retische oogmerken gegeven werkelijkheid door de vorming van hypothesen over-
schrijdt. Ook dat is een wijze van vooruitlopen op het toekomstige, waarvan men kan
zeggen — daarbij denkend aan het ideaal van de ééne, uiteindelijke, alles omvattende
en verklarende wetenschappelijke theorie — dat het evenzeer op zich laat wachten als
de omzetting van de ultimatieve projecties der ideologieën in concrete werkelijkheid.
Het verschil tussen ideologisch en wetenschappelijk bewustzijn is dat het laatste metho-
disch, stap voor stap te werk gaat en de theorie voortdurend aan ervaring toetst, terwijl
het eerste de feitelijke werkelijkheid overspringt door het élan van een globale con-
ceptie, waaraan ten opzichte van het uit ervaring bekende een radikaal-transforma-
tieve stekking eigen is. In het licht daarvan wordt de feitelijke werkelijkheid uitgelegd
als daarop aangelegd, hetzij krachtens immanente wetmatigheid (determinisme), hetzij
krachtens goddelijk ingrijpen (voorzienigheid), hetzij krachtens een combinatie van
menselijke inspanning en aan het historische proces inherente noodzakelijkheid (revo-
lutionaire praxis). Het is, zo beschouwd, de functie van ideologieën het ontbrekende
of afwezige te vergoeden en te voorkomen dat het handelen in een wereld die de
menselijke aspiraties onbevredigd laat gedeoriënteerd raakt.

Persistence and disappearance of aboriginal languages

T. J. Brasser, Leiden University

This paper will explore the problems of culture change and stability among two Ameri-
can Indian groups as exemplified by the linguistic part of their cultures. The stimulus to
this survey was a series of lectures given by Prof. P. E. De Josselin de Jong, at Leiden
University in 1962. In this series the speaker reviewed some welldocumented historical
examples of the rise of local dialects to nationally or even internationally used languages,
resulting in the partial or total outing of other languages. Casually mention was made
of the interesting but complicated language situation presented by the many North
American Indian groups in their widely diverse stages of culture change. To this I may
add that the picture is made even more complicated by the scarcity of available re-
ferences to the role played by the native languages in this process. Thus it should be kept
in mind that this paper cannot be more than a preliminary and superficial survey.
Some 150 native languages still are in daily use among the more than 600.000 First
Americans north of Mexico; great numbers of Indian children start their formal school-
ing without knowledge of the English language; some groups print their own magazines
and newspapers in their native speech; in some regions radio-programs are being broad-
cast regularly in Indian languages; but there is also a rapid dissemination among other
native groups of originally tribal songs supplied with the text translated in English,
and there exist several Indian groups which have completely lost their native language.
In between these haphazardly chosen extremes there are a great many bilingual groups
in all stages of native language-loss.
Many questions as to change in the linguistic area of each of these cultures might be
raised, disclosing an enormous need of fieldwork to supply such data as are still available.
Usually we have no contemporary references to the way the language was affected by the process of culture change in a given group. At best we find only the results in each successive period. For the present it will be necessary to make use of the indirect method of filling the many gaps with non-linguistic data on culture change to obtain some insight in the role played by the native language since the first contact period of the culture in question. The passing away of languages is determined by non-linguistic factors, for that matter.

Selecting some groups, the aboriginal and contact periods of which were as similar as possible, I decided to explore the subject by references to the Cherokee of North Carolina and the neighboring Catawba of South Carolina, close neighbours of old, but extremely different in their present phase of culture change, and especially so in the linguistic field. They are two of those many ethnic groups scattered throughout the southeastern parts of the United States who are classified by the Census Bureau as “Indians”. Some of these groups, like the Cherokee, are of relatively pure Indian stock, but the majority are “Indians” by courtesy, the Catawba being an example. The latter kind of groups represent varying mixtures of White, Negro, and Indian blood, but as a rule the White strain predominates. Such small groups form the middle caste of this tri-racial society because of the White man’s determination not to accept the Indian as his equal, and by the Indian’s continual endeavour to escape the status awarded him, i.e. of being equal to the Negroes.

To Dr. William C. Sturtevant I am indebted for his MS and notes on the Catawba, made available to me by Mrs. Margaret C. Blaker, archivist of the Bureau of American Ethnology, to whom I express my gratitude too. Receiving this material at the last moment it confirmed several of my previous conclusions. Grateful acknowledgement is made to my teacher, Prof. P. E. De Josselin de Jong, for his critical reading of my manuscript.

