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Our Ideologies and Theirs

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During the controversies over the Columbian Quincentenary, it became common to speak of the relation between European-derived political formations and indigenous societies as "encounters." Much has also been written recently about the dialogue between anthropologists and their consultants and about how this dialogue fruitfully complicates the apparent dichotomy of observer and observed. It is a theme of this book that ideology is generated in particular social sites, often sites of conflictual exchange. This chapter speaks to the various senses of contact, engagement, and intermeshing involved in the study of ideology. I present a case study from native Northern California that focuses on two language encounters: one of an analyst and native speakers during linguistic fieldwork, one of a native community and state credentialing agencies in official language renewal programs. In both encounters we find divergent beliefs about the nature of language as structure, its place in social action, and its relation to such collective orders as family, tribe, and nation-state. These divergences point to a complex, interlinked history of scientific claim, official recognition, and local contestation that involves field linguists and anthropologists, bureaucratic offices, and an Athabaskan-descended people who have come to be known as the Tolowa. Thus, we truly speak of "our ideologies and theirs" as an intertwining, both wanted and unwanted, of academic and Tolowa perspectives, of bureaucratic imperatives and local concerns. What follows is necessarily about us-and-them. Rather than a general definition of language ideology

and an analysis of how Tolowa language beliefs and language use relates to their social order, I present a case study of interlinked and often rival assumptions about and interests in language, focusing on the divergent beliefs, and showing how assumptions and interests become authoritative in particular contexts.

The Tolowa are an Athabaskan-speaking people who lived along the Smith River valley and the coastal plain in what is now Del Norte County, California (see Figure 12.1). They were decimated by Anglo conquest, and their language is nearly extinct. However, for the last three decades, various Tolowa have been involved in an ambitious effort to document and maintain their language, as a part of more general efforts to reassert a distinct social and political identity. These efforts have involved local initiatives to document and teach the language, the securing of state and federal monies for native language education, and the articulating of Tolowa claims about language, culture, and tradition that sometimes agree and sometimes disagree with academic accounts.

In the second half of the nineteenth century, the Tolowa were subjected to the same genocidal events and policies suffered by many native peoples in Oregon and Northern California (Norton 1979, Rawls 1984). By the turn of the century an original population of more than two thousand had been reduced to 121, according to the U.S. Census of 1910 (Kroeber 1925, Gould 1978), from which point it slowly rebounded to current figures of between four hundred and five hundred people. The consequences of genocide and cultural disorientation have been emphasized in an anthropological literature that has repeatedly announced the extinction or near extinction of Tolowa culture and language (Drucker 1937, Gould 1978). Indeed, the Tolowa could earnestly remark, "Rumors of our death are greatly exaggerated." They have been reported as nearing extinction for nearly as long as they have been subject to either the gaze of academic scrutiny or the grip of bureaucratic recordkeeping; yet they have managed to survive into the late twentieth century.

In many respects, the Tolowa are similar to the surrounding white, rural working-class population—they perform similar wagework, drive similar vehicles, wear similar clothing, and share musical preferences. But there are also differences. Most Tolowa are dark-haired and dark-eyed, and they spend more time with other Indians, both other Tolowa and Yurok, than they do with whites. They have been parties to a decades-long struggle to claim and exercise aboriginal fishing rights along the Klamath and the Smith rivers, as well as along various beaches north from Crescent City to the Oregon border. This puts them in potential conflict with commercial or tourist fishermen (both non-Indian) as well as state Fish and Game officials. Many Tolowa go to feather dances and salmon bakes, typically sponsored and organized by prominent families—the extended, inclusive, multigenerational kin groups that were historically crucial in securing population stability after the cataclysm of conquest (Thornton 1986). Some Tolowa speak fully or know fragments of "Indian language," which academics and official types and now increasing numbers of local people call Tolowa.[1] Tolowa is recognized as a language course in the local high school, and it has been codified in two editions of a dictionary and grammar (Bommelyn and Humphrey 1984, 1989).

