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**Discourse Forms and Social Categorization in Cha'palaa**

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**Discourse Forms and Social Categorization in Cha'palaa**

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# **Discourse Forms and Social Categorization in Cha'palaa**

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This dissertation is an ethnographic study of race and other forms of social categorization as approached through the discourse of the indigenous Chachi people of northwestern lowland Ecuador and their Afro-descendant neighbors. It combines the ethnographic methods of social anthropology with the methods of descriptive linguistics, letting social questions about racial formation guide linguistic inquiry. It provides new information about the largely unstudied indigenous South American language Cha'palaa, and connects that information about linguistic form to problems of the study of race and ethnicity in Latin America. Individual descriptive chapters address how the Cha'palaa number system is based on collectivity rather than plurality according to an animacy hierarchy that codes only human and human-like social collectivities, how a nominal set of ethnonyms linked to Chachi oral history become the recipients of collective marking as human collectivities, how those collectivities are co-referentially linked to speech participants through the deployment of the pronominal system, and how the multi-modal resource of gesture adds to these rich resources supplied by the spoken language for the expression of social realities like race. The final chapters address Chachi and Afro-descendant discourses in dialogue with each other and examine naturally occurring speech data to show how the linguistic forms described in previous chapters are used in

social interaction. The central argument advances a position that takes the socially constructed status of race seriously and considers that for such constructions to exist as more abstract macro-categories they must be constituted by instances of social interaction, where elements of the social order are observable at the micro-level. In this way localized articulations of social categories become vehicles for the broader circulation of discourses structured by a history of racialized social inequality, revealing the extreme depth of racialization in human social conditioning. This dissertation represents a contribution to the field of linguistic anthropology as well as to descriptive linguistics of South American languages and to critical approaches to race and ethnicity in Latin America.

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## Chapter 1: Introduction

### 1.1 A conversation with Yambu

In August 2008 when I was just beginning a year of research in indigenous Chachi communities of northwestern Ecuador, I sat down with a man known by the nickname *Yambu*, or “Squirrel,” to record a conversation about the different groups of people who live in the area and their respective histories. I had proposed to research social categorization through Cha’palaa discourse, focusing specifically on the relationship between the Chachis and their Afro-descendant neighbors. My starting premise was that it is possible to link specific linguistic forms and discourse structures like those that Yambu used in our conversation to broader analytic questions about what social categories are and how they work. After that first interview I went on to record many more interviews and to collect other kinds of linguistic data with which to explore this premise. Although my analysis of these materials addresses some issues of interest to linguists like number and person marking, pronoun systems, grammaticalization and other topics, my main use for the linguistic data was to provide window into the social order and the concerns of anthropologists. The daily practices of indigenous and Afro-descendant people in Ecuador have been shaped by social history, and forms of social categorization in interaction have played a key role in perpetuating conditions of inequality by supplying their ordering principles. The connections to be made between discourse data and more abstract phenomena like social inequality are not always straightforward, and in this dissertation it will take time to build an argument that starts by examining a single morpheme and ends by connecting social categorization in discourse and interaction to racial difference, social inequality and interracial conflict. Please bear with me and I will get there eventually.

One of the first steps I needed to take early in my research was to develop a format for ethnographic interviews that would yield information to help me to better understand social categorization in the local day-to-day life I was participating in and the less-structured discourse data in the natural speech recordings I was collecting. My concern was that any interview that I could design would in part pre-determine the responses because I would not be totally aware of the underlying precepts of my own questions, and so I would constrain the terms of the responses even before they were voiced. The conversation with Yambu was one of several that I hoped would provide me with some locally-circulating terms and ways of speaking about social categories that I could subsequently use to structure my interview questions in a way that resonated with how Chachi people understand social categorization.

Since this conversation provided a jumping-off point for me during my research, I will also allow it to be the jumping-off point for this dissertation, because in a short stretch of speech Yambu deployed many of the linguistic forms, discursive structures and thematic elements that later turned out to be vital for understanding how speakers of the Chachi language Cha'palaa approach the terrain of social actors that they navigate throughout their lives. Attempting – perhaps with only partial success – to craft as broad an opening question as possible, I asked Yambu to talk about the old times, things perhaps his parents had told him about the Chachis long ago. He began with an account of the Chachi migration from the Andean highlands to the coastal lowlands where they live today, a story I have heard in different versions again and again.

Y:      Timbunu lala chulla Ibarabiee chumu deewañaa,  
          In the old times we lived in Ibarra.

