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Bible translation and medicine man talk: Missionaries, indexicality, and the "language expert" on the San Carlos Apache Reservation

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ABSTRACT

This article sketches the effects of 100 years of missionary presence on how people in the San Carlos Apache community regard language and the idea of a "language expert." Evangelical Christian practice demands an Apache language emptied of all indexical associations with non-Christian Apache cultural practices. The reservation is home to perhaps two dozen missions and churches, each of which takes a slightly different view of the role of Apache language and culture in religious practice. In an exploration of the translation practices of Phillip Goode, a San Carlos Apache interpreter, and of early Lutheran missionaries on the reservation, it is argued that Bible translation is a key factor in shifting ideas about language as a purely referential system on the reservation. This shifting language ideology has repercussions on how people in the community consider the prospects for language revitalization. (San Carlos Apache, missionaries, language ideology, translation.)

INTRODUCTION

This article has emerged out of my attempt to resolve the fact that my Apache teacher of nearly ten years, the late Phillip Goode (1951–1999), was regarded as both a "language expert" and a "Christian" by those who knew him on the San Carlos Apache Reservation in Arizona. That twinned life as teacher and preacher made him doubly a "master speaker," to use Gus Palmer's (2003) apt phrase. This doubling of language and Christian faith rarely found its way explicitly into our language lessons together. As time goes on, however, I am increasingly interested in Phillip's being considered an expert, why he was considered so, and how that social status may have been related to his Christian theological practice.

When I first came to serious study of Western Apache, I was guided to Phillip's mentorship by numerous members of the San Carlos community because of his "expertise." Phillip's love of and facility with the sounds and syntax of

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languages stood out to me from the beginning. The first time I met him, he came out the side door of his HUD home (a type of basic house provided by the Department of Housing and Urban Development on reservations) in the Airport '79 neighborhood, wearing a dark blue t-shirt the front of which asked, "Where the Heck is Globe, AZ?" He held a shouted conversation across his driveway in Apache with the elder woman who introduced us, and in English with me, and we arranged to meet at the café downtown in a couple of days. As he walked back into his house, I saw that he had put the phrase "wot 2 be got 2 be" in iron-on letters on the back of the t-shirt.

Later on, I learned that Phillip had only recently stepped down as the pastor of the evangelical American Indian Church in Seven Mile Wash. His father, Britton Goode, had worked closely with Faith Hill and the Wycliffe Bible Translators on the Western Apache version of the New Testament. Phillip himself continued the Summer Institute of Linguistics (SIL) practice of teaching native-language literacy to fluent speakers of Western Apache. In fact, he and I often had to negotiate how best to adapt Phillip's materials on reading and writing Apache into a graduated course in conversation for nonspeakers. Phillip often engaged me in theological discussions, of course. But in the context of my language learning, Phillip's born-again Christianity flew below the radar – or at least my radar.

In reflecting now on my mentor's status as pastor and linguist, I am interested not only in what I learned of and about the speaking and comprehending of Apache from him. I am also taken by what I learned about how Phillip conceptualized the ontology of language itself. This is clear to me now as it was not when I was caught in the vortex of learning handling verbs and modal enclitics: Phillip's language expertise was not based on his extensive knowledge of San Carlos Apache narratives, or social songs, or ceremonial incantations. Rather, it was based upon his ability to TRANSLATE.[1]

So, in the course of this essay, I want to use my reflections on Phillip Goode in order to explore how people in San Carlos address the questions "What is a language?" and "What is a language expert?" I want to consider the ways in which evangelical missionary practices have hindered language revitalization efforts in the community by asking for a "language" that is cleansed of all indexical attachments to what might be construed as non-Christian or pre-Christian Apache cultural practices or values. I also want to explore how Bible translation and interpretation have contributed to this "reification of the word" (Bakhtin 1981:346), so that what is put at stake in the struggle for language survival and revitalization is not "ways of speaking" but "a language." Finally, I want to investigate the role of missionary work and Bible translation in emergent forms of "expert rhetoric" (Hill 2002) in the local community, including the idea that one must BE an expert in order have the authority to teach the language to others.

Phillip Goode is certainly not the only person who was involved in this process, and so I must stress the modest and preliminary goals of this essay. Simi-

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larly, Christianity is clearly not the sole source of rationalizing ideologies in Native communities.[2] But the missionary role in (re)shaping language ideologies on the San Carlos reservation is difficult to sidestep. The alignment of evangelist, expert, and translator can be sensed in a 1963 *Arizona Highways* profile of Francis Uplegger, a Lutheran missionary on the reservation: "He became recognized and accepted, even by the Apaches, as the greatest authority on their language" (Herbert & Herbert 1963:3).[3] By what mechanism did a Lutheran missionary become recognized as this "authority"? As in Phillip Goode's case, the recognition was not bestowed because of Uplegger's ability to tell stories, perform ceremonies, or sing songs. It was through his ability to translate, and specifically his ability to translate scripture, that his expertise was sanctioned.

In this essay, then, I explore an emergent local notion of "language expert." I argue that this emergent notion is caught up in a rationalization process found in the administrative violence of modernizing internal colonialism. A key feature of this process is translation, and specifically translation of biblical texts (see Rubel & Rosman 2003, Tymoczko & Gentzler 2002). This translation feature makes the transparency of language, both to the world and to other languages, the stakes in recognizing new forms of (ritual) metalanguage, and thus new forms of "constructing the agency and authority of those who wield it" (Keane 2002:95). The administrative protocols of translational transparency effectively reduce socially contextualized vocal practices to lexicon and syntax, and thus they reshape who is recognized as a "language expert." This has far-reaching consequences within the discourse community. How does language become divested of its cultural associations? How do translation practices, and the increasing prestige of translation practitioners, shape this divestiture? What does this mean for language survival? For cultural survival? How does the rationalist drive to change language into a collection of lexico-semantic units, rather than a collection of pragmatically useful registers and genres, affect the prospects for language revitalization on the San Carlos Apache reservation?

WHITHER INDEXICALITY?

Numerous authors have discussed the rationalizing process that brings language under institutional regimentation in contexts of nationalizing modernity.[4] The process is something we might think of as SEMANTIC PURIFICATION. By this term I mean to invoke a process whereby utterances are disarticulated, both "internally" – that is, constituent parts are reformulated as words – and "externally," or separated from the indexical and iconic associations that are the historical sedimentation of cultural relations and meaningful interactions. Through these disarticulations, utterances become collections of lexical units that are arbitrarily associated with referential meanings, be they abstract concepts or material objects in the world. The process recalls a number of Bakhtinian distinctions: between "sentence" and "utterance," between "language" and "discourse," be-

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tween "linguistics" and "rhetoric." The process takes the world of socially contextualized vocal practices, in which "what ... characters say constitutes an arena of never-ending struggle with others' words, in all realms of life and creative ideological activity" (Bakhtin 1981:349), and transforms it into a "language." Silverstein 1998, for example, draws a distinction between two forms of thinking about language communities. In the first, "The language community, and hence its language, can be seen as a precipitate of sociocultural processes" (1998:402). A second, more restrictive sense of language, according to Silverstein, refers not to language in these "processual semiotic terms" (1998:403), but rather to "allegiance ... to a denotational code" (1998:404). In this shift, the material and indexical meanings of an utterance are stripped away, so that what remains is a purified semanticity.[5] Silverstein edges into the question of the rationalizing processes of colonial modernity, locating the shift toward language-as-denotational-norms in "the European experience of explicitly theorizing denotational usage as encompassed under 'grammar' or 'structure' and leaving everything else in the semiotics of verbally mediated interaction to the realm of 'rhetoric' or even vaguer notions" (1998:406).