Cherokee; the aboriginal period.

In proto-historic times the semi-permanent villages of the Cherokee were located in the mountainous western parts of North Carolina, northwestern South Carolina, and eastern Tennessee. In addition, the Cherokee claimed dominion over a much wider area, used primarily as hunting lands and serving as a neutral buffer zone separating the Cherokee from other tribes. War with all their neighbors was their “beloved occupation”, as one of their chiefs expressed it in 1768. Kroeber (1939, 141) gives an aboriginal population estimate of 22000. Though the Cherokee were the most numerous “tribe” in these parts of the present United States, their native culture was marginal to the southeastern culture area. There seems to have been no overall political structure among the Cherokee at first contact; the largest unit appears to have been the region with a large village as the nucleus.

Linguistically the Cherokee belong to the Iroquoian family, though the widest cleavage in this family is certainly that between Cherokee and all the rest of the Iroquoian languages. Until recently three dialects were recognizable in Cherokee: Lower, Middle, and Upper. Since the latter dialect came to be exclusively used in native literature the speakers of this dialect may have formed a dominant group of some kind. Speaking the mother language perfectly was a goal in the native education-system and good orators
were widely known and respected persons still in recent times. The oldest accounts
tell already of chiefs orating for hours, attentively listened to by the people gathered in
council. Elder people used to recite their wardeeds extensively in public, and special
orators recited the tribal history at every annual Great Green Corn Festival until the
19th century.

The contact period

The 16th-century Spanish explorers in this region had little lasting effect on the Indians.
No permanent settlements were established and the contacts were invariably brief.
Spanish outposts established in Florida, however, soon attracted the attention of the
Cherokee, who used to visit these settlements already prior to 1673, obtaining their first
European goods. These early trade relations may be the source of a few doubtful Spanish
loanwords located in Cherokee.

In 1673 the first English traders arrived, opening up a trade route between the Chero­
kee country and Virginia. Since that date there was continuous contact with English
traders, who often settled in the Cherokee villages, taking native women as their wives.
All of these traders learned to speak the Cherokee language. Deer pelts became an in­
creasingly valuable item in trade, stimulated by a growing demand for European manu­
factures. Bow and arrow were gradually replaced by the gun, and the Indian hunter
became more and more dependent on the trader. Unscrupulous methods of the latter
as well as the nearby presence of colonists in the first half of the 18th century resulted in
growing bitter feelings toward the whites. A war was prevented at the last moment by
a treaty and the invitation to seven prominent Cherokee to visit the English king and
capital in 1730. On that occasion they were accompanied by a white trader as interpreter.
Only one of these Cherokee leaders had learned a little English after their stay of some
months in London.

The advancing White frontier could not keep the Indians quiet for long, however, the
more so as the traders introduced rum in increasing quantities, resulting in reports of
alcoholic misdemeanour by the Indians. The Cherokee population, estimated at 20000
souls, was cut down by nearly 50 percent by a smallpox epidemic in 1738, felt by the
Indians to be a disease invented by the English to exterminate them. This phase was
followed by direct contact with white settlers, eventuating in war and the loss of popu­
lation in 1759-'60. Their traditional eloquence they had not lost, however, for a witness
of a chief's diplomatic handling of an obtuse English governor in 1761 declared this
chief capable of outwitting both Richelieu and Walpole, and the Cherokee as a whole
the superiors of Europeans in politics. Still a white trader as interpreter was necessary,
as was also the case in 1762, when three Cherokee chiefs visited England. From the very
first these traders have played an important role as middlemen, no-one on the Indian
side applying for this status by learning the English speech. Yet nearly a century of
continuous contact had already passed. Most of these White residents in the Cherokee
highland were of Scottish origin, introducing many Scottish family names among the
Cherokee. They as well as the Indian commissioners appointed by the Colonies, married
into the tribe and were the founders of important families. Christian ideas made their
first slow entrance via these marriages. White or mixed-blood persons got increasing in-
fluence in internal and external affairs of the tribe, pure-bloods slowly disappeared out of the leading circles.

Among the Cherokee of those years a favorite diversion was the originating of laughable nicknames for White individuals. Traditionally this was already a pastime among themselves.

