BEIN' LUM: LANGUAGE AS A LEGITIMIZING FORCE FOR AN ILLEGITIMATE PEOPLE

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"There is, in fact, nothing at all that about the Lumbees that fits conventional notions of what it means to be Indian. Yet for as long as any Lumbee can remember, they have possessed an unflagging conviction that they are simply and utterly Indian, a tenacious faith that is troubled only by the failure of most other Americans to recognize it."
-Fergus M. Bordewich, 1997

The story of the Lumbee begins in the muddy backswamps of North Carolina, off highway I-95, in an area known by locals as Robeson County, Robco, or nine-dime (because of the area code, 910). It is a place historically and characteristically defined by its rare triad of racial diversity, split into almost neat thirds of Indian, Black, and white inhabitants.[2] The formermost of which consist mainly of the Lumbee, a tribe with a history nearly as muddy as the swamps where it was made.[3] The Lumbee stand over 60,000 members strong as the largest Indian tribe east of the Mississippi river, and the largest Indian group in the United States without reservation land. The tribe is larger than the more widely known Apache, Creek, Pueblo, and Iroquois tribes, however, "Lumbee have been largely ignored by the federal government, the Bureau of Indian Affairs, and people outside of North Carolina, who rarely know who they are" (Wolfram and Reaser 2014). Why has the record of this large tribe been essentially lost outside of Robeson County? The answer, I argue, lies in the Lumbee's complicated history with racial ambiguity, their minoritized language, and outsiders of the Lumbee community's inability to recognize and legitimize what they do not understand.

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[2] Census Quickfacts, Robeson County (2017)
[3] I have chosen to use "Indian" in place of Native American, Indigenous, or First Nations in reference to the Lumbee despite its detractive, demeaning use and historically established inaccuracy because it is what I have found the Lumbee regularly self-identify as and what has been historically used to describe the Lumbee (Starr 1994). However, I use "Native" in reference to other tribes and for the combined "Native" people of the Americas.

Though they have struggled for nearly three centuries to fit into a society that refuses to acknowledge and legitimize their complicated, existence that counters hegemonic ideas of what it means to be "Native," their own sense of identity has remained strong. Insiders of the tribe have told outsiders looking to understand, "...A Lumbee is what he says he is. How do you like that one?" (Blu 1980). More than physical appearance, geography, and surname, anthropologist Karen Blu cites "behavioral characteristics," including "Talkin' Indian," keeping one's word, and owning land in Robeson County as the most reliable way to identify a Lumbee person, unlike most, if not all other racial categorizations. Blu, an anthropologist but not a linguist, says there was no comprehensive sociolinguistic documentation of what she calls the "Indian Dialect" (what is now referred to as Lumbee English). "Talkin' Indian" is something she noted to be important in understanding Lumbee identity and ingroup membership, while admitting her lack of competence in linguistics to make any substantiating claim about language's contribution to Lumbee Identity.

There is now, however, extensive scholarship on language and identity, and many sociolinguistic examinations of the specific syntactic, lexical, and morphological variations that constitute Lumbee English. Penelope Eckert (2012), Sam Kirkham (2015), and Nelson Flores and Jonathan Rosa (2015) lay the framework that is helpful when thinking about language and identity. Eckert (2012) summarized the three waves, or modes of analyzing, sociolinguistics that have taken place within the last 60 years. William Labov's groundbreaking study of Martha's Vineyard (1963) was the first to explore how simple pronunciation shifts in the vowel /ay/ could be utilized (consciously or not) by locals to reflect different local identities. The first wave of sociolinguistics is characterized by surveys and interviews, and later finding the links between linguistic variations like vowel shifts and "macrosociological" categories like gender, sex, class,

age, or ethnicity. The second wave employs a more ethnographic approach to collecting data, and places importance on more local, "participant-designed" categories than larger, "macrosociological" categories. The third wave recognizes the dynamic nature of identity, and instead of viewing linguistic variations as incidental, recognizes variation as inherently connected to a group's identity, as a "social semiotic system capable of expressing the full range of a community's social concerns" (94). By using ethnographic methods, Kirkham (2015) analyzed the vowel in "happy" and its variations used by secondary school girls to subconsciously state their identity in terms of geography, ethnicity, and social class in different social situations. In this way, Kirkham (2015) offers us an example of a third-wave style approach as it not only examines local and "macrosociological" categories as expressed through speech, but also examines how notions of race, class, and gender, can all influence each other and can also influence speech.