The past thirty years have witnessed a renaissance of cultural activity among the Tolowa, as among many other native peoples in Northwest California.[2] This

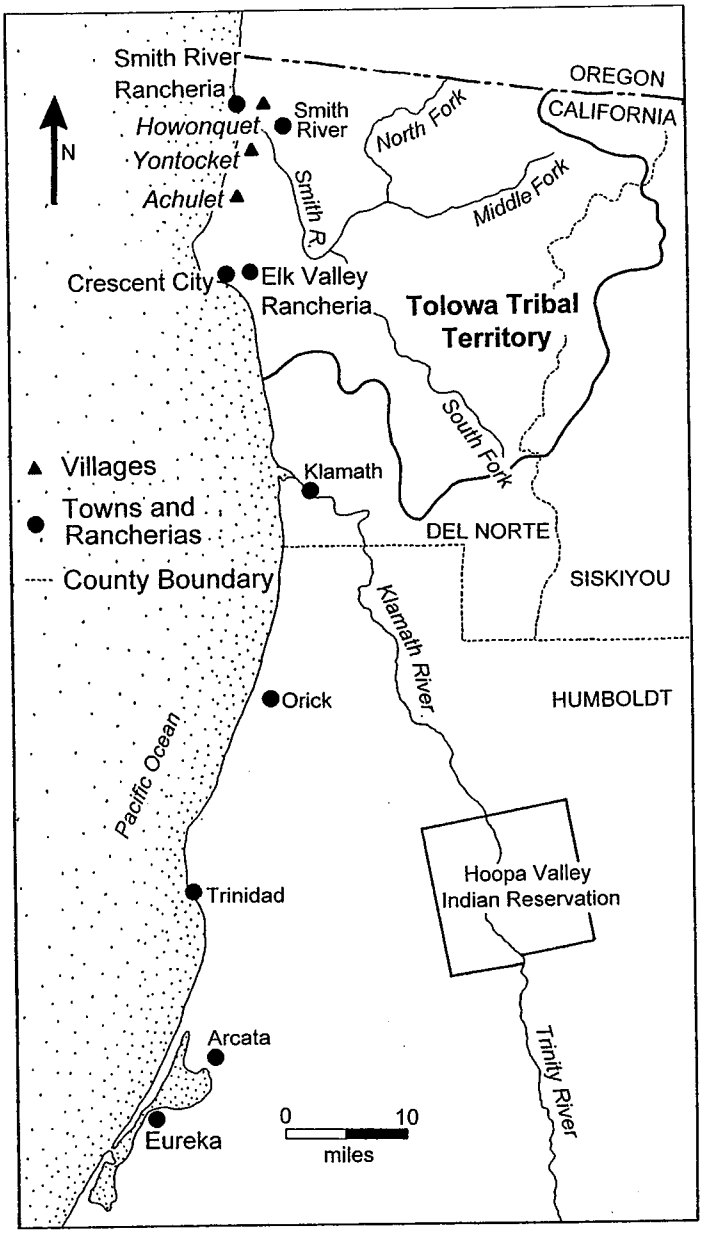

Figure 12.1 Map of pre-contact territory, Del Norte county line, and historical villages and towns. From Collins, *Understanding Tolowa Histories* (1998), with permission from the author.

rebirth has involved political regroupment, cultural assertion, language scholarship, and resource claims. In this multifaceted resurgence and refashioning of a collective identity, various traditional social forms and processes have reemerged in more public arenas: the initiative and rivalry of key extended families in organizing cultural and political activities; the continuing practice of ocean and river fishing, despite ongoing conflicts with state Fish and Game agencies and seafront property developers; and the continously revamped *NedaS*[3] 'dance'. At the same time, their land base has been reduced to a tiny fraction of its original size, and the Tolowa have had to rely on wage labor for survival. Practitioners of cultural/spiritual activities such as dancing have played a game of hide-and-seek with both legal officials and churchmen throughout the century, and now the specialists and organizers are few in number and overextended. The Tolowa language has not been learned as a first language by children since the 1920s. As a result, the linguistic community is moribund.[4]

This chapter is part of a more general effort on my part to understand Tolowa survival and persistence. A more comprehensive analysis is presented in another book (Collins 1998), in which issues of history, politics, and language are more fully developed. For our purposes here, suffice it to say that the effort to understand has required me to challenge disciplinary perspectives—to shift away from a "salvage linguistics" that documents for science another dying language, while trying to understand what losing a language means for those who face that loss; to move away from a "salvage ethnography" that analyzes memory culture, while trying to understand current social dynamics against the backdrop of long-announced and externally perceived cultural death. Such questioning of disciplinary perspectives is also necessary, I believe, when analyzing language ideologies. As academics, our categories of analysis are a part of linguistic practices that characterize social realities, and we inhabit positions as specialists in state-certified institutions that make our statements and our silences unavoidably interest laden.

