557 [1991]:128). A plan to have all the Native language testimony translated into English and included in the record did not come to fruition "due to technical and other difficulties" (S. Hrg. 102-557 [1991]:45,128).

I derive my approach to these documents from Bauman and Briggs (1990), who identify entextualization, decontextualization, and recontextualization as processes by which performed discourse in one interactional setting becomes a text transportable to another interactional setting; and from Briggs and Bauman (1992), who show how strategies of maximizing and minimizing intertextual gaps between a performance and its precedents contribute to the evolution of genres. Bauman and Briggs focus on verbal art; yet advocacy and policy may also be read as performances with their own sense of generic intertextuality as they spiral around certain discursive precedents but not others in processes of ideological involution. This analysis responds to Bauman and Briggs's

invitation to apply the intertextual strategies they discuss in the context of performance analysis beyond performance itself (or settings explicitly framed as such) (1990:74, 79). Advocacy and policy provide examples of how "a rigorously entextualized stretch of discourse may be reported, or translated, or rendered in a frame other than performance" (1990:74).

I emphasize in particular the role of reported and quoted speech as a means of creating consensus around policy questions. Bauman and Briggs (1990:75) identify framing and other metacommunicative issues, such as whether a text is "linked to prior renderings as a repetition or quotation," as key motifs for tracking transformations involved in processes of decontextualization and recontextualization; and Briggs and Bauman (1992:156) highlight metapragmatic framings of intertextual strategies as a point of comparison in genre analysis. In fact, Briggs and Bauman (1992:147) propose that genre and reported speech are analogous in their intertextual dimensions and dynamics. Utterances linked to genres generate intertextual connections, which can be manipulated as strategies to claim authority grounded either in the reproduction of tradition (through minimizing intertextual gaps) or its transformation (through maximizing them) (1992:149).

The roles of reported and quoted speech in NALA discourse are therefore instances of a broader intertextual strategy, one which flourishes in generic contexts that engage with prior models. Citation and quotation of precedents is also widespread in legal texts and academic scholarship, for example. What is distinctive about NALA discourse, however, is the way that reported speech functions primarily to create alignment between participants by minimizing intertextual gaps. As a conservative genre,

NALA rhetorics equating language and culture "foreground the status of utterances as recontextualizations of prior discourse" (Briggs and Bauman 1992:148). Unlike in other settings where reported speech is used to displace authorial control over meaning and generate ideological and discursive heterogeneity, reported speech in NALA discourse is used to build an image of monologic consensus among participants through extensive citation and quotation (cf. Bauman and Briggs 1990:70).

**Proverbial Beginnings**

NALA 1990 and its particular formulation of the language/culture equation were based on a resolution passed at a 1988 meeting of two advocacy organizations that bring together linguists and indigenous language activists: the Native American Language Issues Institute (NALI) and the American Indian Language Development Institute (AILDI) (S. Rep. 100-560 [1988]:2; S. Rep. 101-250 [1990]:3; Warhol 2009, 2011; Watahomigie and Yamamoto 1992). Sen. Daniel Inouye (Hawaii) twice introduced the NALI/AILDI resolution as bills, which passed the Senate but—before Congress passed NALA 1990 as an amendment to a bill funding tribal colleges (Pub. L. No. 101-477; see 25 USC §§ 2901-2906)—died in House committee (S. J. Res. 379, 100th Cong. [1988]; S. 1781, 101st Cong. [1989]; Warhol 2009:140).

While the NALI/AILDI resolution was the immediate impetus for NALA 1990, the campaign for federal indigenous language policy legislation began in Hawaii (Arnold 2008; Warhol 2009, 2011; Wilson and Kamanā 2008: 174, n. 3). There, a cultural renaissance in the 1960s and 1970s sparked renewed commitment to language in the early 1980s. Inspired by the example of Māori language nests, Hawaiian educators and community members founded a nonprofit organization in 1983—'Aha Pūnana Leo—to

establish similar early childhood Hawaiian language immersion programs (Warner 2008; Wilson and Kamanā 2008). There were a number of legal obstacles at the state level, however, including a law making English the only permissible medium of instruction in public education. A provision permitting foreign languages as mediums of instruction in private schools did not apply to indigenous languages like Hawaiian. In the process of state policy reform, it became clear to parties on all sides that ambiguous federal policies offered little in the way of direction or precedent.

As a result, following success at the state level, Hawaiian activists turned their attention to federal policy. In 1987, the Hawaii House of Representatives passed a resolution "urging the federal government to protect and promote the indigenous languages of the United States of America" (in S. Hrg. 100-570 [1988]:91-92). That same year, Larry Kimura, past president of 'Aha Pūnana Leo and professor of Hawaiian language at the University of Hawaii at Manoa, submitted the Hawaii House resolution as a draft for a federal bill during a congressional hearing on culturally relevant early education (S. Hrg. 100-570 [1988]:23).

The office of Sen. Inouye, chairman of the Select Committee on Indian Affairs and future sponsor of NALA 1990 and subsequent legislation, advised Hawaiian proponents of federal policy reform to build a coalition with mainland organizations. The Hawaiian House resolution was presented at the 1988 NALI/AILDI conference (Larisa Warhol, personal communication, March 7, 2011); it includes many themes that would characterize advocacy for NALA 1990: the resolution invokes the special relationship between the federal government and recognized indigenous communities, presents Native American languages as "cultural treasures" of the United States and universal human

heritage, draws an analogy between endangered languages and endangered species, and frames language and cultural preservation in terms of human rights.

The Hawaii House resolution furthermore declares living heritage languages essential to indigenous cultures and identities, based on a felicitous convergence between traditional Hawaiian knowledge and modern social science:

> The traditional Hawaiian proverb "I ka ʻolelo no ke ola; I ka ʻolelo no ka make," or "With language rests life; with language rests death," expresses the extreme importance of a living spoken language in the survival of an indigenous culture and people, a theory supported by modern social scientists who single out language as the most important feature in ensuring the continuity of culture. [S. Hrg. 100-570 (1988):91]

This Hawaiian proverb linking language with cultural and national survival became a trope at the congressional hearing. Kimura quoted it in his oral testimony as the ideological basis of language revitalization: "The reason that we are involved in Hawaiian immersion education is that we believe that without the Hawaiian language we as a people will cease to exist. This belief is expressed traditionally by the saying, 'I ka oʼōlelo nō ke ola; I ka olelo no ka make'—'In language there is life; in language there is death'" (S. Hrg. 100-570 [1988]:22).

Kauanoe Kamanā, president of ʼAha Pūnana Leo and assistant professor of Hawaiian language at the University of Hawaii at Hilo, repeated the proverb in her statement to the committee: "Our tradition tells us, 'I ka ʼōlelo nō ke ola; I ka ʼōlelo nō ka make'—'In language there is life; in language there is death.' Our motto in the ʼAha Pūnana Leo is, 'E ola ka ʼōlelo Hawaiʼi'—'Let the Hawaiian language live, for the language can give that life back to our people'" (S. Hrg. 100-570 [1988]:26). This "ancient Hawaiian proverb" was repeated in subsequent hearings to equate "recapturing

the Hawaiian language" with "recapturing Hawaiian culture" (e.g. S. Hrg. 108-107 [2003]:66).

The Hawaiian proverb and associated glosses are the earliest evidence I could locate of an ideology linking language, culture, and identity in the record leading to NALA 1990. Its relation to similar discourse in the NALI/AILDI resolution—which describes language as integral to cultural and political identity and as the medium for cultural transmission and survival—is unclear. The extent to which similar discourses circulated in mainland organizations like NALI and AILDI prior to collaboration with Hawaiian language activists is also unclear (Larisa Warhol, personal communication, June 2, 2011). Certainly, similar discourses circulate in indigenous communities outside of Hawaii (e.g., Kroskrity 1998:104). The point is not that Hawaiian activism is the origin of this ideology but rather that Hawaiian activists introduced this ideology to policy discourse by performing a proverb—a reported utterance attributed to tradition (Briggs and Bauman 1992:165, n.3). Proverbs are classic examples of transportable texts, entextualizations that invite decontextualization from one interactional setting and recontextualization in another.