Flores and Rosa (2015) explain the fundamental theoretical concept underlying their work, *monoglossic language ideologies,* as ideologies that "position idealized monolingualism in a standardized national language as the norm to which all national subjects should aspire" (151). In the contexts of both this article and my own research, this "standardized national language" is English, but specifically the linguistic variety called "Standard American English." This dialect is considered "professional," "accentless," and "neutral," as an unrealistic expectation of speaking written English. Flores and Rosa (2015) also discern a difference between "minority" and "minoritized" languages, used to describe languages spoken by and associated with minoritized groups like African American English, Chicano English, and Lumbee English. "Minoritized" language shifts the responsibility of perpetuating raciolinguistic ideologies to the "white listener," who deems the language use as separate from the "standard." In that way, the

language becomes *minoritized,* not inherently *minority.* Flores and Rosa argue that this shift in ideology allows us to "push even further by examining not only the 'eyes' of whiteness but also its 'mouth' and 'ears'" (151). Unsurprisingly, like every other facet of a minoritized group's identity, language is also under scrutiny when its legitimacy is decided by the "outsiders" of those groups. Native identity particularly is defined, shaped, and policed by outsiders because of the notions of "Federal recognition" of a tribe, a blatant way the United States Federal Government can decide who is "native" enough. Because the Lumbee lack the traditional "Native" characteristics of other tribes, outsiders have troubles not only identifying who is Lumbee, but who the Lumbee are. Language has been one of the few reliable factors that not only insiders but also outsiders of the tribe use to identify who is Lumbee.

Language has always been key to understanding Lumbee identity. Hamilton McMillan, a white observer that came to Robeson County in the 1880's, noted that not only did the Indian group he found spoke English, but "almost pure Anglo-Saxon" English (qtd in Sider, 1994). This, however, is not reflected by the observations of D'Arcy McNickle, who from the Bureau of Indian Affairs came to Robeson Count in 1936 to collect affidavits and other data from people registering as Indian under the Indian Reorganization Act of 1934. McNickle stated, "…there are reasons for believing that until comparatively recently *some remnant of language* still persisted among these people" ("Senate Hearing 109-610: Lumbee Recognition Act, S. 660" 2006). Because recordings of Lumbee English speakers were not created or made available until the late 1960's, there is no way of knowing what Lumbee speakers sounded like during this volatile time of Lumbee identity. If we assume that Lumbee English is the result of some unknowable nonEnglish ancestral language with the influences of other (Euro-American and Afro-American)

speakers' language, we can assume that the language reflects some real-world racial tensions and offers us some insight into understanding Lumbee identity.

In order to understand the situation the Lumbee currently find themselves in, it is important to know the history, and Lumbee history is one that is complicated by many factors. The first documentation of American Indians in this region of North Carolina was in 1732, when King George II signed a land grant to two men of the Lumbee tribe, Henry Berry and James Lowrie (McMillan 1888 qtd in Blu 1980). The most widely accepted tradition in the tribe is one that links Lumbee history to the descendants of the Roanoke "Lost" Colony of 1585, founded by Sir Walter Raleigh. In fact, the first official "Indian name" for the Lumbee was "Croatan," (Sider, 1994) after the inscription made by members of the colony, suggested as a clue of their whereabouts. The local legend suggests that members of the Lost Colony found their way inland to the swamplands of present-day Robeson County, eventually married into the Native tribes of the region, and created the tradition of an ethnically mixed group of people. This is reflected in the firsthand observations of the previously mentioned McMillan, who came to Robeson County in the 1880s, and there found a "large tribe of Indians, speaking English, tilling the soil, owning slaves, and practicing many of the arts of civilized life" (McMillan 1888 qtd in Blu 1980).

