Rising above My Raisin'? Using Heuristic Inquiry to Explore the Effects of the Lumbee Dialect on Ethnic Identity Development

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CHRIS SCOTT AND KATHLEEN BROWN

INTRODUCTION

Heuristic Phase 1: Initial Engagement

The year is 1990, and it's a warm spring Sunday afternoon in the remote rural community of Wakulla, located in eastern Robeson County, North Carolina. This community is like many other Robeson County communities—Prospect, Saddletree, Deep Branch—where almost all the residents are Lumbee Indians who partake of a Sunday ritual of Sunday school, preaching, and dinner with extended family. I had already received my dinner and was making the rounds through the neighborhood when I came upon Ms. Myrtle, an elderly neighbor who, like most of the elderly residents in the neighborhood, substituted as a grandparent and was a significant part of my upbringing. Ms. Myrtle's backyard was where we divided teams for outdoor games, met to go to Skeeter's Lake on summer afternoons, and relieved our thirst with fresh groundwater from the manual pump. In my memory I am unclear as to what brought me to see her, but I distinctly recollect the conversation we had that afternoon:

MS. MYRTLE: *So, where is it dat you're going off to?*

CHRIS: *I'm going to Appalachian State, up in d'mountains, for college. They gave me a scholarship to come up der.*

MS. MYRTLE: *Well, mind y'don't get up der and rise above your raisin'.*

CHRIS: *What da y'mean?*

MS. MYRTLE: *Well, now our people goes off t'school, and then they'll forget where they come from. They'll get off somewere and forget our people back here, and some of 'em forget about the Lord. You just mind you don't get up der in dem mountains and forget about where y' come from.*

CHRIS: *Okay, Ms. Myrtle. You know I'm not gonna forget about you. And I'm not gonna forget about the Lord.*

MS. MYRTLE: *You better get back here t'see me regular.*

What does it mean to rise above your raisin'? What was Ms. Myrtle so concerned about and why? Using heuristic inquiry, the purpose of this study was to investigate how dialect affects the ethnic identity development of the first author as well as fellow Lumbee students attending a predominantly white university. Heuristic inquiry (see table 3 for a summary of the basic phases) is a process that begins with a question or problem that the researcher seeks to illuminate or answer. According to Moustakas,

> The question is one that has been a personal challenge and puzzlement in the search to understand one's self and the world in which one lives. The heuristic process is autobiographic, yet with virtually every question that matters personally there is also a social—and perhaps universal—significance. (1990, 15)

Findings from this study indicate that the use of a distinctive dialect does indeed act as a trigger for consciousness in understanding one's ethnic identity development.

SOCIOHISTORICAL BACKGROUND AND DIALECT OF THE LUMBEE

Heuristic Phase 2: Immersion

While at Appalachian State I decided to pursue a second major in English, thanks in part to a professor named Georgia Rhodes, who appreciated my interest in Southern literature and helped me gain confidence regarding my verbal aptitude, despite my frustrations as a writer. I enrolled in a linguistics class as part of my program of studies. In the class I had to select a research interest, submit a paper, and do an oral presentation for my classmates. Listening to the project ideas of my classmates inspired me to take a closer look at the linguistic patterns specific to the Lumbee dialect. I could use a home video of the previous Christmas as part of my presentation to the class. It seemed very cut-and-dried.

Robeson County, the largest county in North Carolina, is located in the southeastern part of the state and borders South Carolina. It is a unique

triracial area where Caucasian, African American, and Lumbee citizens have coexisted for almost two centuries. As a people the Lumbee have maintained a deep connection to and appreciation for their tribal community (Dial 1993). While their population is increasing more rapidly than that of any other racial group in the area, they already comprise the sixth largest Native American contingent in the United States and the largest tribe east of the Mississippi River (Torbert 2001).

Robeson County has historically been very swampy, and, until draining and filling efforts, travel in the area was relatively difficult. For this reason industry took a long time to develop, and the Lumbee relied heavily on farming, mostly tobacco, as a means of sustenance until after the World War II era. Most of the area is rural, with communities and towns such as Prospect, Wakulla, and Pembroke remaining almost exclusively Lumbee. Though schools were integrated countywide between 1970 and 1972, de facto segregation appears in churches, social and community groups, and most elementary schools. The racial groups are divided in other ways as well. For example, the Lumbee trail white Robeson County residents in median family income, with fewer than half of the Lumbee citizens holding high school diplomas compared to two-thirds of the white community members (Torbert 2001).

The Lumbee Indians of Robeson County speak a unique variation of the English language (Torbert 2001). As part of the North Carolina Language and Life Project (NCLLP), sociolinguists have conducted studies to better define the patterns of speech that are culturally specific to the tribe. Wolfram and Dannenberg (1999) identified ethnolinguistic markers particular to the Lumbee in comparison to other citizens of Robeson County. In comparison to other Native American tribes, the Lumbee are unique in that they have lost the ancestral language they spoke before the European settlers arrived in the eighteenth century. Even though the Lumbee maintain a strict Native American identity, failure to identify an ancestral language has posed a problem in their attempt to gain federal and social recognition as an authentic Native American tribe. Ironically, this marginalization is the result of their linguistic assimilation to English (Torbert 2001).

Since 1994 the staff of NCLLP has conducted interviews with over 150 members of the Lumbee tribe who reside in Robeson County. They have also conducted interviews with Caucasians and African Americans as well in casual natural settings and speech situations. The studies on

the Lumbee dialect, or, as Wolfram terms it, "Lumbee English," have resulted in noting syntactic specifics such as the finite *be* and the perfective *I'm*. The studies have also focused on vowel and diphthong usage. These specifics are important because they are Lumbee specific, thus distinguishing the tribe from members of Anglo and African American Robesonians. According to Wolfram and Sellers (1999), the finite *be* (e.g., *She bes justa singin' in the d'bacca field*) serves as an "ethnolinguistic marker" because the Lumbee are the only group in Robeson County to use it in speech. Another feature unique to Lumbee is the perfective *I'm* (e.g., *I'm done w' dis mess*). Common among elders in the tribe, the backed/raised diphthong /aj/ also linguistically distinguishes the Lumbee. Furthermore, Torbert (2001) has analyzed the consonant cluster reduction (e.g., *We had us a good ol' time fore he lef' to go on home*) language phenomenon in tracing the language history of the Lumbee. Phonologically, the Lumbee are most aligned with speakers of Appalachian English, which is heard along the Outer Banks regions of North Carolina. This dialect is predominantly spoken by descendents of Scots-Irish settlers. In terms of speech, the Lumbee actually share more in common with this coastal community than with neighboring whites and African Americans in Robeson County (Wolfram and Dannenberg 1999). As noted by Hutcheson (2000), phonology, grammar, and lexicon all give Lumbee English the unique combination of features that allow the Lumbee to recognize each other away from home and that bolster their solidarity at home.