In this case, the proverb's performance as a traditional Hawaiian cultural product is central to its rhetorical power in policy discourse. Its original Hawaiian provenance is established by its recitation in Hawaiian prior to English translation and by metapragmatic framings (it is explicitly described as a "traditional Hawaiian proverb" and an "ancient Hawaiian proverb" and introduced with phrases like "this belief is expressed traditionally by the saying . . ." and "our tradition tells us . . ."). This enables it to be taken up as a representation of traditional knowledge and recontextualized in

relation to other, scientific perspectives with salience in policy formation. The pairing of these two kinds of knowledge in the 1987 Hawaii House resolution and its introduction into federal policy discourse is an example of how processes of uptake and recontextualization play a central role in creating consensus between participants.

## Micro- and Macro-Interactional Examples

Following its proverbial beginnings, discourses surrounding policy formation after NALA 1990 equate language, culture, and identity in a number of different ways (e.g. a functional argument emphasizing the contribution of a shared language to community solidarity and intergenerational communication); still, the dominant themes derive from NALA 1990: rhetorics of integrity hinting at authenticity (language as "integral parts" of cultures and identities and "critical to the survival of cultural and political integrity of any people"); and notions of culture being encoded in language (language as "the basic medium for the transmission, and thus survival, of Native American cultures") (25 USC § 2901). Processes of uptake and recontextualization as a means of consensus-building characterize the elaboration of this ideology on both relatively micro- and macro-interactional scales.

An example of a microinteractional context comes from a NALA 1992 hearing, in which Dominic Mastrapasqua, representing the ANA, testified that his department "recognize[s] that language preservation and enhancement are important to the continuation of native American cultures" but opposes the introduced bill establishing a new grant program because, he claimed, the ANA already adequately funded language and cultural preservation. In order to make both points, Mastrapasqua quoted an ANA grantee on the importance of language: "As one of our grantees put it: . . . 'Language is

the bedrock upon which tradition and ritual is premised; the culture rests upon this'" (S. Hrg. 102-809 [1992]:9).

During his examination of Mastrapasqua, Sen. Inouye, the bill's original sponsor, emphasized their common ground in part by assuming that Mastrapasqua endorsed not only the importance of language maintenance for cultural preservation, but also the grantee's particular culture concept, in which tradition and ritual mediate the relation between language and culture. Sen. Inouye began by saying, "I am pleased to have your assurance that you agree that language is the bedrock upon which tradition and ritual is premised; the culture rests upon this. And in your statement, you recognize that language preservation and enhancement are important to the continuation of native American cultures" (S. Hrg. 102-809 [1992]:9). Later, Sen. Paul Simon (Illinois) asked Sen. Inouye a question about the rate of language shift in Hawaii, which Sen. Inouye answered. Sen. Simon replied, "And you can preserve that part of the heritage. Yes; that's right. That's important." Sen. Inouye then added, "And as the witness [Mastrapasqua] pointed out, oftentimes language is very important because you need the language as part of the ritual and the traditions. Without ritual and tradition, you have no culture. Therefore, no language, no culture" (S. Hrg. 102-809 [1992]:13).

Though somewhat ambiguous, Sen. Simon's statement presents language as only part of culture ("you can preserve that part of the heritage") before asserting alignment with Sen. Inouye ("Yes; that's right. That's important"), which implies that the opposite is also conceivable, i.e. that language preservation could be incorrect or unimportant. For Sen. Inouye, however, language is more than just part of heritage; he perceives their misalignment, which is cast into relief by Sen. Simon's presumption of alignment and

therefore false attribution to Sen. Inouye of an opinion he does not hold. This helps explain Sen. Inouye's response, which is presented as a continuation of Sen. Simon's utterance ("And . . .") and a confirmation of their alignment but in fact clarifies (and attributes to Sen. Simon in turn) Sen. Inouye's own position. Citing Mastrapasqua's grantee Sen. Inouye equates the absence of language with the absence of culture as mediated by ritual and tradition ("no language, no culture"). In the process, however, whatever distinctions remained between the voices of Mastrapasqua, the ANA grantee, Sen. Simon, and Sen. Inouye vanish. The syllogism that language is essential to ritual and tradition, ritual and tradition are essential to culture, and thus, language is essential to culture is presented as a universal cultural truth, attributed by Sen. Inouye to Mastrapasqua himself (even though the transcript is clear that Mastrapasqua was quoting a grantee to illustrate and justify ANA funding priorities) and endorsed by Sen. Simon and Sen. Inouye. In the end, Mastrapasqua's recontextualization of the grantee's text within his own performance was an attempt to establish consensus with Sen. Inouye on the role of language in cultural preservation. This was recontextualized in turn by Sen. Inouye in his own performance to encourage Sen. Simon to align on the precise nature of the relation between language and culture.

While this example comes from a microinteractional setting of face-to-face interpersonal communication, a similar process characterizes macrointeractional discourse over time. Consider the following ten texts from 1990-2006. These examples, just some of many that could be cited, illustrate the prevalence of various forms of reported speech (quotation and citation both explicitly framed as such and unattributed)

in promoting NALA 1990 ideologies and rhetorics in the course of subsequent policy formation:

> 1. Language is the basis of culture. History, religion, values, feelings, ideas and the way of seeing and interpreting events are expressed and understood through language. When others place meanings and definitions on words that are from a language that is not their culture, the original meanings of the words and the concepts they represent eventually become lost. When a language is lost or forgotten, the integrity and identity of the group is diminished. The perpetuation of native languages is thus an integral part in the continued existence of Native American cultures, heritages and identities. Language, like religion and other traditional practices, must be fostered if the culture is to survive. [S. Rep. 101-250 (1990):1-2; also quoted by S. Rep. 102-343 (1992):5 with incorrect attribution]
>
> 2. As the Congress pointed out in the Native American Languages Act in 1990, "the traditional languages of Native Americans are an integral part of their cultures and identities and form the basic medium for the transmission, and thus survival, of Native American cultures, literatures, histories, religions, political institutions, and values." [Sen. Daniel Inouye (Hawaii) in 137 Cong. Rec. (1991):34605, quoting NALA 1990 (25 USC § 2901), in turn quoting the 1988 NALI/AILDI resolution, to support NALA 1992; for similar or identical wording predating NALA 1990, see S. J. Res. 379, 100th Cong. (1988); 134 Cong. Rec. (1988):23958; S. Rep. 100-560 (1988):2; S. 1781, 101st Cong. (1989); 135 Cong. Rec. (1989):25433].
>
> 3. The act [NALA 1990] recognized that traditional languages are a complex part of the ethnic and cultural identities of native Americans and that the survival and distinction of a culture may be dependent upon language preservation. . . . The preservation of any culture lies in the recording of, and the honoring of, the American Indian's traditional rites and languages. Tribal languages are vital links in the preservation of traditional rites and customs and are fundamental to the identity of native Americans. [Rep. Matthew Martinez (California) in 138 Cong. Rec. (1992):30633]
>
> 4. The traditional languages of native American people are an integral part of their culture and identity. They provide a means for elaborating stories, literature, religion, and the rich history and traditional ways of life. The ability of Indian communities to preserve their traditional languages will allow them to effectively preserve their traditional stories, literatures, and oral history. . . . Language in all cultures is paramount to the survival and vitality of one's culture. To lose the ability to communicate in the

traditional languages further compromises the effectiveness of passing on the oral history of traditional ways of life. [Rep. Ben Nighthorse Campbell (Colorado) in 138 Cong. Rec. (1992):30634]

5. Language, if not the most important, is certainly one of the most important components of survival of any culture. Language is more than communication; it is more than the words and their meanings. Language is a conduit for culture, tradition, and for the development of the center of our being. . . . The Federal Government has made known this need through the Native American Languages Act. "The traditional languages of American Indians are an integral part of their culture and identities and form the basic medium of transmission, and thus survival, of the Native American cultures, literatures, histories, and religions." [Dr. Carl Downing, Director, Oklahoma Native American Language Issues Development Institute (NALI), in S. Hrg. 102-809 (1992):23]