Keane 2002 is more explicit in linking this rationalizing process to forms of Christian conversion. In discussing Protestant conversion in Sumba, he explains the emergence of "sincere" forms of speech (forms that directly express the thoughts of the speaker) in that community. Sincere speech "is linked to the historical emergence of language ideologies that stress the referential and predicational functions of language over, say, social pragmatics such as indexing social deference ... to say nothing of language that produces supposedly 'magical' effects" (Keane 2002:74). As Keane writes in his discussion of the shifting meanings of marriage exchange in Sumba under the influence of missionary work, the new relationship between a sign and its object takes on a strongly rationalist, Saussurean tinge:

> The relationship [between gift and giver] has ... become one of representation – the object stands for the person on the condition that they stand apart. In effect, they act much like the linguistic sign as described by Saussure: their significance determined by social convention and their material substance having only an arbitrary relation to that significance. Second ... the exchange value of those objects is supposed to be abstracted fully from any causal articulation with concrete practices and material forms. Not just the labor but also the social ties, political efforts, and ancestral powers that lie behind one's ability to obtain goods for exchange ... should cease to have any bearing on the meaning of those goods.... In this context we can see how changes in how people view material objects articulate with changing assumptions about language. The "messages" sent in marriage exchanges are being understood in terms of the intentions of the sign users. So too, speakers' words are taking their meaning from intentions and the objects of reference, rather than, say,

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their aesthetic or magical power, the flawless repetition of ancestral words, or dialogues leading to convergence between different speakers. (Keane 2002: 73–74)[6]

Kuipers 1998, too, has discussed indexical stripping and semantic purification in Indonesia, where personal names once associated with magical power are now considered simply to be lexical referents to the named person. In school-based language revitalization programs, as well, one can sense indexical associations waning in the production of what Shaul 2004 refers to as "school culture" – nursery rhymes and songs such as "Old MacDonald" or "The Hokey Pokey" translated into Western Apache or Tohono O'odham.

SEMANTIC PURIFICATION AND "MEDICINE MAN TALK"

Links between Christian conversion and semantic purification can be found in ideologies on the San Carlos Apache Reservation having to do with "medicine man talk." This term covers certain forms and genres of Apache speech that are considered "dangerous" or traditionally "powerful" and therefore not suitable for Christian practice or, in many cases, for schoolchildren to learn. Medicine man talk is a form of Western Apache discourse whose material and indexical associations cannot be stripped away. I will relate two instances of this below, but first I want to amplify the distinction between indexically full and semantically purified discourse practices.

As I stated earlier, Phillip Goode was a born-again Christian and had been the pastor at the American Indian Church in Seven Mile Wash. Like that of many other Pentecostals in the community, his everyday life was strongly influenced by a rhetoric of backsliding and salvation. Although he never confided to me why he had stepped down from the pulpit, I came to understand that it had something to do with his own backsliding ways. In spite of this, people continued to refer to him as "pastor."

Part of Phillip's backsliding involved singing "Apache Kid" songs. These are the songs of loneliness for San Carlos and its people that were purportedly composed by the outlaw Apache Kid after his escape from federal authorities in 1889. Phillip used to point out to me the peak from which Apache Kid would look longingly at San Carlos and compose his songs.

Sen Gaa nnee, baa ch'inaagoyee baa ch'inaagoyee
San Carlos people, for them I'm lonely, for them I'm lonely

Phillip always sang these songs full-throatedly and authentically, with the vocal tremor that, given his personality, might have been stifled weeping, but just as easily might have been ironic laughter. Whatever it was, Phillip's backsliding always included nostalgia for older and harder days, and strong links between language, song, and cultural history.

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Having been a pastor, of course, Philip had also thought long and deeply about biblical texts. As I have already mentioned, Phillip's father, Britton Goode, had worked with Faith Hill, the Wycliffe Bible Translators, and the Summer Institute of Linguistics. In his younger days, Britton Goode apparently had performed as a dream interpreter in a traditional Apache manner, but one morning while sitting in his house, he had literally seen the light – a soft glow in the corner of his kitchen that convinced him of the presence of the Lord and Savior. In his older days, living in his youngest son's house, Britton would carry on lengthy conversations with Phillip about scriptural interpretation and about the implications of translation. "I didn't really understand English until I really understood Apache," he told me. Phillip credited these conversations with his father for teaching him the insides of languages – the semantic intricacies of both English and Apache – and for giving him an approach to language and interpretation.

And he always insisted on calling it "interpretation," not "translation." Once Phillip was asked to translate into Apache an ad for a woman who was running for the office of Gila County recorder; the ad was to run in the San Carlos Apache *Moccasin*. The only part of the ad that he left intact was the name of the political office she was running for. And he always joked, "The only thing I TRANSLATED in that ad was 'County Recorder.'" He saw at least part of his task as one of locating semantic felicities – vernacular in one language that would preserve a semantic residue of an original vernacular utterance in another, a task that relates to his exposure to SIL common practice.

Phillip's linguistic world was filled with implications, subtexts, allusions, nuances, inferences, undertones. In his "work of interpretation" (Tedlock 1983), he had astonishing command of the semantic nuances of both Apache and English. One of the Apache teachers at Rice Elementary School spoke reverently of the day Phillip laughingly found a different Western Apache handling verb to depict all the ways in which she could carry her purse – over the shoulder, in her hand, dangling from her hand, under her arm, folded under her arm, stuffed full of items, emptied of all contents – a tour de force. He took delight in interpreting popular song lyrics as well. Once, driving around with *War's Greatest Hits* playing on the car stereo, Phillip performed a simultaneous translation of Eric Burdon's entire monologue in the song "Spill the Wine." He especially amused himself by finding an Apache interpretation for the phrase "long-haired leaping gnome."

To accomplish his interpretive work, Phillip felt that he needed access to the entire range of the Western Apache lexicon. In both his secular and his theological thinking about language, nothing could be off limits. If certain words or idioms carried subtexts of indexical connections, Phillip seemed willing to discard those in service to the meaning he wanted his interpretations to carry.[7] In his backsliding performances of Apache Kid songs, language was infused with form, genre, and history, as Philip wove voice, feeling, melody, rhythm, and text into a richly layered, indexically saturated, indissoluble whole. In distinction, in

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his interpretive work Phillip took a much more semantically purified approach to language as a system of encoding and transmission.[8]

Phillip's willingness and ability thus to transmute linguistic signs bore the stamp of his theology, either personal or denominational. In his thorough review of the globalization of Pentecostal and charismatic (P/c) Christianity, Joel Robbins argues that part of its reach lies in the ways in which P/c "preserves that which it breaks from" (2004b:127). That is, one aspect of Pentecostal dualism in indigenous communities is the way in which it allows adherents to acknowledge the continuing power of traditional beliefs: "P/c dualism also brings about ... P/c's most distinctive quality in comparison with other forces for cultural change: its tendency to preserve peoples' beliefs concerning the reality and power of the spiritual worlds from which they have broken. P/c preserves these beliefs in the sense of accepting their cognitive claims concerning the existence of spiritual forces, but ... [b]y a process of demonization, P/c makes indigenous spirits representatives of the devil" (2004b:128).

This sense of the continuing if demonic power of traditional belief contributes greatly to the Pentecostal critique of medicine man talk. It is important to note, in that context, that Phillip Goode did not appear to have shared this particular dualistic notion of language with his peers. Rather than fearing the demonic power of traditional Apache theology, Phillip saw it as obsolete – an outward manifestation of spiritual belief made unnecessary by the revelations of Christianity and its inward-directed spiritual change of the individual soul.

Phillip's approach to this theological issue influenced his sense of the linguistic forms available for translation. But his approach to language and interpretation was not without consequences. Phillip's father had told him, and Phillip told me, that when people first heard the New Testament in Western Apache, there had been objections to certain phrases and passages. "Like *yaa diłił*," Phillip told me. "People said 'that's medicine man talk.' So my dad had to explain to them, 'No, that just means the sky at night.' "[9] In other words, the deep involvement in the nuances of semantics included a shift in thinking about language, so that it was NOTHING BUT semantics.[10] Unlike in his sung performances, in Phillip's interpretive work, words and phrases didn't have indexical cultural relations. They had referents.

This mention of medicine man talk relates to another episode that directly affects the issue of language revitalization in the reservation community. In the summer of 2002, I was invited to give a teacher's workshop on Apache language survival at the St. Charles Catholic School in San Carlos. Because the Catholic school is not subject to statewide standardized testing, and because of the Catholic Church's recent embrace of Native language agendas, St. Charles has become a place where parents of all denominations may consider sending their children to school if they want them to speak Apache. Many of the teachers in the room for the workshop – all women – were Apache speakers who had grown up on the reservation. In discussing various ways that Apache could be incorpo-

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rated into their students' school days, I asked if there were things like jump-rope rhymes in Apache. The teachers were unaware of any. The practice of jumping rope seems to have come with English attached. One of the teachers, however, remembered a game she had played as a child, which she called *ma' wóózh*, and the group discussed the possibility of teaching games like that to the children. At the end of the session, one of the teachers asked me to sing an Apache song, and another teacher sang one for me in return.