Wolfram, Adger, and Christian (1999) reflected on the social context of dialect issues in education, noting that attitudes about language can instigate a variety of stereotypes and prejudices based on social differences. This prejudice spills into education, as dialects spoken by members of a particular social class or group are subject to stereotypes about intellectual capability and morality. The researchers also note that dominant culture members are not always the perpetrators of language oppression. They found that some dialect speakers themselves hold their dialects in low esteem with respect to social competence. This is important because it is relevant to the issues that Lumbee students face if they choose to alter their language as a result of higher educational demands in nontribal environments.

The aforementioned literature addresses the uniqueness of the Lumbee tribe and, specifically, the Lumbee dialect. This particular field

of sociolinguistics specifies some of the phonological features that distinguish the Lumbee dialect, but it does not adequately address the impact the Lumbee dialect has on students who are educated in post-secondary institutions outside of their tribal communities. While connections can be made between Lumbee students and other historically marginalized populations who do not speak Standard English, there is a gap in the literature that specifically addresses the issues that Lumbee students face in predominantly white public universities. The unique qualities of the Lumbee dialect, coupled with the first author's personal search for ethnic understanding and the tribe's historical and current social and political struggles within the dominant American culture, suggest that this phenomenon should be investigated further.

Heuristic Phases 3 and 4: Incubation and Illumination

Working on the linguistic project humorously entitled "Sayin' Our Fathers, Lookin' Perty, and Stuff Like Dat," presenting it, and taking note of my professor's encouragement and commentary to be proud of my people provoked me to further explore and reflect upon how language had affected my life. Growing up with the threat of summer work in tobacco fields, I quickly learned the value of being proactive in April and May. Not only did I find refuge in the local Piggly Wiggly grocery store, but I also, with help and advice from my high school guidance counselor, sought out opportunities to participate in summer camps at local universities. In the summer after my junior year I was selected to attend Leadership, Education and Development (LEAD), a leadership program at Duke University in which thirty-six minority students from across the United States participated in an intense study of business and economics. The six-week program included seminars facilitated by representatives from companies such as Proctor and Gamble and Price Waterhouse, trips to Washington, DC, and Atlanta, and minicourses in business etiquette and presentation.

I never really thought about language before attending LEAD, but when I arrived there I was confronted with the realization that I spoke much differently from the rest of the participants. I was called to go before the group during the first class to do a statistics problem during which I announced "heads" or "tails" after a series of coin tosses. My pronunciation of those two words brought the class to tears in laughter. It was clear that I was confused and embarrassed, and afterward their attempts to comfort me with

"your accent is so cute" and their requests for me to "say something else" simply heightened my discomfort. Participants were from all corners of the United States, and even those from other parts of the South continued to find humor in my accent for the rest of the summer. I remember being excited during the program when I learned that there were speech coaches who could help "fix your accent" and make it more midwestern. After I fought off the temptation to just go back home, I made friends and made the best of LEAD, but it was the first time I realized that I spoke differently.

Upon arriving back to high school that fall I was selected to participate in "Here's Looking at You, 2000." The advisor was the U.S. history teacher I had had the previous year. She pulled me aside and explained, "You're going places, Chris, so you've got to learn to speak correctly." She seldom addressed issues of pronunciation, but she never failed to correct my frequently substandard grammar. She always did so with a smile, and even though it was embarrassing to be constantly corrected publicly, I trusted her and knew she was coming from a good place. By the end of the year, thanks to Ms. Davis, I had come to terms with my grammatical challenges as a speaker and a writer.

RACIAL AND CULTURAL IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT

Heuristic Phases 2, 3, and 4: Immersion, Incubation, and Illumination

I also reflected on my first few years at Appalachian State University. Proud of my choice to leave Robeson County, I entered ASU with enthusiasm about my new life there. Boone, North Carolina, was about five hours from home, and freshmen were not allowed to have cars, so going home on weekends was not really an option. I knew no one there and was forced to construct a social support system from the options available to most college freshmen: hallmates in my dorm, social organizations, student clubs, and academic circles. My roommate was from nearby Laurinburg and invited me to attend a Wednesday night service at the Wesley Foundation, a Methodist student center on campus. I grew up in a rural Holiness church and was grounded in strict religious roots, so this seemed like a safe risk. After the initial introductions a crowd of students asked me questions and demanded to know where I grew up. When I replied that I was from Robeson County, they all shouted, "He's Lumbee." I did not know how to respond, but, as it turned out, a former member of the group, Keith Oxendine, also Lumbee, had graduated the previous May and left behind a host of friends who

obviously missed him terribly. Thus, they gladly welcomed my Lumbee self, and my relationship with the foundation began.

I remained closely connected with the Wesley Foundation throughout college, but it was a few years before I felt comfortable charting other social territories. Coming from a triracial high school, I was not accustomed to the perceived cultural monotony of ASU, which had a mostly Caucasian, middle- to upper-middle-class student body. Sometimes I felt isolated and even lonely, and for a while in my sophomore year I contemplated transferring to UNC–Chapel Hill, where a number of Lumbee friends from my home church were attending college. I struggled with how to identify myself in a world so different from me. As a first-generation college student, I could not give up and go home. Even though I knew going to UNC-Pembroke would be cheaper and easier, I felt like I would be giving up. I heard stories and knew of other Lumbee who had decided to return home prior to graduation, and I did not want to be one of those people. I criticized their decisions and viewed my fellow Lumbee as weak. I also thought that some of the less-supportive members of my peer group from high school, a group that was rapidly dwindling because I seldom made it home, would feel some degree of satisfaction if I didn't succeed at ASU.

I reflected on other things too. I thought about an older Lumbee whom I met one Christmas while he was home from Harvard Medical School. He told me that looking white was the best thing that could have happened to me, especially since I had moved out of Robeson County. I thought about how self-conscious I had always been about speaking in front of groups, and I thought about the number of times I had sat in a room knowing that I was the only person of color there and ashamed that everyone thought I was white. My physical features would not distinguish me, but my dialect would. I did not know how to confront the ignorance, mine or theirs. And I thought about how, despite having a family that raised me to be proud of my people and heritage, I may have somehow let them down by "becoming white." Was I rising above my raisin'? Were Ms. Myrtle's original concerns warranted? What does it mean to be Lumbee and American?

The construct of *racial and cultural identity* describes our inclination to identify (or not identify) with the racial-cultural group to which we are assumed to belong. Our racial-cultural identity is a reflection of how we see ourselves, those with whom we share racial classification, and those whom we perceive to be outside our racial-cultural group

(Carter 1997; Cross 1994). Racial identity development also helps to dispel the cultural conformity myth that all individuals from a particular minority group are the same, with the same attitudes and preferences. In essence, racial-cultural identity development asserts differences in individual development. It is shaped and influenced by a variety of internal and external environmental factors, including social messages about the individual's worth as well as that of her or his group, parental socialization concerning race relations, peer influences, and educators' communications about race and racial differences.

For most individuals, racial-cultural identity does not emerge until adolescence because a level of cognitive maturity is required to comprehend the relative permanence of racial classification and racial group membership (Phinney 1993). Regardless of when or how it begins, it has become increasingly evident that identity development or establishing a stable sense of self-concept is an essential developmental task. Researchers found that an achieved identity is associated with positive psychological outcomes, including self-assurance, self-certainty, and a sense of mastery (Adams, Gullotta, and Montemayor 1992; Marcia et al. 1994; Phinney, Cantu, and Curtz 1997). There is also evidence to suggest a positive relationship between identity formation and academic success (Berzonsky and Kuk 2000).