6. Native languages are integral to Native culture and identity, and an important vehicle by which Native literature, history, government, religion and lifeways are carried from one generation to the next. [Donna Rhodes, President, National Indian Education Association, in S. Hrg. 102-809 (1992):149]

7. Senator Inouye, your opening remarks introducing this bill speaks to the heart of the bill, and brings honor to the work that we are doing in keeping our indigenous language and culture alive. For as you pointed out, the ability to maintain and preserve the culture and traditions of a people is directly tied to the perpetuation of Native languages. [Namaka Rawlins, Executive Director, 'Aha Punana Leo, in S. Hrg. 106-648 (2000):57, referring to Sen. Inouye's remarks in 146 Cong. Rec. (2000):9713]

8. As all of us know here in this room, for indigenous people across this Nation, the significance of issues that are related to language survival are inextricably entwined with cultural survival. For many native communities, the continuance of cultural values, traditions, and belief in governance systems are dependent on this continued transmission of language. [Christine Sims, Chairwoman, Linguistic Institute for Native Americans (LINA), and Member, Pueblo of Acoma, S. Hrg. 108-107(2003):26]

9. For Native people in the United States, our cultural beliefs, traditions, social structures, heritage, and governance systems depend on our Native languages. . . . For us, the survival of our cultures and identities is inextricably linked to the survival of our languages. If our languages die, then it is inevitable that our cultures will die next. (Ryan Wilson, President, National Indian Education Association, in H.R. Hrg. (2006):16]

> 10. Our heritage languages are an integral part our cultures and identities and form the basic medium for the transmission, and thus survival, of our cultures, literatures, histories, religions, political institutions, and values. [The National Congress of American Indians, Resolution #ABQ-03-026, in H.R. Hrg. (2006):42, unattributed quotation from NALA 1990]

Such intertextual strategies were used by indigenous language advocacy organizations (e.g., 'Aha Punana Leo and NALI), national Native American advocacy organizations (e.g., National Indian Education Association and National Congress of American Indians), and members of congress (Sen. Inouye and Reps. Martinez and Campbell).

Meanwhile linguists provided a scientific basis for these ideologies. Kenneth Hale, for example, testified that "no matter how concrete an object of culture might appear to be, it is ultimately rooted in language" (S. Hrg. 102-809(1992):16). After arguing for the linguistic roots of all cultural objects, he asserted that these linguistic roots are themselves inextricably rooted in particular languages so that translations can never substitute for originals:

> The most important fact to consider in this regard is the fact that the expression of cultural forms, for example, is often rooted inextricably in a particular language. So, take the easiest examples of this sort, poetry and music, that is the lyrical part of the expression of music in which the linguistic form is essential to the expression. So, for example, among the people that I've worked with most, Tohono O'odham in southern Arizona, the expression of verse, for example, the form which verse takes depends in a manner which is inseparable from the form of the language, the particular structure of what we call the phonology of the language and also an aspect of the syntax is integrated into that. So that the loss of the O'odham language, for example, would mean the loss of a cultural form which is beautiful and would be irretrievably lost. Even though the songs could be translated, the translations might in fact be beautiful themselves, but they are not the same as the original and the original can never be replaced by a translation. [S. Hrg. 102-809 (1992):16]

Other testimony echoed these sentiments. Carl Downing, director of NALI, a nonprofit organization which provides language preservation training to members of indigenous communities, said, "Words will have connotation and related images which cannot be

translated no matter how close the translation may seem to be, simply because the people in the other culture do not have the same worldview, traditions, values and customs. . . . Culture cannot be fully or properly transmitted in any language but the native language of that culture" (S. Hrg. 102-809[1992]:103-105).

These translation ideologies were shared by policymakers at these hearings. During a 1991 congressional hearing on a bill (S. 1595, 102nd Cong. [1991]) to fund Alaska Native language preservation, for example, an Alutiiq elder, Nina Olsen, performed a song for Sen. Frank Murkowski to thank him for his efforts on behalf of Alaska Natives. Olsen introduced her performance by saying, "I will quickly sing a song I translated. I will do it in Alutiiq and in English." After she sang in Alutiiq, she sang in English: "One day at a time, Sweet Jesus, is all I'm asking of you. Lord help me today, show me the way, what I have to do. Yesterday's gone, Sweet Jesus, and tomorrow may never be mine. Lord help me today, show me the way, one day at a time" (S. Hrg. 102-557[1992]:47).

When she finished, Sen. Murkowski responded, "That's lovely. Thank you so much . . . it was much more beautiful in its native tongue than it was translated into English" (S. Hrg. 102-557 [1992]:47). In this case, however, Sen. Murkowski confused the direction of translation: English was the source language and Alutiiq was the target language. The lyrics are from "One Day at a Time," a country gospel hit written by Marijohn Wilkin and Kris Kristofferson and first recorded by Marilyn Sellars in 1974. As this interaction suggests, rhetoric extolling the virtues of originals over translations is often just a trope (Bellos 2011:37-43). These forms of apparent ideological convergence between policymakers, linguists as expert witnesses, and tribal members gave credence to

notions, like that contained in the 1987 Hawaii House resolution, that scientists and indigenous peoples agree on the necessity of language preservation for cultural survival.

NALA discourse presents language/culture equations as consensus rhetorics employed by policymakers, indigenous communities, and academics alike. Processes of uptake and recontextualization through reported speech help account for policy involution around this particular nexus by facilitating ideological alignment between diverse participants. In a sense, this is obvious and to be expected: the purpose of policy is not only to influence the course of events in the world but also to create entextualized precedents that standardize how people talk about the world. My purpose here is simply to account in part for how a particular language ideology—a specific way of imagining and talking about the relations between language, culture, and identity—was introduced to policy discourse and developed into the dominant position.

It is important to note that alternative ideologies, or at least qualifications of language/culture equations, were also voiced at congressional hearings by prominent figures in Native American education and language maintenance. Robert A. Roessel, Jr., for example, founder of the Rough Rock Demonstration School and first president of Navajo Community College, submitted a letter for the record of a NALA 1992 hearing in which he pointed out that language is necessary but not sufficient for culture, which exceeds language in important respects. Writing in a time when apartheid was still present in South Africa, he pointed out that English speakers in different parts of the world can have very different values:

> I fear if we only stress the retention of Native American language we may end up with individuals who can speak the language who do not understand and respect the culture. It would be like a person from South Africa who spoke English but never understood or respected the American

> values of equality, justice and brotherhood. We may raise a group of people who can speak the language and who know nothing about the culture, if this happens we have lost the war while winning the battle (retention of language). [S. Hrg. 102-809 (1992):179][22]

Darrell Kipp, director of the Piegan Institute, which promotes Blackfeet language preservation through immersion schools and other programs, expressed a similar perspective at a later hearing, in which he indicated that "culture" and "language" are not coterminous; rather, culture exceeds language: "in our own particular case, we are very careful not to use culture . . . because we believe the word 'culture' is a very large word, and carries multiple meanings, well beyond anything we could produce. We use the word 'language' exclusively, because in our own work, we believe culture emanates from language" (S. Hrg. 106-648 [2000]:40).