The Lumbee's complicated creation story is complemented with a complicated history with ethnic identifying labels. The following is a brief glimpse into the history of the Lumbee as documented by Sider (1994) and Blue (1980) and should not be characterized as a comprehensive view of Lumbee history up until 1956.[4] Between 1790 and 1826, the Lumbee were regarded as free people of color, though their relationship with race was tricky because, as

[4] I do not want to provide a diminished history of the Lumbee, but because of the scope of this study, I have included the major name changes that offer "outsiders" a glimpse into the difficulties the Lumbee have had both in being named by outsiders and in naming themselves.

described earlier, some Lumbee owned slaves, spoke English, and could otherwise pass as "white." In 1826, this label was changed to "free negroes" with the binary racial imaginings of the time period in the segregated South as either "white" or "nonwhite." This time period should raise questions from U.S. Historians and Indigenous study scholars. The Lumbee were not affected by the Indian Removal Act of 1830, leading to many other Native tribes' distrust of the Lumbee claim to Native identity because of their lack of shared experience during this time. Why were the Lumbee unaffected? Ben Chavis, a Lumbee of the Prospect area, had a simple answer: "The land was so worthless, no one ever bothered" (Riley 2016: p53). This conceived a trend in which the United States Federal Government did not care enough for the Lumbee *land* to displace the Lumbee, but definitely did not care enough for Lumbee *people* to help them.

From the 1880's to 1911, the Lumbee were the "Croatan" Indians, as noted earlier, and in 1911 changed their name to simply the "Indians of Robeson County." The tribe then changed their name to the "Cherokee Indians of North Carolina," hoping the association with a larger tribe, as unhistorical and unfounded as it was, would help assign them legitimacy. Instead this move only gained further distrust and disassociation from the nationally recognized Cherokee tribe. There was a brief time in the 1930's where "Siouan Indians of the Lumber River" was popularized and "almost legally institutionalized" (Sider, 1994), as it was the most historically accurate name based on the observations of Ward (1944) and Wetmore (1975), that assigned the Siouan language with the Robeson County area pre-colonization. These observations suggested that the Siouan, Algonquian, and Iroquoian tribes settled the area of and surrounding Robeson County, suggesting what could be the tribes that the Lumbee could have descended from.

The first unique, self-identified label was coined in 1956 with the introduction of the "Lumbee Bill" to congress, which sought (and continues to seek) federal recognition for the

tribe. The Lumbee are named after the "Lumber" river, which runs through Robeson County and with which the Lumbee have an intimate cultural, historical, and geographical relationship with (Wolfram & Dannenberg, 1999). The Lumbee have been fighting for federal recognition from outside groups for over a century (Sider, 1994) and are still not currently federally recognized. This means that more than lacking the validation and legitimacy that is given by the Federal Government that proves a group's "indigeneity," the Lumbee tribe is not supported financially or with land grants from the United States. The Lumbee are, however, recognized by the state of North Carolina, and have been since 1953. Because of this, the tribe does receive some financial and legislative support, but it is no coincidence that Robeson County is the poorest county per capita in the state, and that 30% of the county live under the poverty line.[5]

Lumbee identity and federal recognition cannot be discussed without discussing the tribe's historical racial ambiguity and otherwise lack of traditional "Native" accoutrements, like a nonEnglish ancestral language, connection to larger tribes of the past, pre-colonization religious beliefs (Bordevich 1997), and traditionally "Native" customs, crafts, arts, or even symbols (Blue 1980). Lumbee people run the physical gamut from light, straight hair, blue eyes, and fair skin to dark skin, brown eyes and afro-textured hair (Wolfram & Reaser, 2014, Blu 1980, Sider 1994), complicating traditional notions of "looking indigenous." These together create the complications that "outsiders" of the Lumbee tribe have identifying not only who *is* Lumbee, but who the Lumbee people *are.*

In a society where Native people have to continually prove their "nativity" to a [white] outsider by linking their existence to their tribal traditions or at the very least to a manufactured, Hollywood-inspired image of what an Indian person should look or be like, the inconceivability