In perhaps the most-cited work on adolescent race and identity development Erickson pointed out the likelihood that members of an "oppressed and exploited minority" (1968, 303) could internalize the negative views of the dominant society, thereby developing a negative identity and self-hatred. Social psychologists expressed similar concerns by suggesting that membership in a disparaged minority group can create psychological conflict (Tajfel 1978). As a result, minority group members are faced with a choice of accepting the negative views of society toward their group or rejecting them in search of their own identity. Understanding the meaning and implications of these differences and making decisions about how to live with their dual cultural heritage, values, and status is part of racial-cultural identity formation. So too is the ability to negotiate and establish feelings of self-worth in the face of conflicting messages, discrimination, and stereotyping.

Most identity development models and theories trace their roots to either the psychosocial research of Erickson (1980), the identity forma-

tion studies of Marcia (1980), or the cognitive structural work of Piaget (1952). Traditional identity models are stage models in which growth occurs linearly in stepwise progression, whereas contemporary models describe racial and cultural identity as a process that occurs over a lifetime.

Specifically speaking, racial identity theory concerns a person's conception of herself or himself as a racial being as well as her or his beliefs, attitudes, and values vis-à-vis herself or himself relative to racial groups other than her or his own. The concept of racial identity is a surface-level manifestation often based on what we look like (e.g., skin color), yet it has deep implications for how we are treated (O'Hearn 1998). According to Chavez and Guido-DiBrito, identity formation is often triggered by two conflicting social and cultural influences:

> First, deep conscious immersion into cultural traditions and values through religious, familial, neighborhood, and educational communities instills a positive sense of ethnic identity and confidence. Second, and in contrast, individuals often filter ethnic identity through negative treatment and media messages received from others because of their race and ethnicity. (1999, 39)

For people with minority status, such messages are clear—you are different, and your ethnic make-up is less than desirable within mainstream society.

Regardless of color, all racial identity models discuss an intersection between racial perceptions of others (racism) and racial perception of self (racial identity). Since the earlier studies on African Americans (Cross 1978, 1995; Jackson 1975; Parham 1989), researchers have developed numerous models of racial identity development among other groups (Cross 1994). For example, Katz (1989) and Ponterotto and Pedersen (1993) researched Caucasians; Helms (1993, 1994, 1995) differentiated between theories of black racial identity and white racial identity; Lee (1988) and Kim (1981) explored Asian American identity development; Arce (1981) tried to better understand Chicano identity; Garrett and Walking Stick Garrett (1994) and Red Horse (1997) researched Native American identity development; Gibbs (1987) examined identity differences of biracial students; and Cass (1979) applied similar theories to homosexual identity development. (See table 1 for a sample of these and other racial and cultural identity development models.)

TABLE 1: Stages of racial/cultural identity development

Authors	*Stage 1*	*Stage 2*	*Stage 3*	*Stage 4*	*Stage 5*
Atkinson, Morten, and Sue 1983	Conformity	Dissonance	Resistance/immersion		Synergetic articulation and awareness
Cross 1978	Pre-encounter	Encounter	Immersion/emersion	Internalization	Internalization/commitment
Hardiman and Jackson 1992	Naive/no social consciousness	Acceptance	Resistance	Redefinition	Internalization
Helms 1994	Contact	Disintegration	Reintegration	Pseudo-independence	5.Immersion/emersion 6.Autonomy
Kim 1981	White identified	Awakening to sociopolitical awareness	Redirection to Asian American consciousness		Incorporation
Marcia 1966, 1980	Identity diffusion identity foreclosure	Identity crisis	Moratorium		Identity achievement
Milliones 1980	Preconscious	Confrontation		Internalization	Integration
Phinney 1990	Unexamined ethnic identity—diffuse and/or foreclose		Ethnic identity search/moratorium		Ethnic identity achievement
Sue and Sue 1999	Conformity	Dissonance	Resistance/immersion	Introspection	Integrative awareness

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK: PHINNEY'S THREE-STAGE MODEL OF ETHNIC IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT

Similar to ego and racial identity theories, ethnic identity development models focus on what and how oppressed people come to understand themselves in terms of their own culture, the dominant culture, and the oppressive relationship between the two cultures. According to Torres (1996), a sense of ethnic identity is socially constructed from shared culture, religion, geography, and language, which are often connected by strong loyalty and kinship ties as well as proximity. Several models of ethnic identity development have been proposed. Work by Cross (1978), Helms (1990), Kim (1981), Atkinson, Morten, and Sue (1983), and others shares with the ego identity literature (Marcia 1966, 1980) the idea that an achieved identity is the result of a crisis or awakening that leads to a period of exploration or experimentation and finally to a commitment or incorporation of one's ethnicity. Although these models provide important conceptualizations, there has been relatively little research aimed at validating them, and much of the research has focused on a single ethnic group. In contrast, Phinney's research aimed at

> developing and testing a model of ethnic identity development that is (1) theoretically based on Erickson's (1964, 1968) writings, (2) congruent both with Marcia's (1980) ego identity statuses and with the models of ethnic identity in the literature, and (3) applicable across ethnic groups. (1990, 63)

As a result, Phinney proposed the following three stages of development that many cultural groups experience as they struggle to define themselves: (1) unexamined ethnic identity; (2) ethnic identity search/moratorium; and (3) ethnic identity achievement.

Stage 1: Unexamined Ethnic Identity

According to Phinney (1993), stage 1 is characterized by a lack of interest or concern with ethnicity and a lack of exploration of ethnic issues. Several existing racial identity models suggest that minority subjects initially accept the values and attitudes of the majority culture, including the internalized negative views and stereotypes of their own group that are held by the majority (i.e., white American societal values, standards, and preferences). Cross called this stage in which "the person's

worldview is dominated by Euro-American determinants" (1978, 17) *pre-encounter*. Likewise, Kim (1981) referred to this stage as *white-identified*, while Atkinson, Morten, and Sue (1983) described it as a *conformity stage*. Either minority subjects do not acknowledge apparent differences between themselves and whites, at least on the conscious level, or, if they do acknowledge their distinguishing physical and/or cultural characteristics, they view them as a source of shame. Described by Marcia in 1980, this stage of minority identity development might be compared to *identity foreclosure* (i.e., characterized by the absence of exploration of issues, accompanied by commitments based on attitudes and opinions adopted from others without question). Foreclosure can be negative or positive. For example, Phinney's studies found that a foreclosed ethnic identity does not necessarily imply white preference: "Adolescents whose parents have provided positive models of ethnic pride may be foreclosed in the sense of not having examined the issues for themselves, but may have a positive view of their own group" (1993, 68).

Stage 2: Ethnic Identity Search/Moratorium

Phinney posited that stage 1 continues until adolescents encounter a situation that initiates stage 2, an ethnic identity search. With reference to ego identity, Erickson referred to this as the *identity crisis* or *moratorium*, "a necessary turning point, a crucial moment, when development must move one way or another, marshalling resources of growth, recovery, and further differentiation" (1968, 16). Cross (1978) used the term *encounter* to describe this shocking personal or social event that temporarily dislodges a person from his or her old worldview, making the person receptive to a new interpretation of his or her identity. According to Phinney, "it may be that an encounter experience is evident when individuals look back at the process of their own search, but that it is not clear at the time it happens" (1993, 69).