While such testimony challenged the language/culture equation by pointing out that language itself cannot produce culture, other testimony challenged the language/culture equation by asserting that culture can persist after language shift. The Coquille Indian Tribe was invited to participate in the same NALA 1992 congressional hearing in which the interaction described above among Sen. Inouye, Sen. Simon, and Mastrapasqua occurred. The last fluent speaker of Miluk, the tribe's heritage language, died in 1953. The tribe was terminated by the federal government the following year and re-recognized in 1989. At the hearing, tribal representatives described their plans to develop multimedia resources for language revival based on existing documentation. In

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[22] Roessel's logic here is very similar to an argument Sapir employs to demonstrate that there is no necessary connection between language and culture. "Particularly in more primitive levels," Sapir wrote, "where the secondarily unifying power of the 'national' ideal does not arise to disturb the flow of what we might call natural distributions, is it easy to show that language and culture are not intrinsically associated. Totally unrelated languages share in one culture, closely related languages—even a single language—belong to distinct culture spheres" (Sapir 1921:227-228).

his questions, however, Sen. Inouye focused less on these plans than on coming to terms with the existence of tribal communities in which English is the only medium for cultural practice and transmission:

> The CHAIRMAN. Are you advising us that members of the Coquille Tribe communicate with each other only in English?
> Mr. FARLEY. That's correct, Senator.
> The CHAIRMAN. They carry out their rituals and cultural programs only in English?
> Mr. FARLEY. That is correct Senator. They have no native speakers; the last one died in 1953. [S. Hrg. 102-809 (1992):29]

We see in this exchange a direct challenge to Sen. Inouye's commitment to the language/culture equation. This exchange took place after the exchange among Sen. Inouye, Sen. Simon, and Mastrapasqua, in which Sen. Inouye insisted, "You need the language as part of the ritual and the traditions. Without ritual and tradition, you have no culture. Therefore, no language, no culture" (S. Hrg. 102-809 [1992]:13). Here, however, unlike in the preceding exchange, Sen. Inouye's interlocutor refused to align with him, even after Sen. Inouye's redundant question. After Farley confirmed that tribal members "communicate with each other only in English," Sen. Inouye nevertheless persisted with the same question but singled out "rituals" and "cultural programs," which Farley verified take place in a monolingual English environment. Notably, the challenges that testimony by Roessel, Kipp, and Farley posed to the language/culture equation were not subject to the same processes of uptake and recontextualization as the prevailing ideological position expressed in NALA 1990 and reperformed extensively since.

While NALA discourse makes language an essential part of indigenous cultures and identities, projects to revive languages without speakers were ineligible for ANA funding until recently, despite advocacy for communities without speakers by representatives of the Coquille Indian Tribe and prominent linguists like Michael Krauss

(S. Hrg. 102-809 [1992]:20; S. Hrg. 106-648 [2000]:31,108) and Leanne Hinton (S. Hrg. 108-107 [2003]:97). Perhaps as a result of such advocacy, S. 2688 (106th Cong. [2000]) included a provision permitting funding for "survival schools" to "provide special support for Native American languages for which there are very few or no remaining Native American language speakers." The accompanying senate report includes this provision among a list of activities that were not funded by the NALA 1992 ANA grant program and that would be funded by the introduced bill (S. Rep. 106-467 [2000]:3-4). This provision of "special support" for such communities carried over to S. 575 (108th Cong. [2003]; see also S. Hrg. 108-107 [2003]:165), H.R. 4766 (109th Cong. [2006]), S. 2674 (109th Cong. [2006]), and H.R. 522 (109th Cong. [2006]). However, this provision was not included in the approved legislation (Pub. L. No. 109-394; see 42 USC § 2991b-3). Until 2014 grant programs established by both NALA 1992 and EMNALPA 2006 precluded funding for "projects that seek to revive Native American languages that do not have any living speakers" (Dept. of Health and Human Services 2013a:32, 2013b:42).[23]

## "Piecing Together the Future"

By linking language to culture and identity to justify moral and financial support for language maintenance, but denying communities without speakers equal access to the resources thereby made available, policy trapped these communities in a double bind. A

[23] Warhol (2009:190-191, 286-287) notes that ANA implementation of this policy has been inconsistent. I know of one case where a tribe without fluent heritage language speakers received years of ANA funding for a dictionary, pedagogical materials, and language classes. An employee in that tribe's language department told me that since tribes were responsible for defining what constitutes a speaker, he found some elders who knew a few words and labeled them "speakers" for grant purposes. It is possible that the Otoe-Missouria Tribe could have saved their grant if they had been similarly savvy.

double bind (Bateson et al. 1956:251-254) is a "can't win" situation, an "unresolvable sequences of experiences" in which a victim is confronted with contradictory messages (some perhaps metacommunicative) without the possibility of escape. While Bateson and his colleagues theorized the double bind to describe and explain schizophrenia as socialized incompetence in discriminating communicational modes, in this case it is not related to mental illness at all but rather the politics of identity in the sense captured by W. E. B. Du Bois's (1999[1903]:11) concept of "double consciousness." Double consciousness is a "sense of always looking at one's self through the eyes of others" that leads to a feeling of "two-ness." It is a kind of double bind related to a socialized contradiction of identities.

While federal and tribal law use race (blood quantum and descent) to define American Indian identity as a legal category (Garroutte 2003), federal language policy makes traditional Native American languages an essential component of authentic indigenous cultures and identities. When Native people see themselves through the eyes of federal policy, those who do not speak their heritage languages confront an irresolvable contradiction of identities stemming from different evaluative criteria in different planes of discourse: non-heritage language speakers are both Indian (by race) and not Indian (by language and therefore culture and identity). A Kickapoo tribal member captured this dynamic with the image of an apple in a letter to Sen. Inouye expressing support for NALA 1992: "Because I could not speak my Native language, I was often called an apple, that is 'Red on the outside white on the inside.' This can no longer be said of me, I am well on my way to learning my language" (S. Hrg. 102-809 [1992]:219).

As this letter suggests, the language/culture equation creates a strong incentive to pursue language revitalization because it implies that individuals who do not speak their heritage language and communities without speakers no longer possess indigenous cultures and identities. Even so, policy prevented communities without speakers from accessing resources to support language revival. For these communities, policy both encouraged language preservation (in theory) and discouraged language preservation (in practice). This is analogous to Bateson et al.'s (1956:257) example of a mother who withdraws when her child approaches but then simulates loving behavior to deny her real hostility when her child responds to her withdrawal. In supporting the rights of Native Americans to preserve their languages and cultures, NALA ends up alienating communities without heritage language speakers from their cultures and identities. In this context, a tribal policy of putting traditional language to rest and cultivating other sources of communal identity can be understood as a form of language agency.

As the tribal language coordinator, the author of "Moving Forward" was involved in the ANA grant and could hardly be unfamiliar with NALA discourses. Note the quotes around "traditional language" in his Proclamation "declaring that our 'traditional language' is in the past and put to rest with dignity and respect" (Whitehorn 2009:4); and recall that NALA 1990 defines Native American languages as "the historical, traditional languages spoken by Native Americans" (25 USC § 2901). Through its own use of reported speech as an intertextual strategy, "Moving Forward" can be read as a response to the NALA discourses examined above and the double bind that federal policy created for communities without speakers.

The author of "Moving Forward" self-consciously framed his article, in title and content, as a turning point in how Otoe-Missourias think and talk about language. The article was intended to mediate the disruptive effects of tribal participation in the ANA grant program and the particular forms of community self-knowledge that experience produced. As Ahearn (2001:117-119) points out, practice theory explains the reproduction of social structures so well that they come to have a recursive quality. As a result, the classic challenge in theorizing agency is to account for social transformation in the face of structural forces that seem to reproduce themselves—a focus clearly visible in the association between agency and resistance and in Sahlin's accounts of attempts at social reproduction that create unintended transformation in contact situations (Ahearn 2001:115-116). In linguistic anthropology, Kroskrity has applied Ahearn's "language and agency" framework to his research on Western Mono language ideologies; however, he goes beyond Ahearn's (2001:112) provisional definition of agency—the "socioculturally mediated capacity to act"—in order to stress "an especially robust agency . . . an awareness leading to the transformation of selves and systems" (Kroskrity 2009:192). In Kroskrity's example, this transformational awareness is linked to resistance: "instances of noncompliance to language shift and death" (Kroskrity 2009:192).