[5] Census Quickfacts: Robeson County 2016

of a Native group that lacks these tribal traditions is what makes the Lumbee so incomprehensible to anyone who is not "Lum." It is not only the United States Federal Government that struggles to understand Lumbee identity. This confusion is shared within academia, specifically historians and anthropologists, and even other Native tribes within the United States who continually disown the Lumbee right to identify as indigenous. The Lumbee were not viewed as a viable subject of academic study, Blu argues, because they do not follow traditional standards of group identity and belonging, and do not fit the classic "exotic, out-of-the-way people" that anthropology is accustomed to studying (1980). Malinda Lowery, a Lumbee scholar from Robeson County, has argued that the label of "Lumbee" is one that transcends issues of race, class, politics, and citizenship and instead, the Lumbee people have "crafted an identity as a People, a race, a tribe, and a nation" (Lowery 2010).

Karen Blu (1980) provides ethnographic data from the 18 months she spent in Robeson County conducting interviews and collecting information about identity and belonging as it is embodied and acted out by the Lumbee. Blu states that more than "formal organization, explicit membership criteria, distinctive cultural paraphernalia," the Lumbee define themselves through their "shared ideas about themselves as a people" (1980: 2). "In order for any non-Lumbee to have any sense of what it is to be a Lumbee," Blu offers, "there must be a translation from the insider's experiences, ideas, and sentiments into terms intelligible to an outsider" (1980.) This relationality is exactly what Blu defines as "The Lumbee problem," the inability for an outsider to understand what it is to be Lumbee.

However, as muddy as the Lumbee existence may seem to a non-Lum "outsider," the Lumbee find no issue in their own history, existence, and identity. In the tri-ethnic context of Robeson County, with equal distributions of Lumbee, white, and black identity, where Lumbee

can look traditionally “Indian,” “white,” or “Black,” how can the Lumbee decide who is an “insider” and who is an “outsider” of their tribe? Language, specifically the English dialect that the Lumbee have “carved out” (Wolfram & Dannenberg, 1999) has become one of the most powerful legitimizing forces that the Lumbee use not only to identify in- and out-siders of the Lumbee tribe, but to legitimize themselves as a valid people group against historical, hegemonic understandings of nativity and Native identity. This language use reflects real-world racial complications, and I will provide a third-wave (Eckert 2012) analysis of how individual Lumbee speakers situationally and strategically manipulate their language to showcase or hide their identity.

Published works on the Lumbee-specific dialect of English did not enter the academic sphere until Walt Wolfram, essentially the pioneer of Lumbee English studies in sociolinguistics, compiled *A Dialect Dictionary of Lumbee English* nearly two decades later, in 1996. However, before Wolfram and even before Blu published anything about the Lumbee, the Lumbee were featured as participants in the University of Florida’s Sam Proctor Oral History Program’s Native American History Project. Interviews were conducted by locals commissioned through the program with Lumbee participants in the late 1960’s and early 1970’s with speakers aged 13 to 98 years old. The goal of the program was to archive the tribal histories of the county, the members’ thoughts on the “generational gap,” and details about their own lives. Though this original goal was accomplished, the interviews allowed later sociolinguistic researchers to analyze the phonological, morphological, and syntactic variations that constitute Lumbee English even before the origination of the term.

One interviewee, a 56-year old woman interviewed by Lew Barton (bolded and italicized), and a local from Prospect,[6] spoke about the differences between Lumbee English and other speakers in the area:

Do you think the census takers count our people accurately when they come into the county?
No, I don't.
Do you know, do you have any reason for believing this I mean, do you know why?
Yeah, the reason I said I don't think that they do, they never, they haven't been in my house in years and years to take census. So for that reason I know it's some that don't even be counted.
And those they do count, can they look at them and tell whether they're white or Indian?
No, The majority of them, they can't.
Do you think this could complicate the whole thing
Yeah, I sure do.
But our people know each other --
Correct
And the white people seem to know them too, in this county. Is that correct?
That's true.
I've often wondered how they can tell if it isn't because of the difference in our speech, I don't know what it could be in many cases. Do you think we talk just a little bit different than the average white person?
I'm sure we do.
How about the average black person?
Oh yeah, very different. I think the white man and the colored come here talkin' alike than the Indian and the white.