The two encounters presented and analyzed in this chapter should help flesh out this argument. The first concerns fieldwork exchanges, during which academic categories of analysis are quietly though tellingly resisted by native language consultants. The second encounter concerns certification struggles, during which academics' institutional positions as experts are part of a larger contest to define social and linguistic realities.

Field Encounters

I began fieldwork on Tolowa late in 1981, having been encouraged to do so because it was an Athabaskan language that apparently had never been adequately described and for which there were several living native speakers—the classic charter for "salvage linguistics." Traveling to the Northwest tip of the state of California, I made contact with one of those speakers, who was quite happy to "talk Indian language" with me.

Throughout the next several years of short periods of fieldwork, ranging from three to four days to two months, I concentrated on structural questions in my

analysis. I began with a restricted set of syntactic questions derived from earlier work on the evolution of Athabaskan case-marking and verb transitivity. Early on I worked up a short synoptic overview of the grammatical system—the phonology, word-formation processes, and primary syntactic patterns—and spent the next several years writing up expansions of small sections of the overview. These expansions include analyses of historical change in the system of alienably and inalienably possessed nominals (Collins 1985); a fuller description of linked processes of change in vocalic quality, length, and nasalization (Collins 1989); and an analysis of syntactic structure and word formation (Collins 1988). Throughout the interspersed fieldwork and analysis, I had as my primary object of analysis grammatical structure. Phonology and syntax were investigated to establish the grammatical core of the language. Lexicon was analyzed to establish the complex combinatory mechanisms that lay at the heart of the language, at the intersection of word formation and syntax as typically understood. Texts were elicited and analyzed as ways of expanding the analysis of lexicon and syntax.

Throughout this period, I noted the good humor of various language consultants with my focused and narrow elicitations of contrastive alternates and distributional possibilities, whether of sound structure, word structure, or sentence structure. But I also slowly registered a consistently different orientation to language. Simply put, they were interested in words, not grammar.

At the end of a long and wearying elicitation session on phonological contrasts that involved multiple repetitions of the form for 'coyote' */sk'3m'/* (the second consonant of which, */k'/*, is nearly inaudible in this environment), my first language consultant, Ed Richards Jr., launched into a story of how *sk'3m'* fell from the skies. He told the story first in English, then in Tolowa, and followed with laughing yet serious commentary on Coyote's trickster ways and sexual misdoings. After a difficult session on the rarely occurring reciprocal affix */L/*, my second primary consultant, Berneice Humphrey, provided one of her "favorite words" made with this reciprocal form, *LuLte'* 'lovers' (literally: 'they want each other'). Our working sessions often contained a tension between my efforts at focused paradigm elicitation and her presentation of diverse lexical constructions, her questioning of the distinction between whether one "would" and "could" say a given utterance, and her insistence that controlled paradigmatic elaboration was *not* how the "Indian language" operated.

Loren Bommelyn, the current teacher of the Tolowa language course in the local high school and a prime force in the Tolowa effort to document and maintain their own language, has impressed me over the years, both with his interest in structural patterns and, more recently, with his consistent placement of both lexical items and sentences in narrative or conversational contexts. Counterposed to the linguist's presentation and consideration of grammatical patterns in isolation, he always presented a discursive context, and typically a cultural exegesis. Finally, while working with a group of local Tolowa adults whose expertise in the language was self-acknowledged to be limited, I was made curious by the husband of one such consultant, a man in his fifties whose laconic manner, jeans, and pickup made him seem the typical western farmhand. Yet while he, his wife, and I talked about "old words" and their loss, he commented on his memory of the older folks, their

continuous stories that he missed, and, most pointedly, the fact that they had names for every feature of geography in the Smith River drainage, as he put it: "a name for every riffle in the creek."

What do we make of these differing orientations, to grammatical regularity versus lexical particularity? It is a familiar contrast, an old story among fieldworkers, and our linguistic discipline gives one explanation. Since Boas (1911), Saussure ([1916]1959), and Sapir ([1925]1949), we have known that grammatical patterns are abstract. Speakers are rarely aware of them explicitly, although those patterns form the cognitive preconditions for their speech behavior. A recent book that celebrates the cognitive riches of human language argues that what speakers know when they know a language is really not knowledge in any normal sense of the term; rather, it is a deeply unconscious feeling for form and pattern, accessible only indirectly (Jackendoff 1993).