Ibarabiee chulla chachilla.  
The Chachis lived in Ibarra.

Naa kuluradu kufan putumayu shuara

And the Colorados, the Cofans, the Putumayos, the Shuar,

jiibaru eepera awaa chulla kumuinchi junu mapebulunuren, Tutsa'nu  
the Jíbaro, the Épera, the Awá, all existed in the same town, in Tutsa'.

Within the first few seconds of discourse Yambu had already used a number of **ethnonyms**<sup>1</sup> or more-or-less nominal forms used for referring to specific human groups by social categories. These included terms for a number of neighboring indigenous groups as well as some groups from the far side of the Andes in the Ecuadorian Amazon, areas that I did not realize figured into local discourse or awareness. In addition to these **exonyms**, or terms applied to other groups, Yambu also used the local **autonym**, or a term applied to a speaker's own social group: in this case the word *chachi*. Like autonyms in many South American languages, this word shifts between being used by indigenous people to refer their own social group and to “people” or “humans” in general. Affixed to this term Yambu uses a **collective suffix** *-la*; collective marking also turned out to be one of the major grammatical resources for referring to human groups in discourse. The same suffix can also be seen as a part of the **first person collective pronoun** *lala*, “we” – crucially here the pronoun is co-referential with the ethnonym, meaning that by “we” Yambu is not saying that he personally lived in Ibarra, the city in the Andean highlands to which the Chachi's oral history traces their origins. Instead, he means “we Chachis”, extending the pronominal referent far back into history along his lines of descent.

What do these linguistic forms and the discourse structures they are positioned in have to do with a history of colonialism and current conditions of racial formation and social inequality? It might even seem that these tiny linguistic details are inconsequential in the face of such pervasive social conditions, but on the other hand it would be

impossible for racial difference and inequality be produced, reproduced and given social meaning without the mediation of grammatical structures like these, deployed across different moments of social interaction in ways that tie them together. All of these particular pairings of linguistic form and meaning will be discussed at length in the pages that follow – for now I will continue with more excerpts from Yambu’s account as a way to begin to enter the realm of Chachi oral history.

Y: Tutsa'nu, tsaijturen,  
In Tutsa', it was like that.

tsadei challa tsaa regaideiña nukabain dejideiñu  
So happening like that, now they have spread out all over.

Chachi oral history often refers to the stage of migration from the Andean highland when they lived in *Tutsa'* or *Pueblo Viejo* (“Old Town”), a town said to be halfway down the mountains, not yet in the coastal plains. It is said that at this time all Chachi people lived together in a single town – in some accounts, with other indigenous peoples as well. From that point on multiple waves of migration resulted in the current demographic situation, with Chachi communities now settled on the rivers of several different watersheds in the present-day Ecuadorian province of Esmeraldas. The precise timeframe for these events is unclear, because while some stories mention the Inca and Spanish invasions in the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> centuries as the original reason the Chachis left the highlands, today some of the older community members remember having met people who still recalled the days of Tutsa'. It is likely the migration was a gradual process over decades if not centuries. This is Yambu’s version of how the Chachis came to live in all of their different current locations, some quite dispersed from one another:

---

<sup>1</sup> I will use the term “ethnonym” rather than the more neutral “demonym” or another similar term simply because “ethnonym” is more commonly-understood. This choice is not meant to imply that such terms refer to ethnic rather than racial social categories, a distinction that will be discussed at length below.

Y: Unos setenta año jumeetenñaa, demapiñu dechutyu jungu  
Seems to be about 70 years since they split up and no longer live there (in Tutsa’).

tsai'mitya engu deja' chutaa

For that reason they came here to live,

enkubain, sapayushabain san miguel santa mariya  
here as well as in Zapallo, San Miguel, Santa Maria,

onsole muisne kanandee viche  
Onzole, Muisne, Canandé, Viche.

Kumuinchi paate chachilla dechuña, maali maali.  
Chachis live everywhere, each (population) separate (from the others).

While only a few generations ago (“about seventy years”) Chachis seem to have continued to use the trade routes into the mountains by way of Tutsa’, Chachi settlements were already well established in the Rio Cayapas watershed by the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century when American anthropologist Samuel Barrett, then a student of Alfred Kroeber at the University of California-Berkeley, compiled his ethnographic account, *The Cayapas Indians of Ecuador* ([1909] 1925). The term *Cayapa* is an exonym historically used by non-Chachis to refer to the Chachi people – the Chachi have only recently succeeded in bringing their own autonym into common usage,<sup>2</sup> an issue that I will address in Chapter 3.