Stage 2 of Phinney's model can be described as a time of experimentation and inquiry that may include activities such as reading about various possibilities, taking relevant course work, talking with friends, parents, or others about the topic of interest, and actually trying out different life goals and lifestyles (Waterman 1985). According to Cross (1978), this stage of *immersion/emersion* is characterized by an intense concern to clarify the personal implications of ethnicity, and it may be highly emo-

tional. For example, Kim found that this phase includes "anger and outrage directed toward white society. This occurs when [subjects] discover and allow themselves to feel some of the historical incidents of racism" (1981, 149). For Cross, the process included "the tendency to denigrate white people and white culture while simultaneously deifying black people and black culture" (1978, 17). Erickson (1964) acknowledged the intensity of this period and recognized the role of anger. He noted that a transitory "negative identity," or a rejection of appropriate roles, may be a necessary precondition for a positive identity.

Stage 3: Ethnic Identity Achievement

According to Phinney, "the ideal outcome of the identity process is an achieved identity, characterized by a clear, confident sense of one's own ethnicity" (1993, 71). Individuals with an achieved ego identity have resolved uncertainties about their future direction and have made commitments that will guide future action (Marcia 1980). Cross, using the term *internalization* for this stage, described the following: "Tension, emotionality, and defensiveness are replaced by a calm, secure demeanor. Ideological flexibility, psychological openness, and self-confidence about one's blackness are evident" (1978, 18). During Phinney's stage 3, self-concept is positive, subjects feel good about who they are, they are comfortable blending aspects of their ethnic being, and they feel at home with themselves. They acknowledge a sense of self-fulfillment and pride with regard to cultural identity. All three of Phinney's stages of ethnic identity can be clearly and reliably distinguished, in contrast to some of the four or five ego statuses that have been described in the ethnic identity literature.

METHODOLOGY: HEURISTIC INQUIRY

Heuristic Phase 5: Explication

Looking back, I never would have imagined myself in a doctoral program. After six rewarding years of teaching and two challenging years of graduate school earning a master's degree, I've spent the past four years serving as an assistant principal while pursuing a doctorate in educational leadership at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. To complete a requirement for a field techniques class, I decided to explore the concept of Lumbee

language once again. I am hoping to make some contribution to my people through my dissertation, and I figured that interviewing my Lumbee brothers and sisters would be a way to break ground on ideas and satisfy a curiosity about my experience as a Lumbee who left home for school and who remained determined not to rise above his raisin'.

The choice of research topic often has personal significance for the researcher, whether conscious or unconscious (Devereux 1967). Indeed, some methodologies, such as heuristic inquiry, require us to have a personal connection with the topic of inquiry, which inevitably leads to "self examination, significant personal learning and change" (Stiles 1993, 604). Heuristic inquiry, which derives from the Greek *heuriskein*, meaning "to find and discover," developed out of humanistic psychology. As a research process that involves self-search, self-dialogue, and self-reflection, heuristic inquiry was designed for the exploration and interpretation of experience using the self of the researcher.

Drawing heavily upon the ideas of Polanyi (1958, 1969, 1983), heuristic inquiry was developed by Moustakas (1990; see also Douglass and Moustakas 1985) and bears some striking resemblance to the idea of *lived inquiry* developed by Heron (1998) and *mindful inquiry* developed by Bentz and Shapiro (1998). The heuristic inquiry paradigm is an adaptation of phenomenological inquiry but explicitly acknowledges the involvement of the *researcher* to the extent that the lived experience of the researcher becomes the main focus of the research: "It requires a subjective process of reflecting, exploring, sifting, and elucidating the nature of the phenomenon under investigation" (Douglass and Moustakas 1985, 40). As a result, the researcher really needs to feel passionate about the research question (West 1998a, 1998b). He or she must have a direct, personal encounter with the phenomenon being investigating (i.e., some actual autobiographical connection) and must be open to growth in self-awareness and self-knowledge. Moustakas identified a number of core processes (see table 2 for a summary) and then outlined seven basic phases involved in this approach (see table 3 for a summary).

In heuristic inquiry the research question and the methodology flow out of the researcher's inner awareness, meaning, and inspiration. Moustakas described it as "a process of internal search through which

TABLE 2: Summary of Moustakas's core processes of heuristic inquiry

Core Process	*Description*
Identify with the focus of the inquiry	The heuristic process involves getting inside the research question, becoming one with it, living it.
Self-dialogue	Self-dialogue is the critical beginning, allowing the phenomenon to speak directly to one's own experience. Knowledge grows out of direct human experience, and discovery involves self-inquiry, an openness to one's own experience.
Tacit knowing	In addition to knowledge that we can make explicit, there is knowledge that is implicit to our actions and experiences. This tacit dimension is ineffable and unspecifiable. It underlies and precedes intuition and can guide the researcher into untapped directions and sources of meaning.
Intuition	Intuition provides the bridge between explicit and tacit knowledge. Intuition makes possible the seeing of things as wholes. Every act of achieving integration, unity, or wholeness requires intuition.
Indwelling	This refers to the conscious and deliberate process of turning inward to seek a deeper, more extended comprehension of a quality or theme of human experience. Indwelling involves a willingness to gaze with unwavering attention and concentration into some aspect of human experience.
Focusing	Focusing is inner attention, a staying with, a sustained process of systematically contacting the central meanings of an experience. It enables one to see something as it is and to make whatever shifts are necessary to make contact with necessary awareness and insight.
Internal frame of reference	The outcome of the heuristic process in terms of knowledge and experience must be placed in the context of the experiencer's own internal frame of reference and not some external frame.

Source: Moustakas 1990, 15–27.

TABLE 3: Summary of Moustakas's phases of heuristic inquiry

Phase	*Description*
Initial engagement	The task of the first phase is to discover an intense interest, a passionate concern that calls out to the researcher, one that holds important social meanings and personal, compelling implications. The research question that emerges lingers with the researcher, awaiting the disciplined commitment that will reveal its underlying meanings.
Immersion	The research question is lived in waking, sleeping, and even dream states. This requires alertness, concentration, and self-searching. Virtually anything connected with the question becomes raw material for immersion.
Incubation	This involves a retreat from the intense, concentrated focus, allowing the expansion of knowledge to take place at a more subtle level, enabling the inner tacit dimension and intuition to clarify and extend understanding.
Illumination	This involves a breakthrough, a process of awakening that occurs naturally when the researcher is open and receptive to tacit knowledge and intuition. It involves opening a door to new awareness, a modification of an old understanding, a synthesis of fragmented knowledge, or new discovery.
Explication	This involves a full examination of what has been awakened in consciousness. What is required is organization and a comprehensive depiction of the core themes.
Creative synthesis	Thoroughly familiar with the data and following a preparatory phase of solitude and meditation, the researcher puts the components and core themes usually into the form of creative synthesis expressed as a narrative account, report, thesis, poem, story, drawing, painting, etc.
Validation of the heuristic inquiry	The question of validity is one of meaning. Does the synthesis present comprehensively, vividly, and accurately the meanings and essences of the experience? The researcher returns again and again to the data to check whether they embrace the necessary and sufficient meanings. Finally, feedback is obtained through partici pant validation and receiving responses from others.