Pressure on the frontier resulted in warfare in 1776 and epidemics in 1783, taking their toll and causing decrease of population. The fur trade diminished in intensity owing to the loss of hunting territories and reduced game resources. Many White and part-White members of the new upper class were emulating the White leaders of the South, the planters. Near the end of the 18th century the center of Cherokee population shifted southward, concentrating in Georgia and Alabama areas of plantation ecology. The conservative part, however, remained in the mountains, and kept on their struggle with the colonists until they were decisively defeated in 1792. Small bands of these conservatives had already been leaving the old country since 1785, to look for an "unspoiled" new home in the West. The total population had dropped to 3 or 4000 by this time.

After this war, the Cherokee leaders embarked on a path of conscious acculturation. By becoming a "civilized" nation, they evidently hoped to preserve and strengthen what remained of their ethnic identity. By this time the Cherokee were cattle-holders, and cotton from their own plantations was spun and woven into textiles by their women. Especially the mixed-blood families were well-to-do farmers. Government agents resided among the Indians to teach them various crafts. Moravians, Baptists, and Presbyterians established several mission schools in their country during the first decennia of the 19th century. Especially the last-mentioned missionaries were to play an important role in the process of culture change. They learned to preach in the native language. In the meantime it became more and more apparent that many of the conservative pure-bloods did not favor the infiltration of White-derived ideas. Aboriginal patterns of kinship and religion were breaking down under the impact of missionaries who were successful in nominally converting the majority to Christianity. Private ownership of land penetrated via the mixed-bloods. In 1807 the Cherokee openly split into two factions, and again a group departed for the free western country.

By about 1815, there were privately-owned Cherokee farmsteads in the fertile bottom-lands which rivaled any White plantation of the area in number of Negro slaves. The owners were wealthy mixed-bloods, the progeny of previous traders. This new land gentry, many of whom were educated in American schools, assumed the role of a nascent aristocracy and rapidly gained ascendancy in Cherokee political affairs. Of all Cherokee chiefs in 1816 only two were able to write, and these were mixed-bloods. However, most of the developments described above were taking place in the southern parts of Cherokee country, the plantation area near the White population centres. The mountainous and distant hinterland contained a greater percentage of fullbloods who remained culturally conservative and marginal to the acculturation process.

The 1820's mark the definite prevalence of mixed-bloods in tribal political power, the abandonment of the traditional political organization, and the remodelling of the nation into a republic along the lines of the U.S. Government. Most important to our subject, however, is the invention of a script, suitable to the Cherokee language, by George
Guess. The mere name identifies him as a mixed-blood, in this case the son of a trader and a Cherokee woman. Like most Cherokee, up to the present time, he was given a native name too: Skiwá’ya, corrupted to Sequoyah, by which name he became best known. Born about 1760, he grew up in the backwoods and did not learn to read, write, or speak English. In 1809, however, the importance of writing as an instrument and weapon of the Whites began to impress him, and he studied for 12 years, undismayed by the discouragement and ridicule of his kinsfolk, reducing his language to 84 written characters, the only syllabary ever invented by North American Indians. In 1821 he submitted his invention to the chiefs of the nation, and on their approval the Cherokee of all ages set about to learn it with such zeal that within a year, thousands of them were able to read and write their language. A printing press was purchased, and a bilingual weekly newspaper, The Cherokee Phoenix, besides many native law and Bible translations were being printed, thereby exclusively making use of the Upper dialect. From the very start until the liquidation of the Cherokee nation the native press was actively aided by the Presbyterian missionary.

However, not only the representative of Christian faith realised the advantages of the native syllabary. Although Sequoyah’s invention was hailed as a tool of progress, the syllabary was also a powerful instrument for cultural retention. The medicine-man was able to transcribe his sacred formulas now, which had formerly been dependent on oral transmission. The ancient rites associated with these formal prayers were the core of aboriginal religious concepts, remaining intact up to the present time by means of Sequoyah’s syllabary.

In 1824, the result of 32 years of obstinately desired culture change was indicated by the following estimate of Cherokee-owned livestock and other possessions: 2200 cattle, 7600 horses, 46000 swine, 2500 sheep, 762 looms, 2488 spinning wheels, 172 wagons, 2943 plows, 10 sawmills, 31 gristmills, 61 blacksmith shops, 8 cotton machines, 18 mission-schools, 18 ferries, and a number of public roads. A tribal delegation to Washington during that year wrote and spoke English fluently. The fullblood majority of the people, however, lived in wooden shacks in the mountains, still wore semi-native dress, and had no knowledge of any other language than their own. Besides, several thousands had moved west of the Mississippi. About 16000 Cherokee still remained in the East.