The most likely course of events was that the Chachis, little by little, changed the orientation of their trade relations from the Andean highlands, accessible by uphill mountain paths through dense cloud forests, to the coastal lowlands, which were

relatively easier to reach by canoe along the rivers. The low population density of the Chocoan tropical rainforest during that period of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century rovided for plentiful hunting and fishing resources, long before the current struggles of resource scarcity began to set in over the last decades of the century. This gradual move into the lowlands also meant the end of the Chachis' period of intense inter-group contact with the Quechua-speaking indigenous people of the highlands. While today the Chachis are not in steady contact with Quechua speakers, evidence of language contact, including a considerable number of Quechuan loanwords in Cha'palaa, provide linguistic evidence that corroboreates Chachi oral history in which the highlanders are known by the ethnonym *eyu*. Yambu describes these historical trade relations in another excerpt from the same conversation, using the term *eyu* with the collective suffix *-la*, mentioned above:

Y: Bueno tsai' dewela'chu, tsai'mitya tutsa'sha chuchee ura' chuturen

Well, so (now the Chachis) live separately, because in Tutsa', living well -

tiee kenaanka montañasha chu'mitya tibain ai'nu jutyu

there was nothing to do because they lived in the mountain (wilderness).

Naa ketaa ne tyayu ka' finanka, tsa'mityaa

There was no way to get salt to eat, for that reason

tsai deiñaa junka makepukela, pure dechu

it turned out that they abandoned that place, because they lived in poverty.

taa(?) ai'lla wallapa ka ku'chibain

They used to buy chickens, pigs too,

---

<sup>2</sup> Changes in official discourse and in popular usage are related to multicultural citizenship reforms around Latin America and in Ecuador particularly to the indigenous uprisings of the early 1990s, in which in many

tupiyamabain ke' **eyula** ibarasha dejanmala juntsaba  
and they made clay pots, and when **the highland people** came from Ibarra,

junstaba wete' ka kusas kakakela  
with them they exchanged and received things.

juntsawaa dechuña tutsa'sha,  
That's how they lived in Tutsa'.

In addition to the linguistic resources for social categorization that I described above, the Chachi also draw on cultural resources like their oral history as a way to organize and make sense of different human groups of their social landscape, past and present. In the next excerpt Yambu makes the the oral source of his information explicitly clear when he states about Tutsa' that “we have not seen it” and that “we only know the stories.” In my account of social categorization among the Chachi orally-transmitted knowledge is as important for social categorization as the linguistic forms used to express it – these two areas are never easily separable. In this excerpt one can observe different usages of the first person collective pronoun (*lala*, with the alternate reduced form *laa*), moving between a “we” that encompasses all Chachis throughout history (“we long ago”) and a “we” that ends with his own generation (“we were only children”). Here again is an ambiguous usage of the autonym with the collective suffix – should “Tutsa' chachilla” be translated as “the people of Tutsa'” or “the Chachis of Tutsa'”?

Y: Tsa'mitya enku dechuña juntsa chachilla **tutsa'chachillan**  
For that reason they live here, those Chachis, **the Tutsa' Chachis**,

tsadena'mitya **lala timbunuya**  
And because it is like that **we long ago**

---

cases former autonoms became general ethnonyms based on indigenous demands for auto-denomination.

**laabain wajkayi'mitya** junku kerajdetu  
we were **only children** there and have not seen it,

tsaaren **lala challaya kuindan mikayaaña**,  
and so **now we only know the stories**.

rukula, timbunu **lala' cultura** junku fiesta ketu  
The men, long ago (practiced) **our culture** there by doing celebrations.

Fandagu ketu, chachi leyajturen fandagu ke' naa matsudi'bain  
Doing “fandango,” not many Chachis know how to do fandango,

fandagu ken chumu ruku deju.  
They were men who lived doing fandango.