The sentiment that Lumbee people can identify insiders of the group by their language was not only reflected in this first woman's interview. Later, in a documentary for the Language and Life Project that explored Lumbee English and other dialects of North Carolina, published publicly on YouTube in 2008, a 35-year-old Lumbee artist, Karl Hunt, had the following to say about Lumbee English:

> It's like an immediate identification mechanism. Can I talk to this person? Can I trust this person?... That's [i.e. the dialect] is how we recognize who we are, not only by looking at someone. We know just who we are by our language. You recognize someone is from

[6] Prospect is a town in Robeson County that is historically and currently populated by a mostly (>80%) Lumbee population. This town and its inhabitants (along with other historically Native towns, like Pembroke) hold particular interest for scholars of Lumbee English, because it is where the "Lumbee accent" is strongest, i.e. where unique variations occur most often.

> Spain because they speak Spanish, or from France because they speak French, and that's how we recognize Lumbees. If we're anywhere in the country and hear ourselves speak, we know exactly who we are.

This, along with the first interviewees comments, help to show that more than physical appearance, last name, or even geographical location, language has become the legitimizing force that reaffirms and legitimizes Lumbee identity.

What the first interviewee's interview shows explicitly are the language attitudes that Lumbee speakers have (or, at least, this Lumbee speaker has) about not only their own language, but the language of other speakers. What the speaker also shows, consciously or not, is the way she uses language both to pose herself as Lumbee and disassociate herself from the two people groups she mentions. She does this by shifting her speech when she talks specifically about identity and language, and switching again to a more standard speech when she is not.

> "Oh yeah, very (vury, /vɻj/) different. I think the white (hwhuyt, /ʍu:d/) man and the colored (r-dropped) come here (r-dropped) talkin' alike than the Indian (endien) and the white (hwhuyt, /ʍu:d/)."[7]

When speaking of Lumbee speakers and their variations, she drops more r's and g's, and she raises her ay's. When she is speaking about the census, her speech is much more standard.

This is also reflected in a separate study that Natalie Schilling-Estes found in 2000 (Schilling-Estes 2000a) when she interviewed two younger men from Robeson County, one of whom was Lumbee, and one who was African-American, and through analyzing their levels of r-lessness, she found that there were points where they sounded a lot more similar, and times when they sounded much more different, and that depended on what they were talking about

[7] I have chosen to not only include the IPA for these words, but to also include an anglicized phonetic spelling of the variations for accessibility outside of Linguistics.

(2000). When they spoke of race relations—a topic that highlights ethnic separation and the fact that they are from different ethnic groups, their speech was much different. However, when they talked about subjects that highlight the fact that they're friends, suddenly, their levels of *r* -lessness were much more similar. These two cases are instances where I would argue that speakers change their language in a subconscious attempt to further themselves from other speakers of the area while subsequently reaffirming their own identity as Lumbee.

Three of the interviews I listened to featured stories of anti-Lum racism (institutional or otherwise) — the first was a white-passing 36 year-old man with the initials R.E. who experienced workplace discrimination. He did not think himself capable of being a mechanic because "an Indian had never done it before," but because of his access as a white-passing person in Baltimore, MD (where there is a significant Lumbee Diaspora) he was given the job. Later a supervisor asked him about the "lazy Indians" and if they were "good workers," assuming R.E. was not Lumbee, and R.E. responded "Yeah, I think *we* are." The supervisor did not apologize, but was apparently visibly embarrassed. R.E. later said "They'll be an Uncle Tom just to keep their job" in reference to Lumbee people (specifically women) who are hired to teach white children in segregated schools.