Anthropological linguistics has come at the problem of lexicon and grammar slightly differently and has been more preoccupied with the issue of awareness of language. Sapir argued that regular grammatical forms and processes are abstract, part of the "conceptual world of science," while words are practical, the province "of history, of art" (1921:32–33). Whorf argued that word reference is the focus of our beliefs about how language works but that grammatical configurations, of which we are typically unaware, exert a profound influence on our thinking about the everyday world ([1939]1956). 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).

In both lines of argument, it is implied that native speakers are aware of and preoccupied with words; only the comparative analyst recovers the grammatical configuration. We need, however, to complicate this received wisdom by asking about the analyst's relation to language. As Briggs notes elsewhere in this volume, and as Silverstein has argued in some detail (1979), we cannot grant sciences of language a special status vis-à-vis ideologies of language. Their fates are linked, and one way to explore that linkage is to pursue some questions. In particular, What are the historical conditions for the production of structuralist knowledge? What might be missed or overlooked when the "history and art" of words is shunted aside in pursuit of grammatical pattern, the "world of science"?

It is widely acknowledged that structuralist abstraction and generality requires detachment, a distance and distancing, between analyst and object of analysis. This distance and distancing have an historical as well as a contemporary dimension. Voloshinov, in *Marxism and the Philosophy of Language*, argued that Saussurean linguistics, "abstract objectivism" as he termed it, resulted from the development of grammatical analysis through "encounters with the alien voice" (1973:65–82): medieval and early modern grammarians analyzing the texts of nonvernacular classic

languages; comparative philologists working with the texts of extinct prior stages of national languages; imperial explorers collecting word lists from the languages of a world they so casually subjected to domination and analysis. Bakhtin (1981) also argues that focusing solely on the stable patterns of the "alien voice" leads to neglect of the dynamic, tension-filled heteroglossia and multivocality of language use. Viewing matters from a contemporary, rather than a historical, perspective, we may say that grammatical analysis requires a removal from everyday preoccupations with language use. In anthropology this detachment typically involves an asymmetrical relation between fieldworker and consultants (in which, paradoxically, the learner sets the agenda for what will be learned). Writing of structuralist analysis and this privileged detachment, Bourdieu has put the matter quite sharply: removed from actual engagement in the worlds it studies, structural analysis substitutes "the logic of intelligibility" for "the logic of practice" (1977; see also Fabian 1983 for similar arguments).

But what of this "logic of practice" in the case at hand? What can we say about this orientation to the native, that is, nonalien *word*? First, we may note that the words are indexes of stories and situations; they are embedded within and associated with the art of remembering, a remembering interested in desire and sexual malfeasance and a remembering concerned with a relationship to land. It is a poststructuralist insight, a renovation of the legacy of Freud, that language is intertwined with desire, understood not only as the erotic taproots of humanity's presocial yearning—though Coyote certainly frolics in these shady glens—but also as desire for *sense*, for mastery, for overcoming life's losses, uncertainties, and mortality through names and tales that render the world meaningful (Kristeva 1981, Lacan 1970, Obeyesekere 1990). The words recalled are also often names for places—"every riffle in the creek"—and knowing the words is tied up with knowing what occurred at those places, why they are called by that name. It is a geography that is also a history. As Kari (1986) has argued for the Alaskan Athabaskan peoples, place names are a mnemonic, a "storage and retrieval" system for oral cultures. As Basso (1990) has argued for the Western Apache, place names encode an evaluative stance, a moral tradition tied to a memory of place. For example, *st3ndas3n* is the name for an island in the Smith River that served as one of the few Tolowa villages that survived the 1850s massacres. The island disappeared by 1906, due to erosion; as site name, *st3ndas3n* figures in tales of cultural exuberance and of white trickery and thievery.[5]