The possessive form of the first person pronoun, *lala'*, occurs above with the borrowed Spanish word *cultura*, and here Yambu shares in widely-circulating discourses of “culture,” including, of course, familiar anthropological discourses. One of the central goals of this dissertation is to demonstrate how the highly specific resources offered by Chachi discourse create sites of broader social engagement far beyond the bounds of the territories settled by the descendants of the present-day Chachis as they migrated from Tutsa'. This reference to the concept of culture using a Spanish term in the Cha'palaa phrase “our culture” hints at some of these intersections. Here “our culture” is equated with the apex of the Chachi ritual calendar, the traditional festivals known as *fandango*, another word incorporated into Cha'palaa through contact with other social groups, perhaps from colonial Spanish, or perhaps from Afro-descendant peoples, as it is an archaic Spanish term of possible African origin. The most important part of the Chachi *fandango* is the playing of marimba music and drums, and while these are held up as prime examples of Chachi traditional culture, they too may have been borrowed from Afro-descendants.



## 1.2 Social categories in oral history

In addition to mentioning other human groups, Yambu's account of Chachi history also mentioned classes of beings that might be thought of as supernatural, although the term must be used loosely here, since among Chachis they are very much considered to be part of the natural world. In earlier times there were more *chachi fimu*, Yambu said, meaning "Chachi eaters" or "people eaters". These include jaguars, cannibals and different monsters and ghosts from the Chachis' extensive bestiary.

Y: Animaa dechuña **chachi fimu** kelabain

There were creatures that were **people eaters**, like jaguars,

piwalalabain fayu ujmubain

and the "piwalala", and the "fayu ujmu".

SF: Fayu ujmu.

Y: Juntsa aabare animaa jelekenuu

That is a really tall creature, frightening,

aa fayu ujmu piwalalabain matyu shupa finchakemu fimiren

the fayu ujmu and the piwilala, it bites like a bat when it feeds,

jeke asa mishmu juntsaa wanpiru detiña juntsa animaa

it quickly sucks out blood, like what they call a "vampire," that creature,

juntsa animaa jee juntsaa cha'fimu.  
that creature, yes, that one eats people.

Reviewing this recording from the early stages of my year of fieldwork I am able to make observations about my own abilities in engaging in Cha'palaa conversation and to reflect the meaning-making encounters that stand for evidence in ethnographic research. Learning to speak unwritten and undocumented minority languages is hard. At that time about the best I could do was to recognize words and phrases that I understood due to previous experience with pilot research in Chachi communities and to echo them back in acknowledgement: “Yes, I am listening.” While I am still far away from a native-speaker’s command of the language, data from later recordings shows me interviewing and conversing in full sentences. Somehow the call for reflexivity in ethnographic research has seldom been extended to questions of linguistic competence, as if working through contact languages in indigenous communities without a command of the local language was a totally unproblematic and transparent research methodology. I take discursive interaction to be the primary site of ethnographic meaning-making, and at different points in this dissertation I hope to make these issues more transparent by exposing my own limitations and tracing my personal progress in becoming a participant in Cha'palaa discourse.

Another way that I foreground myself as ethnographer and social actor is to consider my own social categorization by Chachi people throughout the research process. This task is also entangled in local oral history, as will become increasingly clear in the pages that follow. Yambu’s recounting of the different *chachi fimu* (“people eaters”) addresses this issue, as the next consumers of human flesh he mentioned were the *uyala*, the Chachis’ traditional enemies from their oral history who the Chachis defeated in a war that enabled them to settle in the forests of Esmeraldas perhaps sometime in the 16<sup>th</sup> century. While the *uyala* are sometimes known in Spanish as *indios bravos* or “wild Indians”, in this recording my primary transcription assistant translated *uyala* with the term *gringo*, reflecting the present-day practice of referring to white-skinned foreigners

also as *uyala*, applying the same term as heard in the oral history. For now I will leave the ambiguity in the translation and leave a more extensive discussion of this overlap or historical and present-day social categorization for Chapter 4. Crucially, the *uyala* are also *chachi fimu* (people eaters) and were known to cannibalistically prey on the Chachi. Here Yambu continues with his account of the area around Tutsa’:

Y: Uyalabain dechu junka **uyalabain cha' fimu**, chachilianu findetsu  
Gringos live there too, **gringos are also people eaters**, they used to eat Chachis

tsejturen juntsa chachibain parejuren tutendetsu  
but then the Chachis also would kill them the same.

Yaibain tute' yaibain fatindetsu  
They would kill them (kill the *uyala*) and they (the Chachis) would also get eaten.

tsaituren bueno umaa matyu dee...  
So, well, now, they --

pareju ne winkekendetsu'mitya juntsa depiña tsejtu.  
because they fought each other equally, now they (the *uyala*) have disappeared.