Later in the week, stimulated by the discussion and the singing, I asked a teacher in the public school why the children didn't learn Apache children's songs in their Apache language sessions. Rather, they learn a collection of translated nursery rhymes and songs. A number of English-language songs, such as "Old MacDonald," have been translated into Apache, as has "The Star-Spangled Banner" – artifacts of Shaul's "school culture":

Hastiin McDonald bikeyaa, weyo weyo ho
Bikeyaayú ch'igii naikai, weyo weyo ho

In many Apache speakers' view (and mine as well), these songs presented the children with a purported transparency between English and Apache. Why, I wondered, were Apache children's songs not taught, songs that would give the children exposure to the poetic resources of Apache, rather than the false idea that Apache does exactly what English does, but just in a more difficult way, as if *bikeyaa* were the same as 'had a farm'?[11]

I had asked this particular teacher because I anticipated that she would give me a pedagogical justification for the practice. One of the things that she had done for her classes, for example, was to translate the story "Brown bear, brown bear, what did you see?" into Apache. One reason that Apache songs are not taught, she replied, is that they are largely forgotten. Generations of schooling at federal, missionary, and state public schools have destroyed numerous forms of children's culture, expressive cultural forms that are not passed from parent to child but from child to child.

As the teacher continued her response, however, I was surprised. I had thought she would defend the practice. But she didn't. "We can't," she said. "I hate those translated songs. But we have to deal with the parents." She had wanted to teach her children an Apache song, but some of the parents had been up in arms, because "they think that's medicine man talk." The word "talk" here is something of a misnomer: the fact that the objectionable language occurred within the context of a song was an important factor, for it may have been the singing itself that made it seem anti-Christian. The song included the text *ha'í'aayú la' gozhóó* 'where the sun rises is beautiful', and some parents said that it sounded like a prayer to the sun. The teacher, like Phillip Goode, maintained that any such indexical value attributed to the words of the song were in the minds of the parents and not in the words themselves. But one evangelical parent withdrew a child

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from the Apache language class because there was too much Apache culture being taught along with the language skills.

CHRISTIANITY AND LANGUAGE

These complaints about medicine man talk bring the place of Christian missionary ideology onto center stage. The work of language shift in San Carlos, and the attendant rationalization process I am discussing, has taken place under the guidance of three major and interrelated institutions: the federal government, various denominations of Christian churches, and the educational institutions developed under the auspices of these two. I do not wish to exaggerate the role of Christian missionaries in the process of semantic purification to the exclusion of other colonial institutions. It is clear that a "naive" semanticism can be found in secular realms as easily as in that of Christian missionaries. My focus on the role of Christianity in this essay is not meant to exclude these other factors. In the particular context of the San Carlos reservation, however, missionaries have been both prominent and strongly linked to other powerful institutions of colonial modernization.[12] As a 1918 letter from Alfred Uplegger to J. Terrell, the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) superintendent for the reservation, explained in justifying his request for a house:

> Our aim to benefit the Apache Indians being a common one with your efforts in their behalf, we hope this will meet your approval and thus further our cooperation in a work directed to Christianize and to civilize. (Uplegger 1918)[13]

I shall return to the activities of the early Lutheran missionaries in San Carlos in a later section. Here I want to outline some of the challenges of thinking about Christianity, language, and culture on the San Carlos Apache Reservation.

The indigenous impact of Christianity has been a topic of anthropological import for some time, but more recently the role of language and language ideology in missionary work has come under closer scrutiny. The problem of translation has frequently been noted as part of the complex effect of missionary presence. The sanctioning of scripture translation by the Protestant Reformation created challenges for thinking about language. As Steedly notes, "The Protestant tradition's emphasis on unmediated communication with the Divine gave the problem of language a special importance for Protestant clerics like [Johann Gottfried von] Herder, who struggled to reconcile what he saw as the human beauty of linguistic diversity with the singular and universal message of Christian faith" (1996:447). The universality of that message was linked to a semanticist approach to language, a world of words and referents. As Keane 2002 notes, the Protestant tradition is marked by a mistrust of the materiality of rhetorical discourse forms. The early Puritan settlers in Plymouth Colony faced the linked issues of universality, theology, and translation in their attempts to Christianize

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the Native people they encountered. Bruce Smith discusses the question as it was posed to John Eliot:

> One of the Indians related to the Englishmen how he was praying to Jesus Christ in his wigwam, when one of his fellows interrupted him and told him he was praying in vain, "because Jesus Christ understood not what *Indians* speake in prayer, he had bin used to hear *English* men pray and so could well enough understand them, but *Indian* language in prayer hee thought hee was not acquainted with it, but was a stranger to it, and therefore could not understand them." Could God understand Indian prayers or not? Oh yes, the English brethren assured him. Since God made all men in the first place, he can understand all the languages men speak. (Smith 1999:289)

For Protestants, "language is the most distinctly human and basic of God-given characteristics" (Errington 2003:727). Having granted humans the power to use them, God naturally understands all tongues. This omniscience acts as the ultimate sanction for translation of the Gospel. This divine sanction, however, does not relieve man of the responsibility for uncovering accurate lexical equivalents, a difficult process no matter how divinely sanctioned. Rafael 1993, for example, has discussed the problems with the Tagalog translation of such theological concepts as "confession" encountered by Catholic missionaries in the Philippines. Nor does it solve the problem of discourse practices and genres, as Schieffelin's work on Kaluli literacy (2000) and post-missionary shifts in the use of evidential markers (2002) attests.

But to say "Christianity" may do a disservice to the array of denominations vying for the souls of the Apaches of the San Carlos reservation. If missionaries enter into their work with nascent or covert theories of language, the cultural issues emerging out of these nascent language ideologies are articulated by and through the various theological communities of the reservation. "Christian" and "missionary" are sometimes used to cover a broad range of religious ideologies and practices. While no one would argue that the process is therefore rendered uncomplicated, "Christian" as a blanket term erases many of the differences between denominations. Consider, for example, sectarian distinctions in regard to Christ living, dying, and resurrected; the place of Mary and the saints in iconography and theology; the role of the Lord's Supper in the worship service; the place of faith and works in redemption; the manner of confession and penance; or the rational versus evangelical sources of belief. Differences such as these produce differences in relations between particular missionary activities (not to mention particular individual missionaries) and the communities in which those denominations operate – an erasure that in some ways mirrors the political processes that brought various denominations into Native American communities in the first place.[14]

In his call for an anthropology of Christianity, Robbins is concerned that a focus on the diversity of Christian denominations might be an "object-dissolving

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argument" (2003:193). In the context of San Carlos, I find that the unavoidable presence of a multiplicity of Christianities is a crucial aspect of object-constituting. In agreement with Robbins, I would argue that an anthropology of Christianity is central to an understanding of many contemporary Native American communities (see, e.g., Cochran 2000, Holler 1995, Lewis 2003), but I do not see that acknowledging "many Christianities" must lead necessarily to a withering "no-anthropology-of-Christianity" impasse (see Robbins 2003:193, 195).

Important differences between Christian denominations can be hidden, in part, because communities are sometimes faced with a single missionizing force. Bambi Schieffelin's work on the impact of missionaries among the Kaluli in Papua New Guinea, for instance, is concerned with the work of the Asia Pacific Christian Mission (APCM). Although Rafael often refers to "Christianity," his work in the Philippines deals almost exclusively with the Roman Catholic Church. Robbins's (2004a) main focus is the Baptist presence in Papua New Guinea.[15]

The situation in San Carlos is both qualitatively and quantitatively different. Someone once told me that there are 27 different denominations of Christianity on the reservation.[16] I have never been able to re-create that total, but one afternoon I sat with one family and in five minutes between us we did come up with 18: the Lutherans, Mormons, Catholics, and Baptists; World Evangelism Center, Miracle Church, and Full Gospel Church; Cutter Church, Apaches for Christ, American Indian Church, Assemblies of God, Garden of Gethsemane, Ned Casey's Church, the New Harvest Church (formerly called the "independent" church), the Brown Family Church, the Apache Gospel Church, the Church of Calvary, and the Seventh Day Adventists (sometimes jokingly referred to as Church of Jesus Christ Not Latter Day Saints).[17]

All of these denominations have varying and particular ideologies and material effects with regard to language use, language choice, language shift, and the maintenance of cultural practices. A full treatment of the impact that missionaries have had on indigenous language practices and ideologies therefore needs to recognize these distinctions. For example, some of the early Lutheran missionaries learned Western Apache and preached in the native language of their congregants.[18] The Lutheran missionaries also learned a great deal about Apache culture in order to rationally dismantle it.[19] In distinction, the Catholics have only recently begun to use Apache, but they have long embraced (at least post-Vatican II) and warmly attempted to incorporate Apache cultural practices into worship. The Catholic priest regularly blesses the dance ground for *na'í'ees* ceremonies, reading psalms and sprinkling holy water. In Sunday mass, the Lord's Prayer is now recited in Apache (taken from the Wycliffe Bible translation), and the congregation prays to the four directions and to Mother Earth. The Catholic school has a student Crown Dancing group, something which would never be tolerated in the Lutheran school. In a controversial addition to the mass that some congregants object to, the Priest has even used *hadndín* 'yellow powder' as a sacrament during the Lord's Supper.