Second, we should note that the stories and situations change. The Tolowa have faced the imminent loss of their language for the past several decades; their story traditions are more endangered than those of the Western Apache, their sense of place more embattled than that of the Alaskan Athabaskans. So there is a new story, rendered in English, a tale of collecting words. Two of the most active members of the local language program volunteered accounts of such collecting in a general discussion of the origins of this program. Loren Bommelyn had several stories of "lost words" being recalled, confirmed, or corrected by aunts and uncles, typically hours or days after an initial language query. Berneice Humphrey told of an older neighbor, "an elder," who would often come several days after an initial query, bringing an "old word" for Berneice to write down and include in the lan-

guage documentation effort. Old words have value, and it is through relations of kinship and other close ties that the collecting occurs. The collecting and passing on of names and tales is part of Tolowa cultural persistence that connects geography, history, and cosmology (Slagle 1987). As Pred (1990) has argued in *Lost Words and Lost Worlds*, his lexicographical and sociological reconstruction of working-class Stockholm at the turn of the century, names for everyday places and everyday things are forms of appropriation and occupation, ways of being in a place and time. This is true, perhaps especially true, when the occupation is threatened, when one's practice of life and names for the practice of life are overrun by dominant discourses and procedures, whether those of the elite classes in working-class Stockholm or those of settlers and their English in the case of the Tolowa.

I have suggested some of what is at issue when an academic concern with systematic regularity leads to a neglect of linguistic practice, its historical situation, and its sociocultural implications. There is, however, another encounter that we should now consider. It is related to the first, though it occurs on a different, more overtly political terrain. The second encounter is between the Tolowa community, more particularly, its language program, and a network of official institutions concerned with legitimating language.

Contesting Tolowa: Community, Academy, and State

Official institutions (in this case, educational credentialing offices and clearinghouses for native language programs) are concerned with the relation between language and culture seen as the rights of officially defined groups, and their concern with the nexus of language, culture, and group raises a basic question: What kind of description of language is to take priority? Is a structuralist analysis of grammatical and lexical resources to be preferred? There are many reasons for assuming so, but the structuralist paradigm leaves unresolved a fundamental question: What is the location, in social or cognitive space, of structural-grammatical knowledge? Is language to be seen as an abstract, asocial knowledge located in the heads of individual speakers, as standard grammatical theory suggests (Chomsky 1988), or is it a "community grammar," an organization or distillation of aggregate linguistic knowledge and practice (Labov 1972, Hymes 1974)? The close linkage of language and social group suggested by the notion of "community grammar" has proven quite problematic (Bauman et al. 1987, Gumperz 1982), and the individual-speaker option simply avoids the issue. Perhaps another sort of description should take priority, for example, the local description and compilation of the language, drawn from years of consultation with speakers but organized on different principles from standard grammatical analysis. If the latter is preferred, then what about claims that this is not a scientific description of the language? Whichever option is chosen, the question remains: How does language map onto social groups?

In the Tolowa case, this question is particularly vexing, for this community has faced linguistic extinction as the last speakers for whom this was a first language have passed away. Formal Western schooling, Christianization, incorporation into a white-dominated wage economy, and a century of pervasive anti-Indian

sentiment have tested and transformed Tolowa resource bases, patterns of kinship, forms of ritual celebration, and language learning (Collins 1997, Gould 1978, Slagle 1985). Since the 1920s, ethnic Tolowa children have learned English first and Tolowa only if specially situated and inclined. The result is that today many adults and children know some of the language, but very few speak it fluently or regularly. Social interaction in family or larger social gatherings may involve selective use of Tolowa words and phrases, but English is the shared and dominant medium.

It was awareness of and concern about the trend toward this state of affairs that led a group of Tolowa to begin resisting linguistic extinction some thirty years ago. Those efforts have resulted in a dictionary and grammar and a teaching program, all of which make claims about language and tradition in the past and in the present. Those claims have not gone uncontested. If individual Tolowa speakers have faced dismissal or ignoring of their lexical interests by a field linguist confident in and unselfconscious of his disciplinary assumptions, the Tolowa in their collective efforts to document and preserve their language have faced questioning by academic linguists and management procedures by state offices charged with administering bilingual and bicultural education programs.