Source: Moustakas 1990, 27–37.

one discovers the nature and meaning of experience and develops methods and procedures for further investigation and analysis" (1990, 9). Working with the heuristic process of others, this study (which is part of a larger research project designed to further the knowledge base of oppression by race, by class, and by language and its effects on student achievement and cultural identity) sought to understand how dialect affects the ethnic identity development of Lumbee students attending a predominantly white university. The following research questions guided the process of inquiry:

1. What are student perceptions about the use of Lumbee dialect in the home?
2. What are student perceptions about the use of Lumbee dialect in the university setting?
3. What academic challenges do Lumbee students identify in the university setting?
4. What social challenges do Lumbee students identify in the university setting?
5. How have students' attitudes about their Lumbee heritage changed as a result of their experiences in the college setting?

These guiding questions served as the foundation on which this study was designed and the interview questions were drafted.

The researchers focused the study on Robeson County in North Carolina. In the tradition of heuristic inquiry purposeful sampling (Creswell 2005) was used to identify and interview five students who self-identified as members of the Lumbee Tribe, who grew up and still reside in Robeson County, and who are current undergraduate students enrolled full-time at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. (See appendix A for a summary of the participants' demographic information.) The sample was relatively small, allowing for in-depth interviews to explore the sensitive topic of ethnicity in open-ended questions. Note that pseudonyms have been used.

Interviewees were asked to share their thoughts and feelings regarding their culture, their dialect, and their educational journey from high school to college. Specific interview questions focused on questions assumed from the literature to be indicative of ethnic identity search and achievement. They included the following:

1. Does your home speech differ from your school language?
2. When did you recognize that you speak differently from most of the other students?
3. If other students recognized a difference in your dialect, how did they let you know?
4. Describe how your dialect/speech has played a role in your adjustment to the university setting.
5. What role does your social interaction play in returning home?
6. In what ways do you reflect the "typical Lumbee," and in what ways are you different from that norm?

The students were interviewed by the first author (from the same ethnic group) on the university campus for approximately two hours. The interviews were semistructured, tape-recorded, and later transcribed for purposes of analysis. A reflective journal and extensive field notes documenting body language, facial expressions, gestures, and other nonverbal cues were kept throughout the process. The theoretical framework of ethnic identity development, the methodology of heuristic inquiry, and the lived experiences of the first author and the participants helped to focus the data analysis.

Even though the work of Wolfram and others (2002) addresses the Lumbee dialect, there are no known studies that explore and describe this phenomenon's impact on student identity. In this study the goal was to examine how speaking the Lumbee dialect impacts student identity outside of the tribal community. As a member of the Lumbee Tribe, the first author acknowledges his positionality in this research. His personal bias in conducting this research stems from his experience growing up in Robeson County and pursuing postsecondary education outside of his native land. In doing so he succumbed to the pressure to assimilate to the dominant culture of a white middle-class college community and acknowledges that he is empowered by his experiences to tell this story. The story that derives from this research is his story (as well as that of the participants) of coming to terms with his identity in a linguistically diverse society. While this study had limitations, such as having only five participants from the same tribe, the same K–12 educational background, and the same geographical homeland, we are reminded by Douglass and Moustakas that "heuristics is concerned with meanings, not measurements; with essence, not appearance; with quality, not quantity; with experience, not behaviour" (1985, 42).

Heuristic Phase 6: Creative Synthesis

Prior to my investigation, I had to determine where I would fit into the story and how I would tell it. Since I can claim this experience as my experience, I thought it necessary that I place myself in the story and juxtapose the experiences of other Lumbee students to mine. Considering a variety of research options, I decided to conduct interviews with each student. During the interviews I looked for themes in their K–12 and college experiences, including family and community influences and social support systems. Each student also completed a short questionnaire that provided me with some demographic information and gave me a sense of direction prior to each interview. From the data I found striking similarities as themes and patterns emerged in the responses of the students whom I interviewed.

Comments from all five of the study participants revealed clear evidence of ethnic identity search. For all the students, their ethnicity is a critically important issue, and their Lumbee dialect continues to act as a trigger for consciousness in their developmental progression from stage 1 (unexamined ethnic identity) through stage 2 (ethnic identity search). Indications of stage 3 (ethnic identity achievement) were also apparent in a few of the interviewees' remarks but mostly those of the first author. While the extent and rate of movement are different and unique for each individual, these results are similar to those from earlier studies of ego identity, showing progress to higher stages with increasing age and experience (Kroger 1988). Although dialect was the specific focus of this research, it is important to remember that a number of personal and contextual factors are of considerable importance in influencing ethnic identity development. Interviewees discussed struggling with white standards, discrimination, and prejudice. Some also commented on conflicting values between their own and the majority culture. In summary, the salient themes the Lumbee students perceived to be important in the resolution of their ethnic identity included stereotyping, assimilating, talking country, speaking correctly, code switching, building self-esteem, and networking with other Lumbee.

PHINNEY'S STAGE 1: UNEXAMINED ETHNIC IDENTITY

According to Phinney (1990), the initial stage of unexamined ethnic identity is characterized by little or no exploration of one's ethnicity as an identity issue and no clear understanding of the broader issues. While a few of the students in this study recounted earlier preferences for white culture and some lack of awareness regarding cultural values, the data analysis revealed that, as a direct result of their Lumbee dialect, all five participants were prompted to explore their ethnicity in relation to American society today. As part of this process, three of the students shared specific examples of views acquired by others. For instance, Erin expressed some evidence of internalized negative stereotypes when she described the "typical Lumbee" image, discussed conflicting values, and shared how she had "gone away to school to try and better herself."

ERIN: Typical Lumbee are country talking, into the Harley stuff, stuff like that just goes on back home . . . I think that there's the mindset that the average Lumbee is not trying to do anything with their lives, not trying to achieve an education, maybe still living at home with Mama, doing like construction work, like something that's not, definitely not going away to school to get an education, not trying to pursue anything past an undergraduate from Pembroke. So I think that's like the common stereotype and I think that a lot of people in Robeson County feel like they're never going to leave Robeson County, and I think there's a lot of closed-mindedness that goes on with people like that . . . In some aspects, I feel like if I went back home, I would go back to that stereotype.

Helena recalled similar prejudicial attitudes from her teachers: "Until I proved it to them . . . they might have thought, 'Well, she's Lumbee, she might not be as smart.'" Henry seemed to struggle the most with both positive and negative ethnic images. As a first-generation college student, he is proud of his heritage and life choices but completely separates himself from the "typical" Lumbee image. Henry's frustration and perceptions regarding the value systems represented among Robeson County Lumbee are obvious in several of the comments he made throughout the interview.