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The Mormon church had a different, if inadvertent, effect on language shift in the community. The Mormons had a placement program that would send Apache children to live with off-reservation white families. One woman told me that when she was younger, there were children who would convert to Mormonism at the end of the school year so that they could get a summer vacation with a nice Mormon family somewhere. At the end of the summer, she said, they came back to the reservation speaking really good English. "We used to hide behind a bush and listen to them when they walked by." Mormon elders will sometimes attend Apache traditional ceremonies, but unlike the Catholic father, they neither sanction nor actively participate in them.[20]

Finally, the various Pentecostal and evangelical churches are where bilingual Christianity is found nowadays (it is no longer found in the Lutheran church). In those services and camp meetings, one hears testimony, sermons, scripture reading, and gospel songs in Apache. The children of evangelical parents share with the children of traditional parents a greater likelihood of entering school with some active fluency in Apache. But evangelical and Pentecostal parents, according to a number of teachers I spoke with, are also most likely to object to their children's being enrolled in Apache language classes because of the medicine man talk found there. "When it comes to singing songs or teaching things about the culture," one teacher told me, "then they start pulling their kids out."[21]

This abundance of denominations and linguistic-theological practices puts translation and interpretation at the center of a great deal of discussion in the San Carlos community. Not only are there denominational differences over the relationship between Christianity and Apache cultural practice; differences over the proper interpretation of Christian concepts abound as well. These dialogues and differences put at stake the transparency of language, both to the world and to other languages. Furthermore, the multidenominational context of the reservation contributes to the prestige of translation as a marker of language expertise in the community. The Summer Institute of Linguistics has played a central role in fostering this prestige, linking Native language literacy and scripture translation projects to high-prestige accomplishments in publishing and respect from the outside world. Indeed, the SIL emphasis on literacy and its training of literate language experts may contribute to language shift in a community by fostering an "epistemological distinction between expert analysts and 'native speakers'" (French 2004:494). When Phillip Goode died in 1999, I was asked to deliver one of the eulogies. At the lunch preceding the funeral service, the head of the Elders Cultural Advisory Council approached me and asked that when I got up there to speak, could I make sure to mention to the young people that "this doesn't mean that the language is dead." This was, in fact, a prevalent attitude among a number of people I spoke with afterward: because Phillip had died, they thought, "Well, I guess that's it, our expert's gone."

The SIL project of translation trusts in linguistic equality (cross-language equivalence), powerfully stressing the semantic-referential dimension of linguis-

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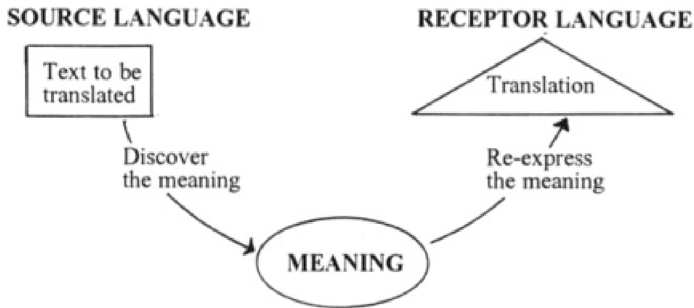

FIGURE 1: Mildred Larson's model of translation, with meaning depicted as lying outside any particular language (used with permission).

tic practice at the expense of other aspects troubling translation, such as the indexicality of syntax or pragmatics.[22] Both the trust and the emphasis are in keeping with the largely non-Whorfian sense of linguistic Platonism of the Summer Institute of Linguistics and the Wycliffe Bible Translators. One of the core texts of SIL, Mildred Larson's *Meaning based translation: A guide to cross-language equivalence* (1998 [1984]), takes, as its title implies, a fairly narrow semanticist view of the location of meaning in linguistic utterances. As Larson makes clear, the goal of translation is to "discover the meaning" in a "source language" and to "re-express the meaning" in a "receptor language." In this model of translation, meaning is free-standing, expressed differentially by various coding systems. The truth is "out there," stable, and waiting to be expressed.

Discovering the proper verbal expression of this externalized meaning is by no means considered a simple process. Lexical inventories are "mismatched," different languages having "different concentrations of vocabulary depending on the culture, geographical location and the worldview of the people" (Larson 1998 [1984]:95). At the same time, the word one might translate as 'house' may conjure up a different image of "that which one lives in" in different languages – structures made of ice, thatch, adobe, brick, or wood. Color terminologies, means of handling objects, and ways in which liquids move are all potentially mismatched from language to language. A receptor language may have a null space where the source language has a concept (163ff). The focus is not entirely on lexical items, but is, as Crapanzano 2000 notes, almost entirely on semantic values. For Larson, a syntactic form encodes a semantic proposition, and the translator's task is to discover the latter, even though the relationship between grammatical form and semantic proposition is quite often "skewed" (189ff).

Phillip was an accomplished practitioner of this SIL-influenced search for semantic equivalence. Early in our association, Phillip discussed a child's disobedience using the phrase *doo dits'ad da*. Although a more literal translation of

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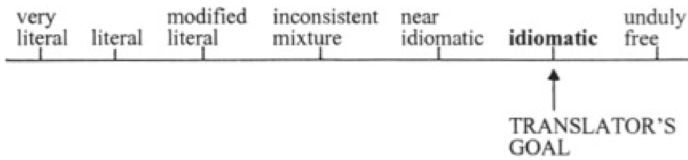

FIGURE 2: Mildred Larson's model of ideally successful translation: The translated text should appear idiomatic to native speakers (used with permission).

this phrase might be 'he/she doesn't listen', the interpretive gloss that Phillip offered was 'incorrigible'.[23] I expressed surprise that a Latinate term such as 'incorrigible' could possibly be a translation of the Apache phrase. "Well," Phillip asked, "what does 'incorrigible' mean?" We dissected it into its component parts, 'un-correct-able'. Phillip asserted again that this was the proper interpretation, because the phrase *doo dits'aa da* does not simply MEAN 's/he doesn't listen' but also carries the implication that you can't say anything to the child. The child is not amenable to instruction. Incorrigible. This morphological dissection of linguistic terms was something of a Goode family tradition. Phillip told stories, as did his brothers and sisters, about their father's explorations of Bible translation keyed to the minutiae of a semantic discovery process: "What does it REALLY mean, he would say all the time," one of them put it to me.

This episode suggests the complicated nature of the SIL-influenced goal of cross-linguistic equivalence, and the expertise claimed in the ability to achieve it. On the one hand, placing semantics outside of linguistic form enables Larson to argue that an exchange of linguistic value, to employ Saussure's monetary analogy, is always possible given the insight of the expert translator. At the same time, difficulties in the exchange rate may be elided in Larson's principle of idiomatic transparency. For Larson, rendering one value system in the terms of another at times ceases to be the goal. Rather, in moving from a source to a receptor language, the goal of translation is colloquial and vernacular: to make a text sound "like it was written originally in the receptor language" (Larson 1998 [1984]:19). By placing semantic value outside the form in which it is cast, then, the SIL-influenced translator can avoid questions of what may be sacrificed in attaining the naturalness of "idiomatic translation." Larson places this last goal on a continuum that extends from "very literal" to "unduly free" (Larson 1998 [1984]:19).

