ABSTRACT

JACLYN NOELLE DAUGHERTY. Spatial Language and Homeland Language Variety in Shaping American Indian Identity: The Cherokee and Lumbee of North Carolina. (Under the direction of Professor Walt Wolfram.)

This paper examines spatial language within personal narratives to explore how Cherokee and Lumbee Indians negotiate group membership and outsider status to construct a phenomenological homeland, or *Heimat* (Rohkrämer and Schulz, 2009). Contrastive, marginalized group identities have formed in these respective communities due to their differential development and historical effects of the dominant culture, leading to different constructions of *Heimat*. Although the Lumbee have lost their native language, their distinct ethnic variety of English and Lumbee-community affiliation with Robeson County signify group membership. The Cherokee, who have a dwindling number of native language speakers, have made great strides in revitalizing the Cherokee language and still rely heavily on Cherokee to delineate group members (or more authentic Cherokee tribe members) from others. The Cherokee also see the original tribe site, Kituwah, and the Cherokee family home where the language can be spoken as significant to the group's notion of *Heimat*. The contrastive status of the Lumbee and Cherokee demonstrates the varied forms of *Heimat* and highlights the importance of interactive discourse in gaining perspective of insiders and outsiders.