HENRY: I tried to assimilate when I got here my freshman year. Like my dress: I wore baggy clothes, backwards hats. Pretty soon I notice

everybody had flip-flops on with rainbows. I said, "I'm gonna get me a pair." I started shopping at American Eagle, going to the Gap. In high school I wore Tommy Hilfiger, Silvertabs, Timberlands. That's all everybody back home wears, and I'm just a part of it. I still sometimes wear my Timberlands, next day I'll wear my rainbows, one day I'll wear Tommy, next day I'll wear American Eagle. It's kinda like I'm struggling.

INTERVIEWER: Do you think you represent the typical Lumbee?

HENRY: No, I don't represent the average Lumbee at all. My roommate and I actually have a joke. Guys my age, young, might have a job by now, don't do anything, maybe work at a plant somewhere, still live at home with his mom and dad (which is fine because I stay with mine when I'm home), but it's like the thug, tattoo, it's that mindset and it's like one of my female friends is talking to a guy here and he does something stupid, we'll say that's TL—typical Lum.

INTERVIEWER: Do you think being here has affected relationships back home?

HENRY: Well, my family is pretty proud of me, but my friends—I don't really hang around the same friends I had in high school . . . I don't hardly ever see them because they're on another path and I'm on a separate path and I don't want to be in that environment anymore. I don't know, but we've kinda agreed to disagree on that. I don't hate them and they don't hate me but we just avoid each other.

When asked if anyone back home ever commented on their grammar or Lumbee dialect, four of the five interviewees had similar responses of home and/or school experiences of someone correcting their speech. Consciously or unconsciously, these students learned prior to attending college that a distinction had to be made between common Lumbee dialect and Standard English, at least in terms of grammar and usage. Henry credits his father for correcting his speech: "My dad, he's always worked outside Robeson County and he's always tried to correct the words I would say. I would say like 'der' [there] and 'den' [then] and 'da.' I can't remember . . . other than my dad pickin' on me." Ann's mother, who is a teacher, regularly corrected her speech, yet she also received instruction from a high school teacher who addressed how her Lumbee speech could possibly hinder her academic performance as a writer.

ANN: My mom always corrected my speech when I was younger. She's a schoolteacher—she teaches third grade. But in high school there was

this one white lady who I had for English. She told us [Lumbee] that you can't write like you talk. After that I knew I had to step it up and write this way or that way but different from the way I talk.

Like Ann, Helena is also the daughter of a teacher who not only addressed the correctness of her speech but also noted that different environments require different language rules. A family member with a background in the teaching profession also influenced Erin's experience.

HELENA: She [Mom] was always correcting me because she is a teacher and I got that all the time. Even now I still get that and I'm like, "Don't correct me. Let me talk this way when I come home." Not trying to be mean or anything, she was just trying to teach me how to act around other people that are different. But like the rest of my family, they don't pay too much attention to grammar and making sure you say the right verbs and all that stuff.

ERIN: My grandma was an English teacher and my daddy drilled hard core on speaking correctly and I was corrected by them but I never paid them no attention because I was like, "Man, everybody here talks like this—why I have to speak proper?" Like even now my daddy will call me out on things I say, like that's just not the right way to say stuff, like I'm going to college at Carolina—I should speak like I'm going to college at Carolina. Again, I'm at home and I'm just conforming to how everybody else talks. But yeah, they always point it out. And I always used my grandma to help me when I was writing and she was always the one who corrected me.

Rachel was the only participant who did not acknowledge that anyone from her home or high school addressed speech or writing issues:

RACHEL: Nobody ever fixed my talking or writing back home. None of my high school teachers really marked me down because of the way I wrote or stuff like that. I really never wrote like I talk anyway. I think that I always wrote proper.

Ethnic identity development is a key factor in understanding the self-esteem and adjustment of minority youth. In this study issues of self-doubt and inadequacy surfaced for some of the participants. While this may be developmentally normal for most high school or college-age students, data analysis indicated that the students' dialect added to

these feelings. For example, Helena attended a multiracial high school where she was one of the only Lumbee students in advanced classes. She is very sure of herself and her abilities and seems poised for success. In describing her experience of realizing that she spoke differently, she used the word "cute" to generalize the response she typically receives at UNC. Helena also recognized that upon entering college she felt "self-conscious."

HELENA: I don't think it [accent] did hinder me in high school because my mom like, my family always said, "You're no different from anybody else, you're just as smart as anybody else." I never worried about my accent. Everybody just thought it was cute. They just think it's Southern, especially here. They say like, "You have the cutest accent. Where are you from?" I didn't feel self-conscious about it, not until college. Like in your English classes and you have to get up and do speeches. And Spanish classes, 'cause I'm in like level 4 Spanish, and you have to do a lot of oral presentations and stuff. Just stuff where you have to speak in front of people.

Likewise, Rachel admitted that in some of her classes she feels restrained by concerns that her contributions will be inadequate and as a result defers to other students to interact publicly.

RACHEL: Like, I can be in a class and there was reading to do for homework, and I'll do the reading real fast in the class. Then we'll get into groups and I know what's going on. I know what the passage is about or what the professor wants us to know, but when he asks us to share with the class, I wanted somebody else to say it because [I feel like] he could present it better.

In discussing their dialect and issues of ethnicity, evidence of exploration, accompanied by some confusion about the meaning of the students' own identity, was obvious. When recalling their past, some students described some events that were emotionally intense or disruptive and some that sounded very much like encounter experiences (e.g., awareness of racism and discrimination). According to Phinney, this is normal: "It may be that an encounter experience is evident when individuals look back at the process of their own search, but that it is not clear at the time it happens" (1993, 69). This growing sense of awareness

was a basic indication that all five of the participants in this study had moved from stage 1 and were indeed engaged in stage 2 (ethnic identity search).

PHINNEY'S STAGE 2: ETHNIC IDENTITY SEARCH/MORATORIUM

Phinney's stage 2 is characterized by participation in activities that help one investigate the implications of racial identity. Typified by a wide range of options, the Lumbee students in this study expressed interest in learning more about their culture, and most were actively involved in doing so. They talked with family and friends about ethnic issues, read books (beyond those required for school courses), and were able to discuss both positive and negative implications of their ethnic group membership. In addition, many had thought about the effects of their ethnicity on their life in the past, present, and future.

Regardless of when each student realized that his or her speech patterns deviated from those of Standard English, they all acknowledged that, upon arriving at UNC, they were reminded of their linguistic uniqueness. They distinctly remembered that this realization came when other students either commented on or ridiculed their word pronunciation. These incidents acted as triggers for consciousness and aided the students' progression from unexamined ethnic identity to ethnic identity search. For example, Ann attended a UNC summer program required of all minority students prior to matriculation in the fall of their freshman year. Her comments are typical of this stage and are indicative of this growing awareness:

ANN: I reckon the first time I noticed it was at Summer Bridge my freshman year. I was talking and I said something about my "ant" [aunt] and everybody was like, "What?" I guess because they say "aunt" [ahnt]. I also said things like "fixin'" and stuff. I never made the distinction back home.

Other students described similar experiences, and because of their dialect they were told that they "talk country."