Another younger boy, who was only 14, with the initials PJ talked about how the police did not come, or come slowly to areas that are mostly populated by Lum. Someone in his neighborhood was shot just the night before and the police took twenty minutes to arrive. He says even though police are only seven miles away, they take almost half an hour to arrive sometimes. PJ thought this is pretty fast, but his mother (who is present during the entire interview) said "They [non-Lumbee people] don't care about what Indians do to each other," and later "They [policemen] don't care unless someone's killed or hurt." Though this boy and his

mother have an understanding of racism within the tribe, the boy still showcases some of his own racist, anti-black attitudes by calling the black people of Robeson County the n-word during his interview.

Another interviewee with the initials G.O., a recently turned 18 year-old in Baltimore talked about how he thought "The Indians are seen as lower than the black man," referencing unfair work environments along with under- and misrepresentation of Native peoples as proof. G.O. turns around and says that this is unfair, because "Indians are peaceful," while "black men are a savage people from a savage country," a questionable analysis that seems to replicate traditional notions of the Native American as the "savage." The interviews mainly focused on the tribes' history and intergenerational divides, but these interviews help to show that racism and racist attitudes manifest in much of Lumbee peoples' lives in the 1970's and today.

The variations that make up Lumbee English help to both link it to and distinguish itself from other varieties in the area. These varieties include the language spoken by black and white inhabitants of the county, which I will refer to as African American (AAE) and White Southern American English (WSAE)[8] respectively. For example, was/is regularization, where Standard American English (SAE) speakers may say *We were there,* speakers of all three varieties of Robeson County tend to use was/is regularization, manifested as *We was there* or *We is there.* Two of the unique variations found within Lumbee English that are particularly important in identifying and understanding the dialect are subsequently the most heavily studied features of Lumbee English. These are the past invariant *bes* and /ay/ raising.

[8] There is some pedantic issue with equating what white speakers of Robeson County speak with "Southern American English" broadly (as all of these populations are technically Southern Americans), so I have decided instead to call this variety "White Southern American English," against other scholars' tradition, as it seems more accurate. This also helps to distinguish the often confusing acronyms -- SAE for Southern American English and SAE for Standard American English

The invariant be is defined by Dannenberg and Wolfram (1998) as "invariant be, finite be, or simply be_2," with its "occurrence in syntactic contexts typically calling for irregular, finite form such as am, is, or are in standard varieties" (139). In Standard American English, where speakers may say "She is here a lot," African American and Lumbee English Speakers can utilize the form "She be here" to have a similar meaning. The invariant be helps speakers reflect a repetitive or habitual action, like being somewhere many times. A variation of this that is specific to Lumbee English, however, has been observed by Dannenberg and Wolfram (1998). This is the addition of the suffix -s to the invariant *be,* manifested as *bes* by some Lumbee speakers. This variety is particularly found in the third person, and less so in the first person (i.e. *The train bes crowded* would be a more realistic phrase to hear than *I bes at the doctor.) Bes* was found most often in instances of third person singular action (*The train bes here late* vs *They bes at the restaurant*). Along with the addition of the prefix a- before a verb ending in -ing, the phrase "He bes a-fishin'" would be a particularly telling "Lumbee" phrase.

The second variation that separates Lumbee English occurs on a more morphological level -- it is the rising and backing of the diphthong /ay/ (found in words like ride, tight, fire, tide). This was studied initially by Brewer and Reising (1982) and in a more in-depth analysis by Natalie Schilling-Estes (2000b). Schilling-Estes found in her analysis of 50 speakers from Robeson County (particularly the Prospect and Union Chapel regions) that more than glide-shortening/monopthongization, which is seen within other speakers of the county (rahd, /raːd/ – ride), Lumbee speakers tend to back and raise this diphthong in certain contexts. This variation manifests particularly when the diphthong appears before voiceless sounds (rait, /rɑːɪt/ = right; tait, /tɑːɪt/ = tight). Schilling-Estes also found that in pre-nasal circumstances, however (tahm, /taːm/ = time), Lumbee speakers tended to favor glide-shortening. These variations were found

particularly in older speakers (those who grew up between the two world wars, with birth dates from 1914 to 1928), and was found to be particularly used in the Prospect community, further confirming the notion that Prospect specifically is home to some uniquely "Lumbee" variations.