In the case of "Moving Forward," agency is expressed more through compliance to language shift and death than resistance, and it aims more at social reproduction (the maintenance of Otoe-Missouria traditions) than transformation; in fact, it tries to turn potential transformation into reproduction. Of course, the author is as dialectically aware as Sahlins that reproduction is itself transformative (and vice versa); in this case, reproduction involves a metapragmatic metalinguistic transformation—a change in how

community members talk about the significance of their heritage language and its relationship to culture and identity. The coordinator proposes an ideological shift that moves with rather than against language shift. This ideology acknowledges language loss but rejects the language/culture equation, emphasizing instead the role of cultural beliefs and practices other than heritage language use in the maintenance of collective identity.

This is not quite a case of "language suicide" in Perley's (2011:121-148) sense, because the language is not being killed; rather, its death is being acknowledged. "Moving Forward" advocates that Chiwere be "put to rest," not put to death. Essentially, the author describes a language funeral, which, like language suicide, uses death to display agency in the face of otherwise uncontrolled structural forces. Davidson (1997:117, 120-121) notes that death is a common reason for Iowas and Otoe-Misourias to sponsor a Native American Church meeting. The coordinator's announcement of a meeting to "respect" and "honor" Chiwere enacts the persistence of culture beyond language by putting the heritage language to rest in a traditional way.

"Moving Forward" tries to cut through the double bind created by federal policy and to reclaim the definition of identity from state-sponsored settings by acknowledging language death, honoring the language in a traditional way, and outlining a new traditional future in which Chiwere is no longer learned or spoken in the community. Of course, leaving a heritage language in the past is not the only response to such a situation, but it deserves as much respect as revitalization. As Leanne Hinton writes, "the right to language choice includes the right to choose against a language" (2002:151).

It is interesting to note that Charles Whitehorn, the grandfather of the author of "Moving Forward," was described to an anthropologist as "a real old-time Otoe. He

didn't even know how to talk English" (Howard 1956:433 quoted in Davidson 1997:81). I have attempted to present above some of the conditions that could lead a descendent of a "real old-time Otoe," defined in part by being a monolingual Chiwere speaker, to want to put his grandfather's language to rest and move forward without language but with a strong sense of tribal identity rooted in common history, traditional culture, and religious ceremony. What I have shared here is, at least, the way that I have come to make sense of a text that was initially surprising and confusing to me and other members of Jimm's Project.

One obvious response to my discussion is to wonder about the author's own interpretation of "Moving Forward." As it happens, I was privileged to be able to have a long conversation with the author, though he decided that what we talked about was for my personal edification; I have no record of that event beyond my memory. His article, however, is a public document, published in a tribal newsletter and available online; believing it is appropriate to appropriate here, I have cited and quoted it extensively. For now, anyway, it will have to speak for itself.

"Moving Forward" is only half the story, however. Members of Jimm's Project were puzzled not just by the article's content but also by its context in the tribal newsletter. Printed next to the language coordinator's article was a column by his new assistant, Sky Campbell. Entitled "Piecing Together the Future," Sky's column acknowledged, like "Moving Forward," that "unless someone comes forward to claim fluency in the Otoe-Missouria language, we must come to the unhappy conclusion that there are no more fluent speakers left." But the two articles articulated opposing visions of how the community should respond to the lack of speakers. While the coordinator tried

to separate language from culture, the assistant equated them: "language," Sky wrote, "is the core of culture" (Campbell 2009:4). And in contrast to the coordinator, who rejected the possibility of language revival based on linguistic "add-ons" and "guessing of interpretation," Sky wrote that "the only route available is to move forward with a new, modern version of the language" by "developing new words to replace those that are lost and borrowing words from tribes whose language is similar." He concluded, "I would like to encourage all of the Otoe-Missouria people, young and old, to learn your language. Study it. Speak it. Use it. Language is culture. Give your future generations their culture" (Campbell 2009:4).

If for only one brief, uncomfortable, unintentional moment, conflicting sentiments were clearly on display, juxtaposed side by side in the same issue of the tribal newsletter. Like many Native American communities (e.g., Kroskrity and Field 2009), Otoe-Missouria language and culture ideologies are temporally and socially diverse. The language coordinator's grandfather was seen as "a real old-time Otoe" in part because he was a monolingual Otoe speaker, while his grandson, the coordinator, proposed putting traditional language to rest and focusing on other sources of collective belonging. His assistant, in contrast, promoted a strong language/culture equation as an incentive for community members to study the language. Clearly, language/culture equations are both circulated and contested in this community.

It may not be surprising to learn that the former language assistant is the current language coordinator and the former coordinator is no longer involved with the tribal language program. Under Sky's leadership, the language program now develops pedagogical materials that the Otoe-Missouria Tribe makes available on its website to an

unrestricted public. Since Sky is committed to language revival and recognizes the validity of linguistic methods, he and Jimm collaborate in their efforts to increase Chiwere's profile and expand domains for its use. "Piecing Together the Future" proved to be the future while "Moving Forward" and its controversial proposals seem safely in the past— as if a momentary and inconsequential hesitation in the language revival process. While the ripples of its initial reception extended through the Iowa and Otoe-Missouria communities and beyond, and while I have been questioning my own commitment to Chiwere language preservation ever since, I have not heard anyone else mention "Moving Forward" for years.

## Conclusion

This chapter has told a story of how two juxtaposed Otoe-Missouria tribal newsletter columns were received with confusion and controversy by members of Jimm's language project, including myself, and how I have come to understand their significance in the context of U.S. Native American language policy. "Moving Forward" and "Piecing Together the Future" respond with opposing proposals to the language/culture equation influential in federal policy discourse, in which reported speech—the recontextualization of entextualized precedents—produces alignment between participants by minimizing intertextual gaps between their voices. Despite this sense of consensus, the tribal newsletter articles provide an example of how language/culture equations can be divisive within a community in dialogue with NALA ideologies as a result of participation in an ANA language grant program.

The 2014 ANA funding opportunity announcements for Language Preservation and Maintenance grants omits the restriction from previous years on "projects that seek to

revive Native American Languages with no living speakers," and such projects are now eligible for funding (Department of Health and Human Services 2014a, 2014b; Sparks Robinson 2013:76836). The double bind that tribes without speakers once confronted is no longer operative: now all tribes are able to apply for federal grants to preserve their cultures and identities by preserving their heritage languages.

But for those with distinctively anthropological sensibilities, there is something potentially discouraging about this new inclusiveness. In *Culture and "Culture,"* Manuela Carneiro da Cunha (2009) argues that while indigenous discourses of "culture" may seem on the surface parallel to our own, they usually refer to different things: anthropologists use "culture" to refer to the structures of significance in which all people live, while indigenous peoples use "culture" as a tool for self-assertion in relation to states or international bodies on issues like intellectual property rights or, as we have seen, language policy. Furthermore, indigenous "culture" discourses often appear self-essentializing compared to anthropological literatures that deconstruct static culture concepts by emphasizing the role of invention and transformation within tradition (e.g., Sahlins 1985, Wagner 1981).

The former Otoe-Missouria language coordinator rejected the essentializing language/culture equations that permeate American Indian language advocacy and policy, proposing instead a creative reimagining of Otoe-Missouria culture that resonates with anthropological theories in which innovation is recognized as part of every living tradition. Philosopher Jonathan Lear, writing of the Crow leader Plenty Coups, captures the apparent paradox: "If the death [of a traditional Crow subject] is not acknowledged there will most likely be all sorts of empty ways of going on 'as a Crow.' Only if one

acknowledges that there is no longer a genuine way of going on *like that* might there arise new genuine ways of going on *like that*" (Lear 2006:51). Like Plenty Coups, the former Otoe-Missouria language coordinator acknowledged death (of his heritage language) in order to forge a new traditional vision of Otoe-Missouria culture.

As we have seen, this possibility is precisely what NALA discourages by promoting language/culture equations. If we recognize (with Nevins 2013) that language preservation is itself a potentially transformative culture predicated on particular ideological assumptions, and not just the "preservation" of existing "traditions," then it becomes possible to question its relationship with the very cultures it seeks to protect. Which scenario is more conducive to the perpetuation of specifically *cultural* diversity in the modern anthropological sense: a scenario in which all Native American communities participate in language revitalization (because federal policy makes their "historical, traditional languages" "an integral part of their cultures and identities," "the basic medium for the transmission, and thus survival, of Native American cultures, literatures, histories, religions, political institutions, and values," and "critical to the survival of cultural political integrity of any people"); or, a scenario in which there is room for multiple ideologies to flourish, some of which make language central to culture and others of which link identities to different cultural practices?