For many years the prosperity of the Cherokee had been a thorn in the flesh of the neighboring Whites, who made use of every opportunity to rob the Indians. After the discovery of gold in their country a powerful agitation was begun for the removal of the “savages”, who, after years of hopeless struggle, were compelled to remove to the West. In Oklahoma printing in their own language started anew and was not suspended until 1909.

The Eastern Cherokee
During the brutal round-up of 1839, many Indians escaped the bayonet-prodding soldiers especially the conservative fullbloods living in the mountains, and they took refuge there. About 1000 concentrated in the western part of North Carolina, a population figure swollen to about 1500 by persons who escaped en route to Oklahoma and found their way back. The progeny of this band constitute the present Eastern Cherokee with which
the rest of this survey of the Cherokee language is exclusively concerned. We shall draw
extensively on the indispensiblê paper by Dr. J. Gulick.

The history of the Eastern Cherokee is like an echo and repetition of the Cherokee
contact period until the Removal. The nucleus and majority, but not all, of the original
band consisted of conservative fullbloods, "hillbillies", speaking the Middle dialect, and
residents of the area since before the Removal. However, at least three other population
aggregates seem to have been present from the very beginning, which can be differ­
entiated from each other in terms of degree of acculturation and racial mixture. The
latter fractions may have undermined the deliberate attempts of the conservatives to
return to an aboriginal way of life, recreated out of transmitted traditions. The mixed­
bloods took possession of the better agricultural lands while the fullbloods set up their
log cabins on the slopes of the Great Smoky Mountains. It should be pointed out that
most anthropological work done among the Eastern Cherokee relate primarily to the
last-mentioned people.

In the history of the Eastern Cherokee too, the White trader played a decisive role.
Mainly through the efforts of Will Thomas, an influential White trader and lifelong
friend of the Cherokee, the Indians received permission to remain in western North
Carolina on lands purchased for them by Thomas in 1842. During the 19th century,
the reservation was fairly well isolated from the rest of the world, and Thomas assumed
a paternal role toward the Indians, serving as agent of the Government, adviser and ef­
fective leader of the Indians. The (presumably conservative part of the) band kept up
contact with their people in Oklahoma, who used to call the easterners “the queer speak­
ing people”, hinting at the difference of dialect. Through this contact they were continu­
ally supplied with publications printed in their own language and syllabary. Through­
out the 19th century, the Cherokee language remained the medium of thought and com­
munication. Even in the late 1880's, very few of the Eastern Cherokee spoke any English,
though the majority of them understood English as early as 1848. From the latter date
too is the report that the majority were Methodists and Baptists like their White neigh­
bours. These religious importations did not seem to hinder in the least the ancient rites
centered around the sacred prayers or formulas, which survive up to the present time.
The texts of these prayers, written down as they were in the Sequoah syllabary, develop­
ed into a “fossilized” speech, a liturgical language.

After the Civil War the population decreased by a smallpox epidemic, taking about
300 souls, and the voluntary removal of some 160 Cherokee to their kinsmen in the
West in the 1880’s. This removal may have been related to the impoverished con­
dition of the band at that time. 1376 Cherokee remained behind on and around the
Qualla reservation in 1885.

During the last decades of the 19th century, the stable situation of the native language
began to change. Compulsory education by the Government’s Indian Bureau and the
end of effective isolation interfered with Cherokee folklore as a living source of in­
struction and undermined the position of the native language. Until 1933, the education­
al policies of the Indian Bureau were markedly authoritarian and ethnocentric. Speak­
ing the native language by the schoolchildren was severely punished. These policies
were instrumental in producing a conscious but passive defensiveness in regard to the
native culture and increasingly sharp differentiations among the Cherokee themselves. In the masked Booger dances the Cherokee expressed their estimate of the White man by portraying him as awkward, ridiculous, lewd, and menacing, when he was represented by the masked dancers. Their leader was a special butt of ridicule because he could not speak Cherokee without committing grotesque errors. However, especially those Indians with White genetic admixture and those living on or near the increasing number of roads, began consciously to aspire to rural middle class standards. Among these families the native language rapidly lost its primary position. More and more Indians hired out their services to White farmers in the vicinity. A road cutting through the reservation since 1931, and the later founding of the Great Smoky Mts National Park, brought prosperity, the annual Cherokee Fair, and many thousands of White tourists. The reaction of the conservatives to these developments was an increase in hostile feelings toward the Whites and the progressive part of the band. The attempt to eradicate the native language, the suppression of the “offending” Booger dances by the Indian Bureau, and the behavior of the progressive mixed-bloods toward the Whites as well as to the conservatives are among the causes to be mentioned. The two ancient annual festivals, red letter days of the conservatives, were replaced by the Cherokee Fair, invented by the progressives.