I have included a chart (Figure 1) that details more variations that define Lumbee English along with their usage by non-Lumbee speakers in Robeson County. This chart was inspired by and utilizes charts created by Dannenberg and Wolfram (1999).

Figure 1

Grammatical Structure	Lumbee	Robeson African Americans	Robeson White Speakers
finite bes (She bes there)	x		(x)
perfective be (I'm been there; They might be lost it)	x		
weren't regularization (She weren't there)	x		
was/is regularization (We was there)	x	x	x
a-prefixing (He was a-fishin)	x		(x)
Null copula (They nice, He nice)	(x)	x	(x)
3rd sg. absence (She like cats)		x	
Plural noun phrase agreement (The dogs gets upset)	x		(x)
plural absence with measuremnt nouns (twenty mile)	x	x	x
completive done (she done messed up)	x	x	x
double modals (He might could come)	x	x	x
for to complement (I want for to get it)	(x)		
generalized past participle (She had came here)	x	x	x
genearlized participle/past (She done it)	x	x	x
bare root as past (She give him a dog last week)	x	x	x
regularization (She knowed him)	x	x	x
different irregular (He retch up the roof)	x		

Figure 1Where x = The variation is found. (x) = The variation is only found in a very limited extent.

The link between Lumbee and African American English helps to highlight the contact these language varieties have had historically within the county. Though Lumbee English is

descriptively more similar to African American English than White Southern American or Standard American English, the interviews that show the tribe's attitudes that identify Lumbee as unique, as seen by the first interviewer's "I think the white man and the colored come here talkin' alike than the Indian and the white" help us to understand how Lumbee English reflects real-world racial tensions.[9]

Much like how Rosa and Flores guide us to think of minoritized groups as being actively minoritized by a white outsider, rather than assuming language is inherently minoritized and perpetuating beliefs of whiteness as standard, I want to push that people groups are also often policed and legitimized by white outsiders. White outsiders of people groups are given the sole power to decide what is legitimate (or "standard") and what is illegitimate ("nonstandard," "vernacular," or "minority"). In this way, it is not only manifestations of Lumbee English that reflect racial relationships and associations, but also the theoretical implications of what (or what kind of) language is seen as standard and legitimate that reflect the illegitimacy of certain groups, like the Lumbee. These attitudes can be implicit through attitudes of appropriateness in academia but can also be manifested in explicit ways.

In an examination of these explicit language attitudes, Walt Wolfram and Kate Eisenhauer (2018) analyzed the comment sections on the publicly published documentaries previously mentioned on Lumbee English and other dialects of English in North Carolina. The public nature of these documentaries helps us to see the attitudes that people can have through an

[9] A phenomenon deserving of its own study is some Lumbee members' anti-blackness, which is evident in the interviews regardless of their age and exists in the tribe even today. These attitudes may be connected to the tensions between the races at the time, in the 1970's post-Jim Crow South, where desegregation had just been implemented (though pro bono segregation would exist until the present day). Though we can't know how much AAE influenced Lumbee English, we do know that desegregation would influence language contact in some way – after schools were integrated and children of many races started attending traditionally Indian schools, AAE variations were introduced to Lumbee English. This can be seen using age-grading and analyzing how the levels of traditionally AAE variations within Lumbee English by speaker age.

anonymous veil of internet comment sections and usernames. To best reflect attitudes towards Lumbee English, it would be most effective to compare it to a similarly nonstandard variety of English that also had its own documentary published through the Language and Life Project. For this, I have selected Outer Banks English. I've relied both on the observations made by Wolfram and Eisenhauer, and some comments that I found myself on these videos that help to reflect attitudes towards these language varieties.

The Outer Banks are the string of barrier islands that defines North Carolina's easternmost border. Based on demographic information from Eastern Carolina University, the population that inhabits the Outer Banks are an older, 98% white population who largely take up careers in fishing. Outer Banks English is particularly unique due to the populations' general ostracization from other people groups because of the nature of living on the islands. Outer Banks English and Lumbee English are similarly largely unknown outside of the regions, and their documentaries have similar amounts of public comments, so analyzing attitudes towards these two varieties seemed most appropriate to me.