# Chapter 8: Conclusion

The proliferation of essentialist "culture" discourses beyond anthropology has led some to question whether the term still has a place within the discipline (Fox and King 2002). In "Adieu, Culture," Michel-Rolph Trouillot (2002), for example, argues that while the anthropological concept is useful, the term's popular usage contains the very racial undertones anthropological "culture" was designed to combat. Arguing that a de-racialized "culture" enabled anthropology to overlook issues of politics and power, Trouillot criticizes the notion that the discipline provides a "space of enlightenment . . . blind to the world, isolated from the messiness of social life" (2002:48). Trouillot's own proposal to replace "culture" with words like "style, taste, cosmology, ethos, sensibility, desire, ideology, aspirations, and predispositions" (2002:57), however, only furthers isolates anthropology from the world and is inconsistent with his lament for the "closing of academic discourse" to lay readers (2002:52-53). Rather than abandon "culture" to essentialization beyond anthropology, we could use the proliferation of "culture" as an opportunity to educate extra-disciplinary audiences about anthropological knowledge.

The previous chapter reviewed the rise of essentialist language/culture equations in U.S. Native American language policy. By way of conclusion, this chapter expands consideration to broader conversations concerning the rhetoric of endangered language advocacy. These conversations wrestle with how academic experts can make a case for endangered language preservation without alienating members of indigenous or minority language communities. I argue that metadiscursive critiques of advocacy rhetoric tend to employ the very representational strategies they criticize by invoking a notion of

ideologically homogenous speech communities to evaluate advocacy. As a result, distinctions between "experts" and "communities" occlude cross-cutting axes of collaboration and conflict and therefore obscure diversity within both groups.

As an illustration of such diversity, I turn to the role of language/culture equations in advocacy contexts beyond NALA. I argue that while such rhetoric may be an effective advocacy tool, it also creates expectations about indigenous languages and cultures that may end up excluding certain indigenous populations from "authentic" identities and associated political protections. While language/culture equations serve the interests of speakers and the communities in which they live, language/culture equations can have deleterious consequences for non-speakers and communities without speakers. Given irreducible language ideological diversity within Native American communities, it is necessary to develop more inclusive advocacy strategies that can accommodate diverse perspectives and the shifting role of heritage languages in indigenous communities over time.

As an alternative to language/culture equations, I draw on the narrative arc of this dissertation to propose that the cultural significance of language is not rooted in the code itself but rather accomplished through processes of social and symbolic investment. By reflecting on the afterlives of language, it may be possible to develop advocacy discourses that are sensitive to the ways in which documentation, revitalization, and other forms of remembering and valuing heritage languages give them ongoing cultural significance even after they cease to be spoken in everyday communication.

## The Rhetoric of Rhetorical Critique

A perception of impending crisis surrounding unprecedented language loss on a

global scale has inspired a social movement within and beyond the academy to preserve endangered languages. Advocates have secured widespread support for language preservation by borrowing rhetorical strategies from a variety of preexisting social movements, including those to protect biodiversity (Muehlmann 2007; Nettle and Romaine 2000), those concerned with human "rights" (Errington 2003; Whitley 2003), and political activism by indigenous peoples and ethnic minorities. Homologous advocacy within academic linguistics led to the emergence of documentary linguistics as a disciplinary subfield dedicated to recording, describing, and helping to revitalize endangered languages.

Accompanying the rise of a movement to preserve language diversity has been a critical metadiscourse concerned with some of the strategies advocates employ. These concerns often revolve around conflicts between advocacy discourses and the views of endangered language speakers and communities themselves. For example, Hale et al. 1992, an iconic series of articles credited with raising the profile of endangered languages in linguistics, were criticized soon after they were published by Peter Ladefoged, who dismissed the influential collection as "opinion pieces" and countered generalizations in those articles with anecdotes from his own experiences: "Hale et al. (1992) write from the perspective of linguists who have worked in particular cultures, but the attitudes of the speakers of the languages that they describe are far from universal" (1992:809). While Hale et al. cited examples of speakers and descendants lamenting the loss of their heritage languages, Ladefoged cited examples of speakers pleased that their descendents will enjoy the social and economic opportunities available to those who speak global or majority languages. In her response to Ladefoged, Nancy Dorian (1993:577-578) pointed

out that patterns in intergenerational language shift suggest that those very descendents will regret that their parents did not transmit their heritage languages. The dynamics of the Hale et al. vs. Ladefoged vs. Dorian interaction, where each side accuses the other of misrepresenting the interests of endangered language speakers and communities, have been replayed a number of times since 1992.

A particularly well-developed case is Hill's (2002) article on "expert rhetorics." Hill's reflexively critical comments on themes anthropologists and linguists (including herself) use to elicit support for endangered language preservation launched a conversation on the rhetoric of endangered language advocacy in the *Journal of Linguistic Anthropology* (Chafe 2003; Dorian 2002; England 2002; Fishman 2002; Hinton 2002) and informed a broader move to analyze "discourses of endangerment" and their implications for language communities around the world (Duchêne and Heller 2007; Moore 2006; Perley 2012).

Hill worried that advocates were unaware that their multiple audiences included endangered language speakers and communities themselves, who could be alienated by rhetorics of universal ownership, hyperbolic valorization, and enumeration. She encouraged anthropologists and linguists "to collaborate with members of communities to identify rhetorics that emanate from and make sense in terms of community concerns, yet that may be effective with the broader community of funders and policymakers" in order to "make the global conversation in support of endangered languages fully intelligible and useful to all who participate in it" (2002:129-131).

One danger with Hill 2002 and similar metadiscursive responses to endangered language advocacy is that they tend to reproduce the very representational practices they

critique by assuming a singular native's point of view from which particular advocacy discourses appear problematic. In a sense, this is a function of her emphasis on *expert* rhetorics as an obstacle to native access and participation. Her distinction between expert and speech community views resonates with research on language ideological differences between scholars and speakers (Collins 1998). However, it also minimizes cross-cutting diversity among experts and communities alike. Hill is certainly aware that "communities. . . are themselves a diverse audience" (2002:119), but by foregrounding expert/community as the relevant axis of differentiation, her presentation lets variation within both groups fade into the metadiscursive background. The result is a cycle of claims and counter-claims about who, in speaking for endangered languages, misrepresents those who speak or spoke them.

To support her concerns regarding universal ownership, for example, Hill relates an anecdote about a linguist being confronted by "a drunken local man who threatened him with a knife, saying, 'You white people have stolen every single thing we ever had, and now you're stealing our language'" (2002:122). While Hill "know[s] that many members of the community would never have said such a thing," the intoxicated individual plays the more prominent role in her narrative—perhaps he expresses what everyone is thinking but is too polite to say. Certainly, there are communities where rhetorics of universal ownership are antithetical to local values (Debenport 2010b; Whitley 2003), but my own experiences with Siouan language preservation—and others' experiences elsewhere (K. Hill 2002)—suggest that competing views on tribal ownership and public access to heritage languages are more common. Hill's anecdote implies

similar ambivalence. It hints at diverse community responses to the linguist's presence but is mobilized to support her argument that universal ownership is problematic.

Similarly, her discussion of enumeration notes that claims like "only five elderly speakers of language X remain . . . may be heard as dismissive and insulting by members of younger generations in the community who make claims of speakerhood in some form" (2002:128). On the other hand, elderly speakers may support such statements precisely because they exclude younger speakers, whose language may sound different than their own, and elderly speakers may be offended if they are not enumerated as such. Enumeration may privilege elders, but that may be culturally appropriate in certain contexts—or more appropriate than refusing to enumerate elderly speakers in deference to younger generations. Hill mentions intergenerational conflict, a fundamental axis of diversity within many communities (McCarty and Wyman 2009; Meek 2010), but does not develop its implications for her argument: it is not *expert* rhetorics per se that are potentially problematic but simply rhetoric, which develops from interested positions and circulates through strategies to gain power, prestige, funding, reform, etc.