I am interested in Larson's choice of terminology here. There is no "unduly literal" translation, for example, perhaps a nod to the compromises involved in aiming for idiomatic vernacular as the speech genre for Bible translation. Nor does the figure represent "idiomatic" as some kind of "neutral" approach. Unacceptable literalism is disposed of by appeals to standard sense-making procedures, such as the ability to understand the implied meaning of an idiomatic

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phrase if it is translated literally. But given the goals of the translation project as she frames it, the "unduly free" translation stands out as a particular problem for Larson: "Translations are UNDULY FREE if they add extraneous information not in the source text, if they change the meaning of the source language, or if they distort the facts of the historical and cultural setting of the source language text" (Larson 1998 [1984]:19; emphasis in original). How one actually avoids changing the meaning is not quite explained. Larson offers an example, deliberately created in order to humorously point out the problems of unduly free translations:

> In one translation, the source text said, "*I was glad when Stephanas, Fortunatus and Achaicus arrived, because they have supplied what was lacking from you. For they refreshed my spirit and yours also. Such men deserve recognition*." It was translated, "It sure is good to see Steve, Lucky and 'Big Bam'. They sorta make up for your not being here. They're a big boost to both me and you all. Let's give them a big hand." The purpose of the translation was to make an ancient text seem contemporary, but the result is an unduly free translation. (Larson 1998 [1984]:19)

This example presents problems in determining what Larson means by "source text," and thus what she might mean by "extraneous information," "changed meaning," or "distorted facts." The source language for this text is Greek, not English – taken from 1 Corinthians 16:17–18. Larson does not discuss the Greek text.[24] Our sense of the first excerpt's accuracy, therefore, is based largely on our trust in Larson's expertise, and Larson's trust that her readers understand the marginalized nature of overtly familiar colloquial styles in weighty contexts. Indeed, just as problematic in this example is the notion of a discourse-independent semantics in Larson's approach, for her critique of the second passage seems based on its generic and colloquial form, not on the nature of its propositional structure. It is unclear both that the language of the first text is "idiomatic" in the way that Larson seems to advocate, and that the second is not – or is unduly so. Her representation of idiom elides the questions of speech genre and register that her focus on semantic equivalence necessarily devalues.

The fact that the task at hand was Bible translation may have automatically constrained translation to a particular formal register. In the Western Apache case, for example, one finds the regular use of "fourth person" and distributive plural verbs, heard very rarely in everyday idiomatic speech but found more readily in orations at various collective ceremonial gatherings.[25] One question here, perhaps, is the extent to which native speakers participating in SIL/Wycliffe Bible translation projects may have used deliberately archaic or ceremonial forms of speech and vocabulary in order to underscore the ancientness or power of the text (see Nicolson 2003, Urban 1996).[26] Thus, the complaint that there was "medicine man talk" in the Western Apache New Testament may have reflected certain generic or lexical choices made, consciously or not, in the production of the

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Apache-language text. If this is the case, however, it undermines the idea of a semantic load that exists independently of indexical values of verbal form.

The wide range of Christian practices and ideologies on the reservation will reward continued research. But I turn now to a discussion of the Lutheran missionaries on the San Carlos reservation. The Lutheran mission is a proper place to begin for a number of reasons. First, the Lutheran Church is the oldest Christian denomination on the reservation, having been established in the late nineteenth century. Second, for almost seven decades, a member of the Uplegger family was part of the church leadership in San Carlos. The Upleggers were copious in their record-keeping and left an extensive archival account of the Lutheran mission activities.[27] Third, the Lutheran emphasis on making the Lord's word available in the vernacular was highly influential in forging a link between Bible translation and expertise. The earlier citation of Francis Uplegger as the "greatest authority" on the Apache language attests to the importance of the Lutherans' Apache language work of conversion in the formation of expert rhetorics. The Lutherans in San Carlos, especially the Uplegger family, thus set the stage for grappling with the role of missionaries in emerging ideologies of language on the reservation.

THE LUTHERANS IN APACHE COUNTRY

Alfred Uplegger came from a family of ministers. He grew up in Waukesha, Wisconsin, attending Lawrence College in Appleton and the Lutheran seminary in Mequon. Alfred arrived in San Carlos in 1916. His father, Francis, arrived in San Carlos three years later and remained until his death in 1964. With the exception of a single year of relocation to Brunsville, Iowa for health reasons, Alfred Uplegger was in and around San Carlos from 1916 until his death in 1982.

It was the Wisconsin Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church that had, in the late nineteenth century, taken up a mission to the Apaches of Arizona. Lutheran legend has it that the Apaches were missionized so late because most Christians were afraid to live among them. The pastors O. Koch and Th. Hartwig made initial contacts with the community in 1892, and the first missionaries to San Carlos, Johannes Plocher and George Adascheck, arrived in October of 1893. The first baptisms and weddings were held six years later.

Gaining mastery of the Apache language and knowledge of traditional Apache cultural practices was an important step in the missionary process. Plocher arrived in San Carlos in October 1893, and by the end of that year he had already compiled a glossary of Western Apache terms in both the San Carlos and White Mountain dialects (Plocher 1893). Francis Uplegger's status as the master linguist among the Lutheran missionaries seems to have been unquestioned – he having, in the Lutheran view, "given [sic] it [Western Apache] a grammar and a written language" (Kraus n.d.:2). But other Lutheran missionaries stationed in Apacheland also gained fluency in Apache sufficient to be regarded as "experts"

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in the language. Carl Guenther, missionary to Whiteriver on the White Mountain Apache reservation, "quickly acquired a mastery of the Apache language to the extent that he could speak the dialects of both reservations. He was considered an authority at Washington in the language, traditions, and folklore of the Apaches" (Kraus n.d.:2).[28] The Lutherans read widely in Apachean linguistics and anthropology, digesting the works of John Gregory Bourke, Father Berard Haile, Edward Sapir, and Washington Matthews.

This interest in Apache culture was in service to the project of dismantling traditional Apache theological beliefs by rational means. Alfred Uplegger, for example, was not trained to think that spirit alone could bring conviction. His seminary notes in metaphysics contain the following: "Man is a rational being, so he should not be forced to certain actions like a beast, but his inner nature should be won for free deeds of duty and love. His deeds will never be those of a free being if he is not convinced that it is good to do them . . . the link between intellect and will is emotion" (Uplegger n.d.). From the Lutheran perspective, then, part of the evangelical project lay in convincing the Apache people by rational argument of the inadequate and misguided nature of their traditional religious practices. This sense of rational engagement pitted missionaries against medicine men, scripture against medicine man talk, and had consequences for thinking about the semantic values and theological implications of certain linguistic concepts in the reservation community.

RATIONALITY, THEOLOGY, AND LANGUAGE

Alfred Uplegger's approach to questions of theological disputation and conversion on the San Carlos reservation led to his drawing a number of structural distinctions, not only between Apache and Christian beliefs, but also between Lutherans and the other Christian denominations making their way onto the reservation. Consider, for example, Uplegger's notes in preparation for a 29 July 1917 sermon on the Sermon on the Mount – specifically, Jesus' discussion of good and false prophets in Matthew 7:15–20. The notes make manifest Lutheran conflicts with both traditional Apache belief and other Christian denominations. Uplegger based his discussion of the good and the false upon a series of dichotomies, which he expounded:

Good prophets	False prophets
God	Devil
Noah	children of world
Moses	Pharaohs Priests.
Jesus	Mohammad
Luther	Pope
Those who teach and confess Jesus the Son of God.	Those who call Jesus only a good man.
Christian Church	Christian(?) Scientists Sects.
Missionaries	Medicine Men

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The distinctions are clear. As God stands in relation to the devil, Luther stands toward the pope, the Christian church toward "sects," and the missionaries toward medicine men. Having laid out this array of false prophets, Uplegger's notes then guided his parish through a moral empiricist approach to sorting things out, drawing on Matthew 7:16: you shall know them by their fruits. Playing on Jesus' metaphor of healthy and poor fruit-bearing trees in this passage, Uplegger continued by comparing Christian conversion to the horticultural process of tree grafting.

INTERDENOMINATIONAL DIFFERENCE AND LANGUAGE CONFLICT

The sectarian disagreements of the Lutherans with the "misguided" religious practices of Apache theology on the one hand and the "Romish" religious practices of the Catholics on the other, came to a head in a sort of running battle with the Holy Ground theology of Silas John Edwards and his followers (see Basso & Anderson 1990; Watt 2004:119–23). Silas John's syncretic ceremonial practice competed with the Lutherans as well as other churches moving onto the reservation.[29]

A key feature of the Holy Ground movement was that it continued a linguistic practice of finding semantic analogies between Christian and Apache theological concepts, symbols, and major figures. This posed a particular challenge to the Lutherans, who worked diligently to convince people of the logical fallacies behind their traditional religious beliefs, and thus could not support such analogical thinking. They took great interest in Silas John and his followers. A letter of 1 February 1923 from Guenther to Uplegger concludes:

> How are you faring with Silas worship? It has taken a new spurt, this time on East Fork. He appears to be making new idols and "fixing" each one of his adherents, as one Indian expressed it. I imagine he is running low on funds and therefore making a final spurt to reestablish himself. I am however confident that even here the Truth will prevail. (Guenther 1923a)

Less than a week later, Guenther again wrote to Uplegger:

> How is the Silas worship faring down in your district? He has given it a new impetus at East fork. I have a faint suspicion or rather a hunch that he is joining hands with the Romanists. When he was remarried not long ago the Priest preformed [sic] the ceremony. Have heard something similar from Bylas. (Guenther 1923b)

The problem with Silas John, then, was the same twofold problem sketched out in Uplegger's notes about good and false prophets: he was both a medicine man (thus against the missionaries) and possibly a Romanist (thus against Luther).