ERIN: I reckon when I went away because when I was at home everybody was like me so I never recognized that there was anything different. When I came to school, though, I realized there was a lot of other people

that speak different from me. And a lot of times they didn't understand what I said so I had to repeat it. At that point I sort of understood . . . Yeah, there's some people here who told me I didn't know my English and I need to learn it. I think it was kinda rude but I just laugh it off because that's just who I am. If I was ever to just move back home I probably would go back to speaking just like my community because that's who I was around. Like now, I feel like that's how I spoke when I was at home, I kind of conformed to how people speak up here, but I feel like when I go back home, the country just comes back out in me somehow.

RACHEL: It really stuck out a lot when I got here. I sing a lot, ever since I was twelve, and I go all over the place. When I got here it's like people said I talk country. Everybody constantly reminds me; they think I'm from Texas or Alabama or somethin'. They like it, though. They always say I talk funny and they ask me to repeat or say certain words.

Henry explained how his environment now determines which language approach he applies, as if he code switches between home and school. It is interesting to note that although Erin did not claim to code switch consciously, she did mention that she speaks differently when in Chapel Hill than she does when she returns home.

HENRY: I can't put an exact age on it [realizing that he speaks differently], maybe around middle school. Of course, then when I got here I full fledge knew I speak different. They ask where I'm from. I have to repeat myself over and over and over. An' now, it's almost second nature. When I'm here, I correct myself automatically. Like if I was at home right now, I would speak differently than what I'm speaking right now. Like I was home over spring break, but by the end of the week I was back to country, back to Lumbee. It takes time to get used to it [code switching], but I try to juggle both of them. Try to, at least.

For students who choose to leave home, their transition to and experiences in college often result in identity transformation. Even though the interviewees in this study all gave the impression of being sure of their abilities and confident that they made the right choice to come to UNC, they also seemed to be in a state not only of evaluating who they are as students at the university but also of evaluating in what manner or to what degree they are remaining grounded in their home roots. They too seemed to be asking the question, Am I rising above my raisin'? For four

of the five students, their behavior at UNC implied a tendency to seek out and embrace their Lumbee or Native American peers. Additionally, their attitudes and opinions about their dialect, their culture, and their Native tribesmen and tribeswomen in Robeson County suggest a shifting of values that may have been influenced by their matriculation to UNC.

In reexamining their identity and making the adjustment to college, the interviewees acknowledged that they have often contemplated going back home to Robeson County. Although their responses varied, there were some patterns in their perspectives (e.g., finding a second home in the Carolina Indian Circle, the Native American student organization at UNC). Henry's commitment to his dream helped him overcome his temptations to return home. When speaking with the first author, he revealed:

HENRY: And I went through the same thing you went through my freshman year. My freshman year I kinda struggled. Sophomore year I thought about going home. Then I realized I didn't want to give up—stick it out. Now I love it. I wouldn't go home for anything right now . . . I'll be here until I finish.

For Ann the transition to UNC was "painful" in some ways. She admitted that she missed the comfort and security of home, but social relationships eased the pain, and her drive to succeed overpowered her temptations to return home.

ANN: I faced struggles like feeling like "a minority within a minority," but meeting friends and joining organizations like Carolina Indian Circle and the Native American sorority have helped ease that pain. I missed the friends and family I saw every day at home and just knowing what to expect or knowing everybody I passed by (that security again), but once I established friendship bonds it began to feel a whole lot like home. It never crossed my mind to go home. The desire to succeed and become an example to others was too strong!!

Henry also seems to have built a life that is an extension of his home life, choosing, like the other students, a predominantly Lumbee peer group. Likewise, Erin credits the Carolina Indian Circle with giving her the strength to overcome temptations to leave.

ERIN: I probably would not have made it up here all these years if it had not been for the Carolina Indian Circle just 'cause when I was a

freshman there was so many times I thought about going home and me and my roommate could sit in my room sophomore year and be like, "We could be at Pembroke." "We could be at home." "Let's go home next semester. Let's go talk to our advisor. It's so much easier. It won't be so expensive." So we definitely contemplated it a lot. And I guess knowing that there were a lot of people who came from Robeson County and they made it here and I was like, "Well, I can make it too if they made it."

In addition to involving a search for understanding about their culture, the ethnic models of Cross (1978) and others suggest that this stage may be highly emotional and may elicit anger toward the majority culture. Of all the participants, Henry was the most vocal about this issue. For him, buying clothes to fit into the dominant culture is only an attempt to assimilate. In feeling forced to change Henry is looking for someone or something on which to place blame. He even employed the term *Lumbonics* to reiterate his struggles as a writer.

HENRY: It's unfair [to have to change] and I don't know who to blame it on. I can't blame it on my teachers, blame it on my heritage. It's just I felt like this. I can't help it. And I get here, my white friends talk proper and they write the way they talk. And when they write a paper, they just look at the topic of the paper and write the paper. When I write a paper, I have to look at the topic of the paper, write the paper, go over it again, read it again, so I can take all the Lumbonics out of it. So it's just unfair. I can't do nothing about it. I just have to work extra hard. There's nothing I can do.

Further evidence of ethnic identity search and commitment by the participants is obvious in the fact that Erin is heavily involved in her Native American heritage at UNC and is majoring in American Indian studies, while Helena has recently embarked upon a journey to better understand her culture. She is taking her newfound knowledge back to her Lumbee relatives.

HELENA: I don't think I represent the typical Lumbee because I never got involved in the powwow thing back home, but I really got involved in my culture when I came here. When I got away from Robeson County, I learned to appreciate it. I think it [social support] has really made me comfortable here because like the Carolina Indian Circle, it's like I've known them my whole life, like the people and members, and I'm in the

Native American sorority and I think that has like helped me discover my culture and everything. I go home and I tell my mama, "Guess what I learned about the Lumbee." And like my mom, she's just now getting into our culture because of me coming back telling her stuff.

PHINNEY'S STAGE 3: ETHNIC IDENTITY ACHIEVEMENT

Stage 3 of Phinney's ethnic identity model, the achieved stage, is characterized by evidence of exploration, accompanied by a clear, secure understanding and acceptance of one's own ethnicity. While indications of movement toward such feelings are reflected in a few of the comments of the interviewees, only the first author revealed a more confident sense of self as a minority group member following a search that indicates an achieved ethnic identity. Of the five students interviewed, Rachel seems to have progressed the farthest along the ethnic identity achievement continuum. She denies being the typical Lumbee and extends this even further by noting that she is not even the typical Lumbee at Carolina. Rachel admits that she has changed, but the change process for her began prior to coming to Carolina. She seems to have a sense of who she is at Carolina and as a Lumbee.

RACHEL: Some of us have adjusted to being here. I am not the typical Lumbee, and I'm not the typical Lumbee at Carolina. I have Lumbee friends, but I also have a lot of friends who are not Lumbee too and I think that makes me not typical. Like, I hang out with people of other races—I'm just like that . . . Coming to Carolina has made me more confident, more carefree. I don't care what too many people think. My attitude began changing about Robeson County . . . When I got here, I took a step out of that box. But I still have friends back home, though. We don't talk as much, but they are my "true friends."