A similar dynamic characterizes Hill's discussion of hyperbolic valorization—rhetorics that use economic metaphors to exaggerate linguistic value. These may alienate communities by implying that their languages are too valuable for everyday circulation/communication or can only be appreciated by connoisseurs. Noting that hyperbolic valorization has been documented in some communities, Hill concludes that these discourses reflect language ideological transformations "likely to appear in the late stages of language shift," when speakers become "rather like endangered-language 'experts'" as their language loses practical value. This distance from "quotidian practice"

is what lets experts and some speakers objectify language as a "priceless treasure" (2002:127). But Hill does not follow this line of argument to its logical conclusion: rather than assimilating speakers in the late stages of language shift to "experts" because both use hyperbolic valorization, it would seem to make more sense to acknowledge that hyperbolic valorization is not an *expert* rhetoric at all but rather a rhetoric that some experts and some speakers employ because they feel that it resonates with their experiences and serves their interests.

Other readers of Hill's article have pointed out that her argument overlooks diversity within and between language communities. Wallace Chafe writes: "My own experiences suggest that native language speakers differ a great deal from one another with regard to these matters. Certainly there is no reason to place all of them in a group that reacts negatively to the themes mentioned" (2003:235). Leanne Hinton finds that Native activists use all three of Hill's problematic rhetorics in their own advocacy (2002:153). Rhetorical overlap between some experts and some community members is a common phenomenon due to borrowing (Gómez de García et al. 2009; Reynolds 2009), ideological manipulation (Loether 2009), and tribal consultation (Meek 2010:136-154).

Given diversity within and between expert and endangered language communities, Hill's concerns about expert rhetoric alienating speakers and communities may be misplaced, and her call for collaboration to identify consensus rhetoric may not address the real challenges of advocacy. Since ideological and rhetorical conflict and consensus cross-cut expert/community distinctions, collaboration may increase tensions: the more anthropologists and linguists "collaborate," the more they participate in factional conflicts within communities. Like ethnographic truths, collaborations are

"inherently *partial*—committed and incomplete" (Clifford 1986:7) because researchers do not collaborate with communities, they collaborate in communities (to twist a phrase from Geertz [1973:22]). And within communities, researchers develop relationships characterized by mutual trust and accountability with specific individuals against a broader background of community diversity (Debenport 2010a; Nevins 2004). In the next section I highlight one axis of diversity within and between endangered language communities—a separation between speakers and non-speakers—and show how language/culture equations exclude the latter from "authentic" identities and political protections.

## Language and Culture Ideologies

Since the value of language diversity on a structural level tends to be lost on a linguistically lukewarm public, the significance of endangered languages must be presented to general audiences in non-linguistic terms. The idea that "the language" is essential for "the culture" has emerged as a prominent and successful rhetoric in this respect. As a result of nationalist ideologies (see below), language/culture equations resonate on an intuitive level for many modern subjects. Some advocates believe that language/culture equation should be emphasized even more than they already are. Fishman, for example, critiques linguists' "linguacentrism" and encourages them to focus on connections between language and culture since "only distinctive cultures and their ways of living (acting, valuing, and believing—or knowing) can either justify or support distinctive languages" (2002:147).

Language/culture equations are also often presented in a way that implies consensus between experts and community members (Chapter 7). Hinton, for example,

finds that the notion of "language as carrier of culture and worldview" is common in many indigenous communities and indeed "that language and culture are linked is one theme that is directed at both [internal and external] audiences by Native and non-Native authors alike" (2002:153-154).

Language/culture equations derive from a language ideology (Schieffelin et al. 1998) that Webster characterizes as a "Herderian conceit in which glottonymically nameable languages map onto ethnonymically nameable peoples" (2011:63). Ideologies involving indexical, iconic, or otherwise essential connections between language, culture, and identity are often naturalized in state nationalisms (Bauman and Briggs 2003; Kroskrity 2000), so much so that they often define the terms of opposition available to minority language activism (Jaffe 2007). A central concern of language ideology research, however, has been to denaturalize ideologies by exploring the semiotic processes that construct them (Irvine and Gal 2000; Silverstein 1985). In this framework, language/culture equations emerge as only one of many possible relations between the terms.

Surveying the range of variation in Native American language/identity relations, for example, Field and Kroskrity suggest that many multilingual tribes historically "emphasized the utilitarian nature of language(s) and . . . did not link language to identity; rather, identity was linked to knowledge of cultural activities" (2009:18). They note "an emergent ideological process of iconization (Irvine and Gal 2000) between a language and various national, ethnic, and tribal identities," which they attribute to state-controlled processes of recognition (2009:23).[24]

[24] For an analogous discussion of an African context, see Sylvain 2014.

In 1980, for example, when Kroskrity started the UCLA Western Mono Language Project, participation in activities like festivals and funerals and helping relatives and other community members made a person Mono. Language was considered "a significant cultural resource but not any more so than a knowledge of basket making or plant use" (2009:194). Kroskrity identifies three recent factors that have contributed to emergent language/identity iconization: language and culture programs in schools, the federal recognition process, and NALA (2009:195). Other researchers in North America have found communities where identities are rooted in cultural practices other than language (Perley 2011), where members actively resist language/culture equations (Muehlmann 2008), or where such rhetorics function as a "cliché" and "rhetorical sacred cow" at odds with actual practices (Dauenhauer and Dauenhauer 1998:75).

Ironically, while efforts to revitalize heritage languages are often justified with rhetoric that "the language" is essential for "the culture," language revitalization itself often ends up separating codes from their traditionally associated cultural settings. David Samuels (2006) discusses how conflicts between Apache traditionalists and Christians have limited communal language instruction to object identification. As a result, children are learning a version of the language systematically stripped of its indexical associations with traditional cultural practices, which Apaches see as either too powerful or too un-Christian for their children.

Other scholars have also noted that revitalization efforts can separate heritage languages from the traditional practices that motivate their revitalization by: prioritizing literacy and other technologies of public circulation in communities where keeping language within the social group is a central value (Debenport 2010b, Whiteley 2003);

emphasizing educational routines over communicative competence (Meek 2010:126; Nevins 2004); and making language an icon of identity through the performance of memorized texts by nonspeakers (Ahlers 2006; Dauenhauer and Dauenhauer 1998:98; Whitley 2003:715).

Thus, while language/culture equations may be circulated with an aura of consensus, they are in fact highly controversial (as the previous chapter indicates). Discourses that draw an equation between language, culture, and identity reflect a particular, nationalist conception of the role of language in social life, which indigenous communities have adopted in their engagements with encompassing political orders (Nevins 2013). This language and culture ideology is simply one of many possible ways of understanding connections between language, culture, and identity, however, and there is considerable ideological diversity within and between indigenous communities concerning how these terms are related.

**Essentialism and Exclusion**

While language/culture equations may seem like a found example of just the kind of collaborative rhetoric that Hill proposes we develop, they can also erase members of indigenous or minority language communities, particularly those who are not themselves speakers of their heritage languages or who are from communities with no heritage language speakers.