Prior to my fieldwork, as well as that of other academic linguists, various Tolowa people had jointly undertaken to document and analyze their language. Working with a local university-affiliated Indian community development funding consortium, they used a non-IPA transcription system, the Unifon Alphabet, and a basic set of English grammatical categories for their descriptive framework. They proposed and initiated a Tolowa language course in the local high school, which they have conducted continuously since 1973, and they published, in 1984, a first edition and, in 1989, a revised and expanded second edition of *Tolowa Language* (Bommelyn and Humphrey 1989). This is a linguistic compendium comprising more than four hundred pages, an English-to-Tolowa dictionary plus various cultural-linguistic sections on genealogies, place names, and so forth.

This local and self-initiated effort at language preservation has proceeded apace, with low-key and continuing controversies over authentic versions of Tolowa. As I began fieldwork more than a decade ago, I was warned to work with "real speakers" and not with those who ran the language program, who had only "limited knowledge of the language," being people who had learned Tolowa as a second language. And as I worked with my first consultant, an elder whose first language was Tolowa, I was told by academic contacts that he was good but did not know the language as well as 'X' and 'Y', who had passed away. Like some linguistic will-o'-the-wisp, the real Tolowa was always just receding on the historical horizon.[6] The local language program efforts at language documentation and teaching have also been questioned for more than a decade, although never, to my knowledge, in print. Since before beginning fieldwork with this group, I have heard dismissive comments about the value of the Unifon script by various prominent Athabaskanists. One derided it as "look[ing] like a batcode," and another warned me in the mid-1980s against lending any academic credibility to the Unifon script as a system for linguistic description.

There is some justification for this academic skepticism. Those native speakers who died in the 1970s were experienced raconteurs and singers, as well as con-

sultants of choice for midcentury linguistic fieldworkers; those who died in the 1980s had felt quite clearly their linguistic isolation. Those who continue the language program have learned the language as a second language, albeit with a singular dedication and impressive results. Similarly, an analysis of either edition of *Tolowa Language* shows that the Unifon script, which is fundamentally based on English orthography and phonetics, fails to make certain consonantal distinctions found in Tolowa, and it overdifferentiates in the vocalic system. The Tolowa Unifon orthography does not have a separate glottal stop ['']; instead, it lists a series of vowel-glottal sequences as separate elements: *I'* for */i/+/'/*; *E'* for */e/+/'/*; *O'* for */a/+/'/*. This solution requires a double series of plain and glottalized vowels, and it does not allow for syllable-initial glottals, as in */n'e/* 'land'. In addition, as noted, the grammatical analysis in *Tolowa Language* is based on a simplified English plan, a past-present-future tense scheme, although this Athabaskan language has aspect as its fundamental temporal category, with tense a secondary derivative. Thus, verb paradigms are listed for present and past tense, as in *naYa* 'he walks' or *nasya* 'he walked', with the *s-* perfective, the *Y-* imperfective, and the *n-* repetitive left unexamined. These problems notwithstanding, we should note a double maneuver in the informal academic criticism: locate the real language prior to or away from current speakers, and locate an "adequate description" elsewhere than in the one currently available, a product of local language activists.

This controversy about authentic knowledge and representation is further overlaid with another knowledge interest. The language program has not existed in isolation. From its inception through the late 1980s, it had received financial support from the California State University–affiliated Center for (Indian) Community Development. Teachers in the local high school language course have received special Indian Teacher Education and Eminence credentials from the California state educational system, with the assistance of the Center for Community Development. And if academic linguists have been dismissive of local efforts at language documentation for their failure to achieve descriptive adequacy, the Community Development Center has also had its axe to grind, for it was deeply enmeshed in the business of getting and administering federal and state monies for a variety of Indian-aimed programs, including programs for bilingual and bicultural education.

In the fall of 1987, shortly after a field trip, I was contacted by an associate director of the Community Development Center. Under increasing pressure to legitimate its linguistic efforts, in the wake of "English Only" legislation in California (Adams and Brink 1991), the center wanted to bring in university-affiliated Athabaskan linguists for workshops on Comparative Athabaskan, the structure of the local Athabaskan languages, and the curriculum of the local language programs. But there was a price tag. It wanted not only expertise for workshops but also positive academic evaluation of testing materials for an Indian Teacher Education credential. In my case, it wanted evaluation of the Tolowa section of the test.