In 1930 the number of Eastern Cherokee was estimated as 3700, 39 percent being pure-bloods. Among the latter, native medicinemen still were active. In dress, diet, houses, and work they differed but little from the mountain whites. In 1945 there were about 4500 Indians in the area, less than 25 percent of whom were fullbloods. Almost all of them were able to speak English. Five day-schools operated on the reservation. Nearly all local churches were served by Indian pastors, several of whom preached in the native language. The tourist industry was stimulated by the reconstruction of a typical 18th century Cherokee village, peopled during the tourist season by “reconstructed” 18th century Indians. Several revived and some survived native crafts can be seen and their products bought there. However, the whole business was planned and designed, and is maintained, on the initiative of White people, with some progressive mixed-bloods in consultation. In recent years the tribal council has been endeavoring with fair success to attract small industry to the reservation.

The conservative fullblood minority stayed aloof from these developments. By means of the Dutch Reformed press agency they requested the tourists to respect the Day of the Lord and not to visit their reservation on Sunday. Bibles in the Sequoyah syllabary are found in many households, and the syllabary is still in use among the native medicinemen for their formulas. A revival of printing in the syllabary among the Oklahoma Cherokee since 1961, and the publication of a regular newsletter, Tsalagi Tsineki (The Cherokee Speaker), received enthusiastic response and many subscriptions among the Eastern Cherokee. In 1957, several Eastern Cherokee became interested in reviving the old native religion. After long discussions in informal groups proposals were made to contact religious leaders among the Cherokee in Oklahoma. The result, however, is unknown to me. Significant, also, is the fact that the relative decrease of fullbloods has come to a standstill. This can not be said of the hostile feelings toward the Whites. Resistance to any change is noticeable, just because it is ”White man’s stuff”. They have no
interest, nor do they take part, in the recent revivals of native culture for the tourists. Of special interest to us is the role played by the native language in this situation. Concerning this aspect, Gulick explicitly states that “their language survives primarily because its use is a symbolic expression of resistance to the continued socio-cultural pressures of the Whites. The fact that this form of resistance is essentially passive is wholly consistent with the general demeanor of those Eastern Cherokee who continue to speak the aboriginal language by preference”. Two types of behavior reveal this attitude:

a. “White people conversing with an Indian have not infrequently had their conversation interrupted by the appearance of a known conservative who begins speaking in Cherokee. That this is an act of exclusion of the White person is clear in many cases”.

b. Conservatives enjoy making up unflattering or even obscene nicknames for White persons in Cherokee, and such a name in the very presence of the subject.

The last mentioned habit has been reported down to the earliest contacts.

Catawba; the aboriginal period

Also marginal to the southeastern culture area were the sedentary Eastern Siouan-speaking groups, with a hunting and horticultural economy, occupying the Piedmont area from Virginia to Georgia in proto-historic times. Their culture is designated as having been “low” in comparison with those of their neighbours. Among these small groups a tendency was evident to form loosely integrated confederations like those of which there existed so many in the East. One of these confederations consisted of some fifteen Siouan groups, headed by the Catawba.

By all accounts the Catawba were formerly the most populous and powerful tribe in the Carolinas, excepting the Cherokee. In the first contact period — the first part of the 17th century — the tribe numbered an estimated 5000 souls. The Great Trading or Catawba Path from Virginia to Georgia, used already in pre-columbian days and soon known to White traders, crossed their territory, thus bringing them into frequent contact with strangers. Many loans are thought to be present in the Catawba language from southeastern Indian tribes, perhaps indicating the prevalent direction of intertribal contacts. The lingua franca along this route to the northeast was the Siouan language of the Occaneechi, also used by the native priests of the Siouan tribes bordering the Catawba to the northeast. The most important intertribal trading centre was also situated in the territory of the Occaneechi, who lived along the present southern border of Virginia. It is uncertain, however, whether the Occaneechi influence reached the Catawba too. In early historic days, at least, Catawba contacts to the north were of a warlike nature. Of all Siouan languages Catawba seems to have been the most aberrant and because of its divergence the language has been termed “Proto-Siouan” of late. Most if not all of the linguistic material, however, has been recorded since the Catawba had absorbed the remnants of at least twenty other tribes, most but not all of them speaking Siouan languages. In view of the resulting composite character of the historic Catawba language one might question such designations as "aberrant" or "Proto-Siouan". Even in linguistic material recorded as late as 1950 at least two different languages were still noticeable. Nothing is known of respect derived from perfect speech and oratory in native times.
among the Catawba, but since we encounter this value throughout the eastern area it probably existed among this group too. Mooney (1894: 33) wrote of the Eastern Siouans: “their traditional history was delivered in the form of long narratives from the fathers to the children, who were obliged to learn them by heart. Although ignorant of books and letters, they were trained in expression and oratory”...