Alexandra Jaffe (2007) has challenged language/identity equations, which she terms "essentialist" because "the content of both 'language' and 'identity' and their iconic relationships are seen as fixed, ascribed/natural and unproblematic" (2007:58). She presents examples of such rhetoric—many of which involve "culture" as a connecting

term between "language" and "identity"—from international governmental organizations (UNESCO) and academic and advocacy organizations in the United Kingdom (Hans Rausing Endangered Languages Project, Foundation for Endangered Languages) and United States (National Endowment for the Humanities, National Science Foundation). She analyzes these discourses as "efforts to capitalize on public awareness and recognition of 'cultures' as belonging to discrete communities, and of languages as embodying those cultures in their vocabulary and structures (resulting from widespread popularization of the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis)" (2007:62). While these discourses may be effective, Jaffe notes that they undermine community claims to possess distinctive cultural identities and derived political rights when not all members of the community speak the heritage language:

> Language shift and other forms of contact-induced linguistic change become, by definition, forms of cultural deficiency at both the collective and individual levels. The fact that not all Corsicans speak Corsican undermines claims to have a unique cultural identity and any other rights attached to that (including political self-determination). At the individual level, not speaking Corsican (or speaking it 'badly' or using mixed codes) can give rise to linguistic insecurity and, lurking in the background, a sense of cultural inauthenticity. [2007:63-64]

Similarly, Meek notes that "the Yukon government's slogan 'We Are Our Language,' while intended to communicate solidarity through the identification of a language and culture with a people, ideologically marked heritage speakers (elders) as core members of the 'We' and erased those large numbers of First Nations people who do not speak an aboriginal language" (2010:158). And Donna Patrick (2007) finds that discourses used by First Nations in Canada that emphasize connections between language, land, and spirituality in the context of ongoing land claims negotiations exclude Aboriginal individuals and communities in urban settings. Joseph Errington makes a

similar observation in his discussion of "localist" rhetoric, which often involves a "totalistic linkage between language and identity" but creates a hierarchy of linguistic value based on how closely a language's lexical resources are keyed to an ancestral homeland as opposed to, say, a relatively recently inhabited urban environment (2003:725).

Thus, while I disagree with David Treuer that indigenous languages are essential for indigenous cultures, I believe he is correct to say that "our cultures and our languages . . . are linked to our sovereignty" (2008). In recent years, federal language policy in the United States has been a place for asserting tribal sovereignty around questions of who should be eligible to receive federal language maintenance funding, who owns language and language materials (are they intellectual and/or cultural property?), and what kinds of restrictions—in terms of prescribed methods and criteria for evaluation—the government can impose on tribal grantees (H.R. Hrg. [2006]:36-37, 42, 54, 57; S. Hrg. 106-648[2000]:39-41, 139-141).

But at the same time that language has become a plane for projecting tribal sovereignty, it has also become a basis for sovereignty, to the extent that political protection rests on distinctive cultures and identities, which are linked to indigenous languages. In light of the success ideologies linking language, culture, and identity have had over two decades of Native American language policy formation, it is conceivable that these same now extensively entextualized discourses could be taken up and recontextualized in future policy contexts with unforseeable consequences.

The language/culture/identity/rights nexus becomes especially worrisome considering that rhetoric linking them, as entextualized in policy and law, will outlive

most endangered languages themselves. It is not hard to imagine, for example, that the words of speakers advocating for endangered heritage languages by linking them to their cultures and identities could be used against their communities in the future when their heritage languages are no longer spoken and the government decides to reconsider their political and legal relationship. It is all too easy to define culture in terms of language when there are speakers. It much more difficult when no speakers remain, but by then it may be too late to take back. Will speakers' descendents be haunted by entextualized essentialisms that deny them authentic cultures, indigenous identities, and political futures? Or will they be able to articulate a relativism that allows cultures to carry on after language loss? Recall that NALA 1990 states that "languages . . . are critical to the survival of cultural and political integrity of any people" (25 USC § 2901). Linking language to an intertwined "cultural and political integrity" seems dangerous in light of the afterlives of language.

By the afterlives of language, I mean to signal more than just the ability of advocacy rhetorics to come back to haunt future generations but also to call attention to the realities of language shift. Language revitalization is a profoundly hopeful project (Debenport 2015). Nora England, for example, suggests that the term *endangered language* itself be added to Jane Hill's list of problematic rhetorics because "endangered" can be read by speakers as "becoming extinct" and therefore lead them to believe that preserving their heritage languages is pointless (England 2002:141). Practitioners want to believe that endangered languages will be restored to vitality, so they do not want to linger on the fact that many communities will find after endangerment not revitalization but the absence of heritage languages as everyday means of communication and

repositories of traditional knowledge and cultural practices. While the contemporary exclusions that Jaffe, Meek, Patrick, and Errington identify may lead us to question the wisdom of the language/culture equation, it is the uncontrollable potential for the language/culture equation to threaten the cultural integrity, indigenous identities, and political futures of not just current individuals and communities but all those connected to languages that (if current predictions of massive impending language shift prove true) will have no fluent speakers in a matter of decades or by the end of this century that lead me to believe that the language/culture equation is not a sustainable advocacy rhetoric.[25]

The problem with language/culture equations, then, is that by creating an essentialist connection between language, culture, and identity, they also possess the discursive capacity to dispossess indigenous people of traditional cultures, authentic identities, and political rights. As far as I can tell, the capacity to dispossess appears to be a feature shared by all of the rhetorics that Hill finds problematic. Universal ownership, for example, takes endangered languages away from communities who may claim them and gives them to all humanity. Hyperbolic valorization takes languages away from communities that use them for everyday communication and makes them objects of expert appreciation. Enumeration denies speakerhood to individuals who may consider themselves speakers. Like Hill, I see no reason to use rhetorics with the capacity to dispossess when alternatives are available.

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[25] If what I see as realism regarding prospects for sustaining linguistic diversity in the long-term is interpreted as pessimism perhaps it is because I am most familiar with the status of languages in the Siouan family. Out of around fifteen languages spoken at the time of contact, "only Crow, Sioux, and Stoney—and perhaps Hidatsa—were first languages for, or actively used by, relatively large numbers of speakers" by the end of the twentieth century, a rate of loss of approximately 75-80% (Parks and Rankin 2001:112).

## The Afterlives of Language

When it comes to advocacy rhetoric, anti-advocacy rhetoric, and anti-anti-advocacy rhetoric alike, then, we see a cycle of claims and counter-claims that reproduce the very practices of (mis)representation that they critique: advocacy like Hale et al. 1992 or rhetorics of universal ownership, enumeration, and hyperbolic valorization represent endangered language communities in one way; responses like Ladefoged 1992 or Hill 2002 present contrasting representations; responses to the responses like Hinton 1993 or Chafe 2003 present other representations still.

In a sense, this dissertation can be construed as a response to responses to responses to advocacy. Given irreducible diversity within indigenous and minority speech communities, even rhetorics like language/culture equations that appear to be endorsed by experts and community members can produce the discursive erasure and dispossession of non-speakers. The findings of this dissertation have the potential to point the way to alternative, more inclusive advocacy rhetorics that can acknowledge the efforts of speakers and non-speakers alike to find significance in their heritage languages.

I have described how community linguists, language activists, and educators use literacy (Chapter 4), metalexical discourse (Chapter 5), and translation (Chapter 6) to imbue Chiwere and other Siouan languages with social and cultural import and to resist semantic purification (Samuels 2006), recontextualization in inappropriate contexts, or proposals to leave Chiwere "in the past." I have also discussed how academic linguists and community members support and challenge their efforts, revealing social and ideological collaboration and conflict between diverse practitioners and constituencies (Chapters 3 and 7). A principle finding from my research, then, is that producing and

controlling the significance of Chiwere and other Siouan languages involves a constant and complex investment of social labor.

The importance of Chiwere is neither inherent in the code nor obvious to non-linguistic audiences, even to tribal members for whom it is their heritage language. Part of the goal of language revitalization as a revitalization movement is to invest language as a symbol with social and cultural significance (Chapter 2). In this way, revitalizing Chiwere becomes a means of maintaining continuity with previous generations and a way of being Ioway or Otoe-Missouria. Often, the process of revitalization—rather than any anticipated endpoint—is enough to evoke the relevant associations. Through the process of engaging with Chiwere in forms of study, appreciation, and display—rather than speaking it fluently—it is given an afterlife in which it continues to renew and reshape social relationships, cultural practices, and distinctive identities in the wake of language loss. Discourse foregrounding the investment of social labor that makes languages culturally significant as a contingent and valuable accomplishment—rather than positing an essentialist connection between language, culture, and identity—would bring a more inclusive understanding of language preservation's importance into focus.

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