The first author also acknowledges that even though he has come to a better understanding of his ethnic identity, he still struggles somewhat with full acceptance (of himself and by others). Chris has resolved a number of uncertainties regarding his future and has made commitments to move forward with pride. He is a lot more open, confident, and comfortable blending aspects of his ethnic being, and he feels good about who he is, where he is headed, and why.

As I sit with the second author and reflect upon my personal journey, I consider who I am in the world. Among many other identities, I am an educator, a doctoral student, a Christian, a Lumbee, an American citizen. I have come to realize that the lens through which I view the world is colored by the unique perspective of having grown up Lumbee. My social experiences, mostly in the educational arena, brought me to a crossroads. The pressure to assimilate to the dominant culture by acquiring a command of Standard English and non-Lumbee dialect left me questioning, "Have I risen above my raisin'?" Encompassed in that question are other questions, such as "By acquiring the rules of the 'white man's' world, what have I relinquished from my own world?" and "Would I be in the same place had I not acquired these skills?"

To answer these and other conflicting questions, I look back to my Lumbee world and the messages I received from childhood, that I can be anything I want to be. *My past prepared me with the resiliency to sustain a sense of pride in my heritage in spite of the challenges and obstacles that I continue to face. When I go back to Wakulla and visit Ms. Myrtle (and many others who left their fingerprints on my upbringing), I feel some degree of insecurity because I fear that my choice to explore beyond the comfort of my native community will be met with an air of contempt, similar to the feelings of the students who participated in the interviews. But often I am relieved by a commentary about the aspirations of our people and a symbolic pat on the back for a job well done.*

As my journey continues I continue to answer questions about who I am going to be in the world. As a school administrator I strive to understand those who are culturally different and model an appreciation for diversity. I also challenge those whom I have been charged with leading to consider the lens through which they see the world and the messages they send to students and families. Finally, I always share with pride the cultural uniqueness of my Lumbee heritage. As a doctoral student I plan to use research to contribute to a better understanding of the mixed blessings of growing up Lumbee in a non-Lumbee world.

CONCLUDING DISCUSSION

Heuristic Phase 6: Creative Synthesis

In juxtaposing the experiences of the Lumbee Indians I interviewed with my personal experiences as a student of color, I find striking similarities

and differences in the themes that arose in the research. With the exception of Rachel, each student acknowledges that someone from his or her home environment corrected his or her application of language. Henry is the only student interviewed who is a first-generation college student, but his father worked and traveled outside of Robeson County and imposed an expectation on Henry to apply Standard English rules. Ann and Helena are daughters of professional educators, Erin is the granddaughter of a former English teacher, and Rachel's mom works for a local university. Not only have these students been raised in a home environment that has formal language training, but they also come from families that have encouraged them and placed value on formal education. To the contrary, I am a first-generation college student whose parents were part of the working, lower-middle class. My academic performance in my formative years was more a product of obedience and respect for authority (most of which consisted of white females), values my family embraced. I had to rely on a well-meaning high school teacher to explain why acquiring and applying rules of Standard English was important.

In transitioning to college these students all credit the Carolina Indian Circle with helping them adjust to their feelings of social displacement. At ASU there were significantly fewer Native Americans and thus very little support for students who were "a minority within a minority." I found comfort in the Wesley Foundation, and my transition there was made easier by the fact that a Lumbee had already influenced the social climate, unknowingly paving the way for my acceptance and transition. But I did feel the same sense of inferiority that impaired my willingness to openly participate verbally in large classes, and I also struggled academically, particularly as a writer. Just as Henry expressed his frustrations with double negatives and choppy writing, I too am self-conscious about the fluency with which I communicate the written word. With regard to going back home, even though I contemplated transferring, I knew that going home was not an option for me. Like Rachel, my dreams extended beyond Robeson County.

I do find it interesting that the students I interviewed seem to confine themselves to social interaction that is almost exclusively Lumbee specific. Some even noted that it's like home away from home. Erin elaborated by saying, "When we get together, we can cut up and it's just like we're back home again." In this regard my experience is much different. Like Rachel, I found friendship with students of other ethnicities, which at ASU were almost exclusively Caucasian and African American. Ironically, as much as these Lumbee students strive to create a sense of home by selecting Lumbee

peers, they clearly distinguish themselves from the social groups they left behind. I have come to realize that my social interactions with ethnicities different from my own have helped me to be even more proud of my heritage. They have shaped my worldview, which was tainted by feelings of inferiority, and helped me to be less defensive.

Leaving home and going to college has a profound effect on most students, but Lumbee students of color seem to leave behind more than their friends and family. It's almost as if they leave a bit of their identity. What I found most evident in the students I interviewed is their sense of pride in the fact that they made the choice to apply to and study at UNC. It is still unclear to me whether these students struggled with the exact same identity conflict that I did—feeling like I was compromising my racial heritage by accepting and applying what Delpit (1995) calls "codes of power" in attempting to mask my dialect and become part of the game of success. I did not realize this until years of reflection forced me to reevaluate my place in Robeson County and among my people. The transformation that took place for me is the result of acquiring many "codes of power" and applying them to my social setting. As a public school administrator and a doctoral student I am still acquiring them, but I am also gathering resources to confront the power structures that exist, and I hope to change the rules of the game for students of color.

The process of ethnic identity development has clear implications for overall psychological adjustment—it is a key factor in understanding the self-esteem and adjustment of minority youth. The results of this study reflect that more research needs to be conducted on this topic that extends beyond the perimeters of cultural identity. As student responses in the research suggests, speaking the Lumbee dialect has implications for student achievement as well. Other issues on this topic include hidden messages that Lumbee students receive, such as "talking white versus talking country," resiliency factors that contribute to Lumbee students' success, and students' attitudes about postsecondary education at schools in their native communities versus those in nonnative communities.

Heuristic Phase 7: Validation of the Heuristic Inquiry

I am eight years old, and it's the last night of Vacation Bible School at Cherokee Chapel Holiness Church in Wakulla, North Carolina. The sanc-

tuary is filled mostly with children. After singing "Jesus Loves Me" and a variety of other religious children's songs, we sing the song that every Lumbee child learned along with those Bible songs.

I'm proud to be a Lumbee Indian, yes I am.
When I grow up into this world I'm gonna be just what I can.
My mama and daddy believe in me.
They want me to be free,
free to be anything I want to be.
I can be a doctor or a lawyer or an Indian chief, yes I can.
When I grow up into this world I'm gonna be just what I can.
My mama and daddy believe in me.
They want me to be free,
free to be anything I want to be.

APPENDIX A: Study Participants

Name	*Hometown*	*High School*	*Parent Education Level*	*Noteworthy Home Language Behaviors*
Ann	Pembroke	Minority high school	College graduate	Mother corrected language; works in a college setting
Erin	Pembroke	Minority high school	College graduate	Grandmother was an English teacher; parents corrected language
Helena	Lumberton	Multiracial high school	College graduate	Mother is a teacher; corrects language
Henry	Pembroke	Minority high school	Unknown	Father corrected and ridiculed Lumbee dialect; father worked outside of Robeson County
Rachel	Pembroke	Minority high school	College graduate	Aunt is a professor; family corrected language

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