Attitudes towards Outer Banks English in the comment sections were generally positive. One commenter said that the dialect was "Cool!" and that it was "So great to be able to record diverse accents, since accents and dialects are always changing and shifting. I've never heard this one before, and it's a delight to listen to." "Great Heritage = Stay proud of it…," and "Love that accent," said others. The comments were relatively focused on the dialect featured in this documentary, along with how beautiful and peaceful the Outer Banks lifestyle seems. Montgomery (2007) has observed that Outer Banks varieties of English are associated with "the language of Shakespeare," idealizing not only the Outer Banks dialect, but what the dialect seems to represent - values of family, lifestyle, and homeland.

Attitudes towards Lumbee English, however, were not so positive. Wolfram and Eisenhauer observed that many of the comments were focused not on the dialect itself, but instead on Lumbee identity. “There not real indians they changed there [sic] tribal connection like 5 times and in the 1950s they decided to be called lumbees most lumbees are mixed with just black and white in the early days they claimed to be indian to escape going to black schools first off there were no reported indian in that area.” While this comment is misguided at best (as I have discussed, there have been reports of Native Americans in this area since 1732), this is not the most blatantly harmful of the comments. Some commented “No language, no unique ceremonies that are not borrowed from other Indians, no Treaties, no reservation, please explain how the lumbee are Indigenous?” There were, however, some comments specifically on language in my own observations, like “‘He be doing this and he be doing that’ is just lazy ghetto grammar. It isn’t a dialect’” and “Lumbee English? sounds like the way hicks and [n-words] from the woods speak.”

Not only do these comments reflect the misled opinions people have towards minoritized languages, but towards the Lumbee in general. Descriptively speaking, Lumbee English and Outer Banks English are very similar. Figure 2 highlights some of the variations that are shared by both dialects.[10] Knowing this helps to highlight

Variation	Lumbee English	Outer Banks English
Positive *was* leveling	x	x
/ay/ : /a/	x	x
[h] retention in "it," "ain't"	x	x
intrusive [t]	x	x
toten as 'a sign of spirit or ghost'	x	x
mommuck as 'a mess'	x	x
weren't regularization	x	x
a-prefixing before -ing verbs	x	x
plural noun phrase agreement	x	x

[10] Some variations that help distinguish Lumbee and Outer Banks English are the null copula found in Lumbee English (She here where SAE = She is here), along with Lumbee speakers’ tendencies for /ay/ ungliding (“time” = /tam/) and many lexical items specific to Lumbee English (“Lum” in reference to a Lumbee person, “ellick” as coffee, “jubious” as strange, “Juvember” as a slingshot.)

that language attitudes towards minoritized languages are not towards the language itself, but towards the speakers of those languages. Lumbee English is seen as fake, illegitimate, and wrong, much like how Lumbee identity is also viewed both within these comments and through more implicit manifestations of these attitudes.

Language in the Lumbee tribe acts both uniquely and ubiquitously as a tool of cultural revitalization and of political action. Every time a Lumbee person speaks they reaffirm their identity as Lumbee. Through recognizing Lumbee English as fake, illegitimate, and wrong, outsiders do a perhaps paradoxical job of actually identifying the Lumbee as a unique people group, while their language attitudes highlight a lack of understanding of who the Lumbee are. Because of this lack of understanding, the difficulties the Lumbee face can be largely ignored by not just outsiders of the tribe, but also by scholars of anthropology and history, other Native tribes, and the United States Federal Government. Federal recognition is one small step that would not only give Lumbee people financial and land support that would help to alleviate the stresses that the Lumbee people face, but also legitimize them in the way they have been forced to do themselves for centuries. Language offers us a way to understand this seemingly unthinkable people group and is subsequently used by the Lumbee to reaffirm and legitimize their own identity – more than physical appearance, last name, or even geographical location, language has become the most salient identifying force for the Lumbee. Bein' Lum is much more than being an "illegitimate tribe" with no Native traditions or language from the backswamps of North Carolina. It is existing in a space that has never had the desire nor capacity to understand their existence, and instead relying on itself for validation and legitimization.

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