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The suspicion of a link between Holy Ground religion and Catholicism is a thread running through much of the Lutheran correspondence on the issue of Silas John and his followers. The suspicion of Catholic influence found adherents to Silas John irrational on two counts: On the one hand, he had fallen under the improper influence of a popish and tarnished denomination; on the other, neither was his movement any kind of authentic Apache theology.

The Lutherans' dispute with Silas John appears to have been conducted in many arenas, both on and off the reservation. In 1921, H. C. Nitz contacted Uplegger with a 33-item questionnaire about Silas John, in preparing to "compose the paper assigned to me recently by the conference" (Nitz 1921). The questionnaire takes the reader on a tour of the Lutheran concerns with denominationalism (especially Catholicism) and Southwestern ethnology. Nitz noticed similarities between Silas John's worship and "the Romish mass," and asked Uplegger specifically about Catholic influence. As well, given Nitz's knowledge of the Apaches' "proverbial abhorrence" of snakes, he asked if Silas John might have gained familiarity with the Hopi snake dance either in his travels or through his associations with Hopi students at non-reservation schools. Nitz's questions covered a wide-ranging sociological and theological territory. Was Silas John sincere? Was he respected in the community? What Christian denominations or other Indian tribes had influenced him? Did crosses hold the same significance to Holy Ground believers as to Lutherans? Was he sane? Did he oppose the Lutherans? Was his influence waxing or waning?

Nitz's twentieth question to Uplegger opened onto issues of language, theology, and translation: "What are the contents of the songs he is alleged to have composed?" (Nitz 1921). I shall ignore Nitz's begrudging "alleged" in his description of Silas John's songs. By asking Uplegger about the textual content of Silas John's songs, Nitz focused squarely on a particular linguistic difficulty that brought Silas John's theology into conflict with the teachings of the Lutheran missionaries, and thus contributed to Lutheran concerns about Silas John's influence in the community. It was here, around the issue of the translatability of language, that questions of religious practice and questions of semantic purification met.

The problem, in a word, was a word: Jesus. For Silas John, "Jesus," both linguistically and theologically, was an analogical manifestation of Nayénezgháné, a key figure in traditional Apache creation narratives. The precise meaning of the name is somewhat open-ended, but it is generally rendered in English as 'slayer' or 'killer' of 'enemies' or 'monsters'. It is subject to folk etymologizing, and may be, as Hoijer 1938 suggested, morphologically unanalyzable. The analogy, as Phillip Goode explained it to me, centers on the concept of a being whose purpose is the destruction of those that are harmful to humans. 'Killer of Enemies' is a name for Jesus in that sin is the enemy, and Jesus came to slay sin. If one translates the name using 'monsters' rather than 'enemies' (as we shall see Uplegger did), the analogy becomes arguably nonsensical.[30]

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Analogies of this kind can be seen in other contact situations, coming as easily from missionaries as from the missionized. Kaplan 1995 notes that the Tuka movement associated with Navosavakadua in Fiji sometimes sees the twin gods Nacirikaumoli and Nakausabaria as Jesus and Jehovah.[31] Conversely, according to Clements 1996, the Jesuit missionary Joseph Jouvency "equated the Algonquian word *manitou* with 'Satan'" (1996:61). In any event, the Lutherans rejected Silas John's analogical construct. Given their oppositional approach to the relationship of Christian and Apache verbal forms, it could be no other way. If for Silas John Nayénezghánè, Killer of Enemies, was a proper translation of Jesus, for the Lutherans this could not possibly be the case. It simply was not possible that the Apaches knew Jesus by another name.

In his first letter asking about the resurgence of the Holy Ground, Guenther mentioned to Uplegger that "You once had a very good paragraph in your report about the man who even on his deathbed renounced Najaednesjanne" (Guenther 1923a). Guenther asked if he would write up the incident more formally for the Apache *Scout*, the newsletter published by the Lutheran missionaries in Apacheland. The episode mentioned by Guenther was originally in Uplegger's report for the last quarter of 1921, and it illuminates the struggle between indexicality and semanticity in the encounter between missionaries and missionized:

> A young man of about 23 years, Somigo Gage by name, was sick for the last three months. Tuberculosis was gaining and sapping Somigo's strength from day to day. His missionary visited him often. At the first visit he did not seem pleased with the missionary's coming. But he told Somigo of the Savior, of the one great physician for the one great disease. With every following visit Somigo semed more glad to hear more. And so, a week ago, he also wanted to be baptized, although he was so weak already that he could not raise his head. Somigo understood what baptism meant, but knew also that it was not magic for restoring his health. For the sake of his father, who understands no English, someone was called to interpret at the baptism. This one made the mistake of slipping back into the old habit of calling Jesus Nayenesgani, the name of the greatest hero of Apache and Navajo myth and legend, meaning monster-killer. As soon as Somigo heard that name, the happy expression on his face was gone, his features at once expressed anger and disgust and, the word had hardly escaped the interpreter, when with all the strength he could summon, he cried out: "Nayenesgani do ani da!" "Do not say Nayenesgani". Somigo wanted his father also to know Jesus and know very well that "there is no other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved."[32]

Here, in the conflicting names of sacred deities, language retains its cultural-indexical power. Although the Lutherans, like the missionaries of many other denominations, were willing to accept translations between Apache and Christian supreme deities, Nayénezghánè was both semantically and indexically inadequate. It could not refer to Jesus, and it could not be stripped of its indexical

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associations, its existence as medicine man talk. For Uplegger, the name could not be a translation. Uplegger's language-collecting procedures involved writing down the Apache equivalents for common nouns (plants, birds) of which he already knew the common English terms. His early notebooks include a number of blank spaces where he had listed an English word but had not procured its Apache equivalent. But where Uplegger readily accepted the idea that terms for 'house', or 'saguaro', or 'mesa', or even 'God' were substitutable, this free interchange of verbal forms was walled off where semantics met evangelism. 'Jesus' has no Apache alternative.[33]

In the dying convert's cry of *doo anii da!* Uplegger's tract challenged Silas John's theological expertise by challenging his linguistic expertise. More specifically, the linguistic challenge is framed as a questioning of his ability in the realm of translation, and more specifically scriptural/theological translation.[34] More generally here, we see how the Lutheran missionary claimed language expertise through the process of semantic purification – knowing which words refer to which things. In this way the knowledge of a man who composed songs and ceremonial worship services in Apache, a fluent speaker of his native tongue, could be trumped by the translational expertise of missionaries who understood that "names" had "meanings." The mark of expertise in a language, from the missionary perspective, was emergent neither in social competence nor in ways of speaking. It was not in creative knowledge of genres, nor in affecting or meaningful performances of Apache cultural forms. Rather, expertise was found within an ideology of translation and interpretation between lexico-semantic storehouses (cf. Bauman & Briggs 2003, esp. 95ff).

Uplegger's tract on Somigo Gage is highly rhetorical, bent on conversion and salvation. But again, Uplegger's rhetoric is framed as a lesson about language and translation. It highlights theological issues surrounding translation and the recognition of cross-linguistic semantic transparency as the mark of knowledge and expertise. Given Guenther's remembering the incident, Uplegger's having written it down in the first place, and his calling the Apache practice a "mistake" and an "old habit," it is plausible to imagine that this was a linguistic practice that the Lutherans had set their sights on eradicating for some time. Uplegger's translation of Nayénezgháné itself, 'monster-killer', fosters questions of lexical choice and rhetorical composition in the framing of ideological/theological arguments that deny the power of indigenous religious movements. By translating Nayénezgháné as 'monster-killer', Uplegger appears to be drawing on Navajo and not Western Apache parsings of cognate terms. Hoijer's San Carlos texts have the name as 'Killer of Enemies' (see note 28). Furthermore, Uplegger's choice of 'monster' over 'enemy' reveals a trust in the objective expertise of anthropologists over that of native speakers. 'Killer of Monsters' was the "literal" translation that Hoijer preferred in his Chiricahua texts, although he noted, "This meaning is, however, rejected by the Apaches whose conception of this culture hero is not in accord with it" (Hoijer 1938:83).