The contact-period

The earliest contacts, with Spaniards, were of the same date and briefness as noted for the Cherokee. Even at this earliest date the behavior of the Catawba already differed significantly from that of the other natives: they were not only friendly toward the Whites, but aided them in war against other tribes. With but one exception this siding with the Whites against other Indians is noted time and again throughout Catawba history. They would have to pay dearly for it by a rapid decrease in manpower as well as an equally rapid weakening of the socio-political organisation.

When the first English trader visited the Catawba in 1670, they were already in frequent contact with the Spaniards who lived only a few days’ journey to the south. Continuous visits of English traders followed now, but these men did not settle among the Catawba, as they did among the Cherokee. White settlements were soon too near to make this necessary. Presumably the Catawba frequented the White settlements too. No invitations to the English court were necessary to assure the colonists of Catawba friendship. Maybe this attitude was seen as the only way out by the Catawba, their territory very soon coming within reach of the White settlers, and bordering the hostile Cherokee to the West. In only one instance they took side with other Indian tribes against the colonists, and in that case too they had no other choice. Caused by White slave-hunting practices a revolt among the Carolina Indians set the whole country aflame in 1715, in the end diminishing the tribes to remnant groups. A mere 1400 Catawba remained of the once powerful tribe. The eagerness with which they were willing to restore the friendly relations with the Whites is shown by their offering a number of their children to the colonial authorities to be educated. Frequent aid given to the colonists in their Indian wars, continuous attacks of northwestern Indian enemies, disease and the use of alcohol, decreased the Catawba population steadily, notwithstanding the incorporation of many Indian remnant groups. The last-mentioned process started with the disastrous result of the 1715 revolt and went on for many years. In 1743 the Catawba numbered about 1000 souls, all together speaking some twenty distinct languages!

Though the majority will have been related Siouan languages, in all probability also other languages were included. Apparently the selection of the Catawba as a safe harbor by all these remnants was caused by the well-known friendly relations this tribe had with the Whites and its political dominancy of old. Among these remnants the neighboring Cheraw may have been the largest in number since their language survived until recently among the Catawba.

The role played by the Catawba in colonial politics came to a definite end when, in 1762, their last chief of any importance was killed by Indian enemies. His people accepted the relative security of a reservation in York co., South Carolina, while an increasing White population surrounded them. The reservation was inhabited by some 500 souls in 1768, among whom were about 60 Cheraw. Reduced again by smallpox
about the time of the Revolution, they invited another Cheraw group to join them. Numbering again some 500 persons (!), they were described as degenerated paupers in 1784.

Gradually the Catawba became intermingled with the surrounding Whites, who leased nearly the whole reservation in 1826, the remaining 110 Indians depending on revenue from it. Among these survivors the Cheraw were still a recognizable group (by their speech?) in 1840. It was perhaps this relatively homogeneous group from which came the majority of conservatives, who, dissatisfied with their condition among the Whites, removed to the Eastern Cherokee about this time. About 100 Catawba were living among the Eastern Cherokee in 1848, returning to their home-country before the Civil War, however, because of the inhospitable behavior of the Cherokee, enemies of old. In the meantime, however, the other Catawba had sold most of their reservation. Twenty-five Catawba removed to the West in 1851, followed by other small groups in the course of later years. Presumably these movers belonged to the most conservative part of the tribe, leaving behind the more progressive mixed-bloods. Until the Civil War their chief was a holder of Negro slaves, reminding us of the progressive mixed-blood Cherokee leaders. The constant warnings of the Catawba chief to his people never to intermix with negroes is another indication of the same attitude as noted for the new Cherokee upper class. Only a few individuals still bore native personal names and European surnames were integrated by now, together with a European (but polygamous?) kinship system.