The materials were sent to me. They were interesting documents, revealing an official conception of "exotic" language and social life. The Indian Cultures section of the test asked a series of questions about various cultural domains—traditional kinship, flora, fauna, and domestic-food gathering activities—for a vari-

ety of Northwest California Indian groups. Students were tested for knowledge of vocabulary drawn from these domains. The Language section presented the Unifon script for each language, a short list of grammatical features, and a story in each language. The Tolowa examples illustrated verbal paradigms in terms of English tense categories, and the syntax of sentences was difficult to determine from the examples given. The discussion of verb tenses listed present, past, distant past, and mythical past, as if these were regular grammatical categories in all four languages, rather than rhetorical options. It said nothing about verb-internal aspect and listed some incorrect forms for Tolowa (e.g., *nasya* 'he walked' was listed as 'he walks'). I checked the roster of consultant linguists and saw listed Algonkianists and Hokanists affiliated with California universities but no one who worked on Athabaskan languages—that is, no one who had worked with the relevant language family.

I wrote back to the associate director, expressing my interest in conducting a workshop and my commitment to working with the Tolowa folks who ran the local language program but also laying out my criticisms of the test as it existed and offering to work on its revision. Shortly thereafter I was phoned by the associate director and told that the center needed a positive evaluation if it was to keep monies for its teacher education program. I said that I had to stand by my criticisms of the existing materials. Shortly after that conversation, I was contacted by the local Tolowa language teacher, who was checking a report from the associate director that I, along with other linguists, was trying to "wreck everything they had done." We talked, I explained my position, and I found out that he had never seen a copy of the teacher's certification test. I sent a copy, and we subsequently discussed some of the Tolowa examples, the oddness and ungrammaticality of which he also found puzzling.[7]

The lesson of this incident is that it is not just the local Tolowa people and distant academic linguists who have a stake in defining an "Indian Language." Local funding consortia also have an interest in such an enterprise, especially as they encounter and interact with the certifying and credentialing operations of state agencies, that is, as a given representation of language is called into question or maintained as legitimate (Bourdieu 1991). In the case just discussed, it did not matter that the treatment of culture was overly simple and the description of language bungled from the perspective of native speaker or linguist. What mattered for ongoing legitimacy was rendering a claim, a representation of cultural and linguistic knowledge of "the Tolowa," in the appropriate, stipulated format of a test and then obtaining expert support, in the form of academics on an advisory board, regardless of their particular linguistic specialization.[8]

We may compare this legitimation effort through professorial and other expert opinion with Tolowa-internal disputes about authority for language. Local Tolowa, both older adults with varying knowledge of the language and their younger kinspeople, do at times question the validity of the *Tolowa Language* compendium and the form of the language learned in the local school. They do not criticize it, however, as academic linguists do, as "not really Tolowa" because it is a violation of a stable structural system that existed prior to current circumstances. Rather, they say, "That is not how we at Smith River [or Achulet or Elk Valley] speak . . .

that is not how my family spoke." Unlike many Americans who assume that cultural chaos reigns unless there is an official standard language (Adams and Brink 1991), Tolowa skeptics question the effort to have a *general* linguistic description for the entire speech community. They call on local definitions of language, as the communicative wherewithal of extended kinship groupings, a view of language and collective order apparently found in much of the aboriginal Pacific Northwest (see Hymes 1981). And, indeed, any inquiry into current cultural and political efforts, whether to preserve fishing rights, to obtain services for a Rancheria, or to initiate language preservation, quickly unveils the importance of local kin groupings, albeit in the name of a larger tribal-national social group (see Collins 1998).

Conclusion

The preceding analysis raises the hoary problem of emic and etic perspectives. Can we study Tolowa language ideology (*their* emic beliefs about language structure and use in relation to collective order) in some neutral, descriptive, etic metalanguage, or must ideological analysis also interrogate our ideologies (*our* beliefs and practices in relation to partially shared social arrangements)? I argue for the latter position. Contemporary American Indian social conditions often involve intricate and volatile connections between local lifeways and state-level processes of a legal and regulatory nature. In such circumstances, academic researchers are never disinterested; they are always tied to interests—local interests, official interests, career interests, perhaps all simultaneously and uneasily.[9] Academic beliefs about language and academic words about language, however well buttressed by accepted theory, are part of the social game that links Indian lives to university careers and both to bureaucratic-legal descriptions and decisions.