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Similar arguments about interpretation and translation continue today, albeit in changed circumstances. One of these involves discussion over which Apache translation of the New Testament is preferable. In distinction to the SIL Western Apache translation, published by the American Bible Society, the Upleggers' translations of Biblical text and song remain largely in manuscript and uncodified. They are by no means unknown, however, and there is debate over which interpretation is more "correct." The lines are drawn along boundaries similar to those in the Silas John incident: between the expertise of native competence, on the one hand, and the expertise of scholarship on the other. Those who prefer the Uplegger translation of scripture regard it highly for its scholarship, its seminarian approach to working from original Greek and Hebrew texts. Those who prefer the SIL Bible celebrate its having been done by native speakers of Apache.[35]

CONCLUSION: RATIONALIZATION AND REVITALIZATION

Phillip Goode negotiated his born-again Christianity and his language expertise by rejecting the notion of medicine man talk. In doing so, of course, he troubled those, both Christian and traditionalist, for whom medicine man talk remains a source of power in the community, sacred or devilish as the case may be. In return for this rejection, he gained access to the full array of expressive resources made available by the Western Apache language, but he did so in order to maintain the viability of semantic concepts across languages. If his facility with these resources was part of his expertise, it came at a price, which was the extraction of these resources from the indexical soil in which they had been grown. Others have negotiated this relationship differently, maintaining a distinct category of medicine man talk whose use is inappropriate. (Note that a concomitant category of overtly Christian language is not similarly cordoned off.) One result of these various struggles between Apache and Christian conceptualizations is an emerging sense that the referentiality of language – and the locus of expertise in the translator's discovery process of finding linguistic encodings of independently existing semantic values – is a philosophical problem for Apache language revitalization in the community. That is, if semantic values are independent of particular languages, why does it matter if people speak Apache?

Indeed, the question of transparency between Apache and other languages has become a key ideological issue among Apache speakers who wish to revitalize indigenous ways of speaking among young people. One major focal point seems to be the notion of a "vernacular," and the question of how one can possibly learn a vernacular in a context in which translation from English is the baseline practice for Apache-language learning both at home and in school. ("This is how you say 'cat' in Apache.") Many older speakers argue that young speakers are completely lost when it comes to understanding idiomatic language. They attribute this to a direct consequence of the translation model that has been in-

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corporated into the community's notion of what a language is and how a language works.

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

If the literal semanticism of young speakers is the logical conclusion of the logic of translation, it is ironic that the work of Christian Bible translators is now considered to be a rich resource for language revitalization, even by those who are not believers. This is mostly true of the SIL New Testament. Not only idiomatic language but also "older" vocabulary items and syntactic constructions are found in the New Testament translations of both Britton Goode and the Upleggers. For, despite the widespread use of Apache language in Pentecostal churches and tent meetings, those language practices are sometimes critiqued for their "sloppiness" – a word people use to refer to the common code-switching that takes place in camp meetings. One person observed, for example, that a person singing a song in an evangelical church often says *Dii **song**híí nohwił **share** ashle'* 'I'm going to share this song with you', when there is a perfectly legitimate way to say the "same thing" in Apache: *Dii sįhíí nohwaa hadish'aah*.[36]

The cultural indexicality that makes an utterance medicine man talk also continues to be problematic, however. Older forms of language run the risk of being coded as medicine man talk, perhaps especially if those forms are embedded in sung performances, such as the song the teacher at Rice School wanted to teach her young students. On one side, some Christians, many of them Pentecostal, argue that there is language that should not be preserved because of its inexorable links to devilish, un-Christian beliefs. They will sometimes refuse to allow their children to attend Apache language classes on account of these feelings. On another side, some traditionalists argue that there is language too powerful to be entrusted to young speakers. The result, as one bilingual teacher explained it to me, is that the broad area of agreement about language learning for young speakers is narrowly delimited and inert. It seems to be all right for young people to learn Apache "to identify objects," that is, as long as it can be divorced from anything that would index powerful Apache cultural practices. If children want to use Apache language to order a cheeseburger at the vendor's stand, that's fine. But they should not learn anything that risks being construed as medicine man talk. And, as this teacher concluded, why would anyone want to learn that language?

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NOTES

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[1] Certainly Phillip may have had a great storehouse of knowledge of these things. As I shall discuss in a later section, he knew a great many "Apache Kid" songs and would sing them frequently. What I am arguing here is that this knowledge, whether he possessed it or not, was not the source of his acknowledged expertise in the community.

[2] Indeed, it may strike some readers as ironic that evangelical Christianity is associated with rationalist ideologies at all.

[3] The May 1963 issue of *Arizona Highways* is completely dedicated to the people of the San Carlos Apache Reservation. Of all the residents of the reservation, the editors chose the profile of Francis Uplegger, the Lutheran missionary, as the lead article for the issue.

[4] I have discussed elsewhere some of the ideological effects of this process in modernizing Europe and the United States (Samuels 2004a), arguing that rationalizing ideologies marginalize such practices as vocables and scat singing in favor of the rational, if arbitrary, practices of referentiality. See the references therein; also Urban 2001, Certeau 1996.

[5] Sawyer 2001 links this denotational focus to a particular sense of intentionality, as well – what he refers to as the "Horton" theory of communication (after the Dr. Seuss character whose mantra is "I meant what I said and I said what I meant").

[6] One can quibble with Keane's seeing something "much like the linguistic sign as described by Saussure" in this shift. The Saussurean model posits not a link between words and objects of reference rather than magical power, but rather the divorce of the sign from the "real" object it purports to denote. What appears to be at work in the San Carlos context is a more naive words-stand-for-things denotationalism, rather than the sophisticated fields of arbitrarily articulated signifiers and signifieds envisioned by Saussure. Keane's choice of analogizing economic and linguistic exchange is telling, and it adds another wrinkle to the processes under consideration here. This is so in part, of course, because of Saussure's own use of monetary exchange as a metaphor for his theory of signification. Moreover, recent work on economic exchange has also noted the ways in which shifts from real to abstract standards of exchange – the U.S. government's doing away with the gold standard, for example – have influenced ideologies of linguistic exchange. See Akin & Robbins 1999 and Shell 1982.

[7] Indeed, the strong sense of personal agency involved in Phillip's willingness to maintain that "a word is just a word" over the objections of others may have been part of the production and performance of his expertise.

[8] At the same time, I must note that Phillip's approaches to questions of language and culture were extremely complex and nuanced. Phillip was one of the people who strongly encouraged me to pursue more phenomenological approaches to cultural identities. But as I have noted, his approach to "culture" and his approach to "language" could sometimes diverge from each other.

[9] The transparency of *yaa* as a noun phrase glossed as 'sky' is problematic. It is more often glossed as 'up', 'upward', 'high', or 'skyward'.

[10] Another possibility, certainly, is akin to one that Steedly 1996 notes for missionary interpretations of scripture in Karoland: "By offering Christian exegesis of Karo words… missionaries aimed not only to facilitate the preaching of the Gospel, but also to add a new spiritual dimension to the language" (1996:458). In other words, Bible translators may have deliberately made use of already powerful language in order to lend power to biblical texts, and to add Christian meanings to already existing spiritually powerful forms. Phillip's metacommentary on his own technique denies this, however, claiming only an indexical blankness for his interpretive choices.

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[11] And of course, with the exception of syllable count, *bikeyaa* and *had a farm* are very different. *Bikeyaa* is more like 'where his/her footprints are', 'where s/he walked', and is often meant to refer to a place where someone grew up: *Brooklynyú shikeyaa* 'I grew up in Brooklyn'.

[12] In part because of his fluency in Apache, for example, Francis Uplegger was a key liaison between tribal representatives and the federal government in crafting the original constitution of the San Carlos Apache Tribe under the auspices of the Indian Reorganization Act in the 1930s.