About the time of the Civil War (and as a result of this war?) the Catawba incorporated a group of Indians, the origin of which is rather vague. Traditions as well as facts contradict each other, pointing to the Virginian Pamunkey and to another group of Cheraw. Almost a third of the present Catawba trace their descent from this group. Of the 125 Catawba in 1881 not one-third retained their native language. Many of them hired out their services to White farmers. Nothing is known of their religious practices up to that date, but some years later the whole group accepted the Mormon faith; the only instance known of a whole Indian tribe converted to Mormonism. Several Indians went to Salt Lake City, Utah, to be trained as missionaries. The wholesale conversion to a Christian religion may indicate the nearly total loss of all values basic to a native culture which was even more completely lost. The polygamy they practiced as being Mormons may be a continuation of earlier days sanctioned by their conversion. Basketry, pottery-making, and the native language survived as disjointed culture-elements until recently.

During the first decades of the 20th century some Cherokee and Iroquois intermarried with the Catawba. Though the physical Indian types still predominated, a considerable infusion of white blood was noticed. The language was still remembered, but rarely spoken, by about 10 middle-aged and older Indians. Isolated native words were recalled by more individuals.

A slow increase in population numbers is noticeable since 1930, when 166 Catawba were recorded. In 1944, 1950, and 1962, they numbered respectively 300, 409, 539, and 626 souls. The census returns of 9 “fullbloods” up to 1950 are not to be taken as in any way biologically accurate. These figures are to be understood as relating to local
opinion, presumably indicating the most conservative individuals. Again, up to 1950 23 adults were still illiterate and 25 percent of the children did not attend school. This is to be connected with their low socio-economic situation, which corresponds to that of the surrounding White population, contributing thus to the exceptionally good relations. This is also reflected in the attendance of White schools by the Indian children, impossible for many other Indian mixed-blood groups in the general region, and indicative of the absence of visual Negroid admixture among the Catawba.

Returning to the death-bed of the native language, we record in 1922 the decease of Margaret Brown, born in 1837. Married to a White man, she was the source of many folktales and vague memories of native rituals, using the native language with her children, Sam and Sally. With her death, the last bilingual family had disappeared. Besides her children, there remained still one other linguistic source, named Robert L. Harris. Until their death these individuals have been frequented by several linguistics. Investigation of their recorded material is disclosing the composite character of the Catawba group, of which a study is in preparation by Dr. F. T. Siebert.

Until recently it was the general consensus that Sam Blue, the son of Margaret Brown, was the last speaker of the Catawba language, passing away with his death around 1960. Sam was well aware of the attention payed to him by the learned world, and he, the son of a White man, was rather anxious to pass for the best still living relic of bygone days, complete with the feathered headdress. However, the last speaker of Catawba proves to have been the more quiet and aloof Harris, who died in 1954. Sam will never know, but his speech seems to have been Cheraw.

Conclusion

It is surprising to find two neighboring groups who had so much in common originally, and yet wave so extremely different in their present phase of culture change. Even this first survey, however, enables us already to analyse some of the most decisive factors in the linguistic history of the two groups.

The first factor, of course, is the aboriginal context from which the Indians entered into the contact period, conditioning their behavior from the very first beginning up to the present century. The degree and the way in which their cultures received, accepted, or rejected stimuli from the southeastern culture centre as well as from the later European settlements have been largely dependent on their different geographic locations; the Cherokee isolated in their mountain range, the Catawba living in the more accessible Piedmont area. The interaction between these locations and the local native cultures resulted in a different attitude toward the surrounding world; the Cherokee intensifying their isolation by creating a no-man's land around their villages, the Catawba making the most of a major trade route crossing their territory, i.a. by taking the lead of a confederacy.

Against this background the characteristic behavior of both is understandable; the self-assured independence successfully maintained by the Cherokee in contrast with the Catawba, who, quickly noting the superiority of the newcomers, endeavored to win the favours of these Whites. The latter in turn treated the powerful Cherokee with care, but exploited the Catawba until there was nothing left to exploit. This is evident that
this reciprocal line of conduct is closely connected with the second major factor: the
native population numbers in relation to the steady increase of the White population.