Let me review the key encounters discussed in this chapter and what they reveal about contrasting, contested views of, and practices with language. In the field encounter, we have an orientation to words as cultural indices in a situation of enduring alarm about the state of traditional linguistic culture—a culture of stories and dance songs, of names "for every riffle in the creek," of an "Indian language" now spoken by very few. This contrasts with an orientation to grammatical pattern, our structuralist legacy, which bequeaths us both a powerful theory of language description and fundamental ambiguities about the social mooring of linguistic systems. In the local/nonlocal encounter over "authentic" Tolowa we have a multiparty conflict: academic linguists question local efforts in the name of an always earlier, more systematic system; certifying officials seek expert opinion to validate an image of ethnic cultural-linguistic tradition-as-test; and local people question the presumption of a general representation, while recognizing that without efforts at such representation, the language tradition is indeed "lost."

In such encounters, ideology is always present. It reveals itself in basic assumptions about what counts and in practices that build representations (documents, descriptions, images, and stories) that reflect those assumptions. It is present in efforts to authorize one representation and undermine others, efforts rooted in conflicting and complicit institutional, disciplinary, and local-political commitments

to define tradition and language. Such assumptions, practices, efforts and commitments define the academic "us" as well as the ethnographic "them."

In terms found elsewhere in this volume, ideology is situated; it is a practice, a producing of language and the social, not an abstracted conceptual grid. Representations of the real are weapons in the struggle to define the real (Bourdieu 1984). Orthographies carry in their train rich histories of conflict, for behind apparently technical questions of representing sound hides a yearning for a fully adequate representation of language; and there is always a politics to this quest (Schieffelin and Doucet this volume). Ideologies of language involve selection, emphasis, and counteremphasis. What is the heart, the core of language? Is it words, as with the Tolowa or with Tewa language purists (Kroskrity this volume)? Is it grammatical structure, as standard theory teaches, or some privileged zone of intentionality, as with Warao shamanistic speech (Briggs this volume)?

Semiotic analyses, especially those developed by Silverstein (1979, this volume), have taught us much about the intricate interweaving of context, language, and intentionality. Such analyses have helped revitalize the study of language ideologies by emphasizing the place of words, situations and practices in the realm of "ideas." But those of us who would describe and analyze this interweaving never fully extricate ourselves from our contexts and interests. We do not escape ideology with a science that studies language use rather than grammar, that considers power as well as context, though we may sharpen our historical appreciation of the interpenetrating, conflicting visions and practice, of language that comprise "our" ideologies and "theirs."

NOTES

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1. The Tolowa term for themselves was simply *x3S* 'people' and for their language *x3S weya'* '(the) people speak', or in approximate translation, the current "Indian language." See also fellow Athabaskan usage such as Navajo *dine bizaad* 'the people's language'. The term *Tolowa* appears to be a modification of a Yurok phrase that became the name used in academic and bureaucratic description for Smith River Athabaskans. As noted in the text, "Tolowa" is now part of local Indian and non-Indian usage.

2. For those unfamiliar with this part of the world, a lively and informative discussion and depiction of California Indian cultural life, often by various native artists, activists, and intellectuals, can be found in *News from Native California* (quarterly issues, 1987–), Heyday Press, Berkeley, California.

3. Tolowa examples are in standard IPA transcription except for *S* = alveopalatal fricative (š), *L* = voiceless lateral fricative (ɬ), *Y* = velar fricative (ɤ), and *3* = schwa (ə).

4. This historical process of devastation and regroupment is described in an

acknowledgement petition prepared by the Tolowa Nation group in the mid-1980s (see Slagle 1985). I have analyzed some of the historical and contemporary dilemmas in a separate work (Collins 1998).

5. The last great ten-day dances are said to have been held on *st3ndas3n* just before the island washed away; embattled Tolowa were allowed to settle on the island by U.S. militia, but more land was supposedly promised; later, the papers or deeds were lost (Collins 1998, Gould 1966, Slagle 1987).

6. As I have gathered material from various consultants and assembled, transcribed, and checked tapes that have been collected by various linguistic foraging parties over the past three decades, the historical and sociological, as well as the cognitive, location of "Tolowa grammar" has grown more complicated.

7. Shortly after this, the directorship of the Community Development Center changed hands, and the credentialing program was reorganized.

8. This is not an unusual situation. It is common to Mexico and Australia (John Haviland, personal communication).

9. As Indian scholars such as Vine Deloria Jr. have argued for the past several decades (Deloria 1969).

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