[13] It may be that we should not take Uplegger's expression of fellowship with the BIA at face value. The statement may be entrepreneurial, serving the missionary's rhetorical needs of the moment, a mere attempt to soften Terrell's heart and secure housing in San Carlos. There are other indications of common ground, however, one being the participation of the Lutheran missionaries in developing the San Carlos Apache constitution as part of the Indian Reorganization Act (see note 11). The Lutherans may in fact have considered their project superior to the government's. The distinction, however, may have been one of means and not ends. Gustav Harders, one of the first Lutheran missionaries in the area, later wrote a handful of novels that fictionalized his experiences among the Apaches. One, *Dohaschtida* (1958), opens with a disparaging description of the practices of the government Indian school, practices that "could not inspire confidence; quite the contrary, they fostered the hate and dislike of the Indians of the whites" (1958:3). An early scene features the narrator of the story in a conversation with the superintendent of the government school, who is also a childhood friend:

> "They [the missionaries] had the confidence of the Indians. We government people do not have that. They had schools. Their enrollment was small, but all the children had been enrolled at the express wish of the parents ... Instead of using the police to bring in pupils, as we do, the missionaries even had Indians attending church on Sundays." ...
>
> On one of our first evenings together we had discussed the practice of bringing the Indian children to school by authority of the police. Sims was of the opinion that under the circumstances it had to be done, because the parents just wouldn't send them. I said that nothing good could come of such forced training. It would be better to gain the good will of the parents first.
>
> Van Augustus defended his stand: "Such efforts just wouldn't be appreciated, either in Washington or by the mission boards. I would be dismissed peremptorily if I were to report after the beginning of a new school year: 'I have twenty-five children in school, not two hundred fifty as in the past year; but these twenty-five have been entrusted to me voluntarily by the parents. I've given up sending the police after them. Instead I've tried to convince the parents of the value of an education and persuaded a few to entrust their youngsters to me.' " (1958:15, 18–19)

[14] During the late nineteenth century, in one of the clearest examples of government-church partnerships, the federal government distributed oversight of the Christian life of Native American communities among a handful of denominations, along largely geographic lines. Implemented under the presidency of Ulysses S. Grant, the program is alternately known as "Grant's Peace Policy" or "Grant's Quaker Policy." In the 1870s, President Grant turned to a policy of replacing civilian and military Indian agents with men selected by representatives of about a dozen Christian denominations: Methodist, Baptist, Presbyterian, Episcopalian, Friends, Roman Catholic, Congregationalist, Christian Church, Dutch Reformed, Unitarian, and Lutheran. To these groups were allocated all the Indian reservations in the United States. (Assignment also took population into consideration, so that the denominations with the largest memberships were assigned to the largest Indian agencies. The Catholic Church, which was the largest church in the United States at the time, was under-represented. Note, as well, that the Mormon Church was not invited. This possibly reflects the suspicion in which these denominations were held by the Protestant majority of the country.) The idea behind the policy – and the reason it was called a "Quaker" policy – was simple: "peace," which, it was argued, was a social and moral value unknown to the Indians. By teaching them nonviolence, Christians (Quakers) could convert Indians to pacifism. In practice, the policy took a specific ideology of the Friends and aligned it with all Christian sects. Similarly, researchers sometimes flatten different sects into a somewhat undifferentiated – though I would stop short of saying "monolithic" – Christianity.

[15] Robbins's work on the global spread of Pentecostal and charismatic Christianity would imply that the situation in these cultural contexts is undergoing change that would lead them more closely to resemble the situation I describe here for San Carlos.

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[16] In their 1963 profile of Francis Uplegger, Herbert & Herbert (1963:3) cite fourteen churches and nine denominations. That is, some denominations had churches in multiple communities on the reservation.

[17] The American Indian Church is not to be confused with the Native American Church. The AIC is an evangelical Christian denomination, where hymns are sung out of a shape-note hymnal. It is the church where Phillip Goode was pastor. As I note later, the Lutheran denomination responsible for the San Carlos Apache missions is the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod.

[18] It is no longer the case that Lutheran pastors sermonize in Apache. The principal of the Lutheran school in Peridot, however, does speak the Bylas dialect.

[19] From my reading of Uplegger's papers, it appears that the Lutherans were equally concerned with the rational and the nonrational bases of conversion.

[20] These characterizations are subject to change, of course. The Lutheran Church recently held its first "Apache Day" at the school – although they assiduously avoided anything associated with Apache ceremonial life. One woman told me that the Mormon position on traditional ceremonies has also changed, and that the elders will help people set up their camps for a puberty ceremony. I think, still, that the elders do not participate in the ceremony itself – for example, that they will not line up to bless the girl being sung over.

[21] These positions are not entirely consistent. Many children of evangelical parents in fact participate in the Apache cultural activities in the schools. This teacher was unclear how those families resolved the contradictions between their religious convictions and their children's extracurricular school activities.

[22] Writing at about the same time as Mildred Larson, for example, Nir 1984 discussed the difficulty of treating the pragmatics of "mimetic dialogues" when translating English-language films into Hebrew. Pointing out that Israeli police officers are more likely to use direct speech acts than are their American counterparts, Nir observed that "the translator will have to decide whether to present the American policeman to the Israeli viewers as someone who behaves differently from the local policeman, namely, as someone who uses mitigated speech forms, or to put speech in the mouth of the policeman on the screen which accords with the expressions employed by an Israeli policeman in a similar situation." This latter decision is more "idiomatic" in Larson's terms, and in Nir's discussion more "credible" to viewers, but it runs the risk of creating a false sense of iconicity ("a policeman is a policeman everywhere and in every society") (Nir 1984:86). Where Larson treats semantics as the central problem, Nir takes the transfer of semantic content to be less problematic, focusing instead on sociolinguistic issues. Both writers choose their examples accordingly.

[23] Here I must note, with at least some irony, that I, too, am unable to divorce myself from notions of "literal" and "figurative" or "implied" translations.

[24] Crapanzano 2000 notes, "There was a time, which has become proverbial in both Fundamentalist circles and in those of their critics, when some Fundamentalists believed that the King James version was so inspired by God as to be sufficient for biblical study. Fundamentalists no longer assume they can understand the Bible without reference to the original languages in which it was written" (2000:66).

[25] "Fourth person" refers to a verb form used when one third person is acting toward another third person. It is also found in formal speech situations, acting in some sense as the English impersonal ('one does'), as well as having some features of honorifics, being used in addressing elders and other respected members of the community.

[26] Steedly 1996 writes of Karoland, "Neumann's new Testament translation, composed in a self-consciously 'archaic' style that many Karo today find stilted and hard to understand."

[27] The Uplegger papers are divided between the libraries at the University of Arizona in Tucson and Arizona State University in Tempe.

[28] It is noteworthy that in chronicling this education, Kraus notes only that Guenther was "assisted by Teacher Rudolph Jens. Mayerhoff," making no mention of the Apache speakers who must obviously have participated in this educational process.

[29] Although the Lutherans were in conflict with the Holy Ground followers, one woman told me that the early Lutheran and Catholic missionaries both attended Holy Ground services, both in order to understand it and to poach members for their own congregations.

[30] Nayénezghání is one of two culture heroes in traditional Apache creation narratives. In his Chiricahua texts, Hoijer 1938 translates the name as 'he who kills monsters'; Goodwin renders the

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event 'slaying of monsters' (1939:3, 16). In his San Carlos Apache texts, Hoijer translates the name as 'Killer of Enemies'. Hoijer writes:

> This noun is unanalyzable in Chiricahua. From comparative data, however, it appears that it is a compound of *naaghee'* "monsters"; *-neesghan-*, a bound third person perfective form with a prefix *ni-* of the theme *–gha* "to kill several" (act. trans.); and the relative *–e*. *naaghee'* may also be a compound of *naa-* "enemy" and *–ghee'*, a compounded form of the theme *–ghe* "to be dangerous" (imp. neut. intr.). This analysis results in the literal meaning "he who kills monsters". (1938:87)

It is difficult to determine what Hoijer means by "literal meaning" in this passage as it is difficult to determine how 'dangerous enemy' can "literally" mean 'monster'.

[31] The biblical characters personified by their Apache counterparts appear to be Jesus and Moses. Nayénezgháné's twin brother, Túbadischiné (Child Born for Water) is sometimes interpreted as Moses, because Moses was placed in the water to be found by Pharaoh's sister.

[32] Uplegger here is quoting Acts 4:12. The verse in its scriptural context is not about translation but about the source of salvation. In the original hand-written text, the phrase "and Navajo" is editorially inserted into the phrase "greatest hero of Apache myth and legend," revealing his reading of Athabaskanist ethnography and folklore. I have maintained Uplegger's spelling of Apache in the passage, but elsewhere use more generally accepted orthographic forms.

[33] I thank Roy Wright (personal communication) for pointing out, in a response to an earlier version of this article, that many Native American translations of the Bible translate 'God' into a native term, but not, for instance, 'Satan'.

[34] This has some resonance with Manning 2001, who argues that Welsh miners in the late nineteenth century conceptualized a linguistic division of labor by imagining that English and Welsh had "distinct spheres of referential adequacy" (2001:213).

[35] But see Reuse 2003 for comments on Uplegger's more consistent use of Western Apache narrative particles than is found in the SIL Bible.

[36] It is not a transparent transfer, of course. Where the first sentence would be 'I'm going to **share** this song **with** you', the second is more like 'I'm going to **sing** this song **for** you'.

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