The Cherokee, numbering about 20000 souls, were by far the most populous group in
the general area in 1700. In the course of the next 85 years they decreased to 17 percent
of their original number. After 1785 an increase followed again owing to their own
putting an end to their crisis period by a program of conscious acculturation.
In 1700 again, the number of Catawba was but one-quarter of their Cherokee contemporaries. Soon after, a rapid decline set in, scarcely checked by the continuous incorpo-
ration of remnant groups. The destructive defeat in 1715, the rapidly decreasing popu-
lation, and the continuous incorporation of strangers made it impossible to reorganise
the tribal organisation and must have been a serious handicap in the transmittal of the
native language. Their crisis period, indicated by the decrease in numbers, continued
for nearly two centuries, and was not stopped by their own efforts but by the improving
standard of living in general. In the meantime the Catawba were surrounded by and
intermarried with a large but poor White population, in contrast with the Eastern
Cherokee, who remained fairly well isolated until the arrival of the 20th century White
tourists loosening their purse strings. This factor must have contributed to an early and
large-scale dissemination of the use of the English language among the Catawba.

Since the pattern in which we are used to think — and by that our particular world of
reality — is furnished by our particular language, it is evident that any traditional
culture element surviving the old language has no longer its roots in those unformu-
lated metaphysics that served as the raison d’être of the traditional culture. Like some
Anatolian farmers who still use stone flints instead of metal utensils, Catawba pottery
survives as a result of poverty. The immaterial world realised out of the traditional
culture is lost to the people who throw away the key to it, their language.

The third major factor bears on the proportion of conservatives and progressives within
the two groups concerned. It will be clear that the strongest and last resistance of the
native language within each group of people will be offered by the conservative part of
it. Among the Cherokee the split within the group arose already during the last years
of war against the Colonies, but the birth of a clear-cut and permanent division of con-
servatives and progressives can be dated at 1820.

F. M. Keesing (The South Seas in the modern world 1941; 289) already pointed out the
prominent role frequently played by mixed bloods in nationalistic movements. The core
of the Cherokee progressives was formed by the mixed blood new upper class, the core
of the conservatives was to be found among the fullbloods preserving their isolation and
self-subsistence in the mountains. In fact, the latter were able to remain conservative
and fullbloods thanks to the defensive activities of the progressives. This is even more
clear among the present Eastern Cherokee. The progressives identify themselves with
the Indians but manipulate White methods in defense of their group. In my opinion
it is thus clear that the possibilities of preserving the old traditions and the native
language among the conservatives largely depends on external factors nowadays, i.e. the
tolerance of the progressives and the Whites.
Progressivity and conservatism, however, should also be related to the period considered;
several indications of progressivity in the early 19th century have changed into indi-
ations of conservatism at present. An example is presented by the use of the Sequoyah script*. If all other means of resistance disappear it is the native language, strengthened by its own syllabary, which is called to arms. Lack of references makes it impossible to say when this function was attached to the Cherokee language. The comparison of the pre-Removal Cherokee with the post-Removal Eastern Cherokee is hampered by the different subject of interest in the pertinent ethnohistoric sources. For the pre-Removal period we get a detailed picture of the progressives and but brief data about the conservatives; in the studies of the Eastern Cherokee, however, it is precisely the latter part of the group which is given all attention. Although the data concerning this factor among the Catawba are not at all clear and abundant I believe I can recognize a division in conservatives and progressives among this tribe too, again attached to different degrees of ethnic mixture. An indication is the voluntary removal of part of the tribe in contrast with the planter-chief using negro slaves. However, with the removal of a relatively large conservative contingent there remained in the east a nearly homogeneous group of mixed blood but not spirited progressives. The last Catawba speaker exhibited a characteristic conservative fullblood mentality. Sam Blue, however, displayed a halfbreed behavior. There are indications that he descended from the most recently incorporated remnant group, which may be the cause of his knowledge of a native language. He was conscious of his being a halfbreed, knowing that of both ethnic backgrounds the Indian one offered the most possibilities of identification, especially so since he lived in a race-conscious White world and his Indian group was anything but pure itself. That is why he valued and demonstrated his linguistic knowledge as a means of identification, even though it never convinced those few conservatives like Harris. The Catawba adherence to their fictive status of being Indians until 1962 was caused, in my opinion, by their fear of being classed with the negroes.

References:


*) Compare the Handsome Lake Religion among the Iroquois.
Ten Kate Jr., H. F. C., Reizen en Onderzoekingen in Noord-Amerika. Leiden, 1885.