Umaa enku dejatu **peechullalaa** engu kerajdetunuren,  
Now when (the Chachis) came down here **the Blacks** could not be seen here,

Junku tutsa'sha chutu.  
When they had lived there in Tutsa’.

The last social group mentioned by Yambu in this series of excerpts are the *peechulla*, the Chachi ethnonym used to refer to Afro-descendant peoples who descend from communities formed by escaped enslaved Africans and, later, newly-freed Afro-

descendants in the haven of the inaccessible forests of Esmeraldas. Today Afro-descendants are the Chachis' closest neighbors and have become their primary trade partners, taking over the role of the *eyula* (highland indigenous people) of the Andean highlands in the days of Tutsa'. The close inter-group contact between Chachis and Afro-descendants is the most salient inter-group relationships in this particular ethnographic context, and as such it will become the central focus of this dissertation on Chachi social categorization. In Chachi oral history, Afro-descendant people are said to have come later to the area. Only a few people explicitly mention Africa as their place of origin, but Yambu does make this connection, using a number of different words to refer to Afro-descendant people including the common term *pechulla*, to be discussed in detail later, as well as the Spanish loanword *neegue* (from *negro*) and the toponym *Africa*, all in combination with the collective suffix *-la* that was mentioned above.

**Pechullala afrikanu**, chachi dechutyu naa **negueelabain** dechutyu.

The **Blacks were in Africa**, and neither Chachis nor *negros* lived (around here).

**Afrikala** jatu tulitabi main chu' limunebi

When **the Africans** came only one lived in Tolita, up to Limones,

pen ya chunaña, limune detishujuntsa limunchi chunañaa

there were only three houses in Limones - there was a lemon tree.

Limune detiña, lemuchi chunañu.

They called it Limones because there was a lemon tree.

Limones is today a town of about five thousand mostly Afro-descendant people and is the seat of the local administrative division of Cantón (“county”) Eloy Alfaro, a large territory which includes the majority of the Chachi population centers far upriver. Chachi people often travel long distances to Limones to take care of different kinds of official business speaking in Spanish among Afro-descendants – Yambu’s account is

populated by people and places that held significance for understanding the relationships among different social groups, and I was beginning to get a better feel of the terrain as the interview went on.

Unlike ethnographic spaces where the dominant and oppressed social groups are more clearly defined, in my field site where Afro-descendant people and indigenous people are living out their own distinct histories of racialization and post-colonial inequalities side by side while the powerholders are off-stage, things are not so clear-cut. It is not easy to analyze interracial contact, affinity or conflict between Afro-descendants and indigenous peoples because the roles of the historically dominant and the historically dominated are not as clear as when either of those groups is contrasted with white European descendants. The racism of white people and the upper classes towards people of color often lines up neatly with structures of dominance, but racial language and behavior between different peoples of color seems to call for a more complex analysis in order to understand how it can be linked to social inequalities. Ultimately my conclusions will be that conflict between Afro-descendants and indigenous people in Esmeraldas is an important element of the historical conditions of social inequality, and that the fact that their lives are structured by conditions of mutual tension is itself a symptom of their distinct but often comparable positions of social disadvantage. In this way inter-group conflict helps maintain the social inequality of both groups rather than leading one of them to a position of dominance over the others. To get from my first explorations of social categorization in specific moments of Cha'palaa discourse to this level of analytical abstraction requires returning to the beginning of my research and following some of the steps I took to arrive at my approach.

### 1.3 Using racial language

Returning to the problem that I posed above of structuring my ethnographic interviews around local expressive forms, this short conversation with Yambu provided me with a rich set of terms and topics that I could use in the future as a way to open up conversation. However, I still had an important doubt that I needed to confront. In my research I had planned to treat the relationships of the Chachis with their Afro-descendant neighbors and other social actors as cases of *interracial* contact and interaction, since my preferred approach, for reasons I will elaborate on below, is one of racial analysis. But as a participant in Chachi discourse, could I even ask questions in racial terms? Were such terms even meaningful in this ethnographic context, or was I simply imposing my own concerns on the Chachi based on my background of race as experienced in United States? I had heard Chachi people using the word *raza* when speaking Spanish, but at that early stage of language-learning, I was unsure if there was any similar term in Cha'palaa. I was deliberately avoiding using the word for fear that people would simply respond to me in my own terms as a way to tailor language towards the recipient – so that while while looking for a Chachi perspective I would inadvertently only end up finding my own.

Towards the end of the hour-long conversation Yambu gave me my first hint that the language of my research questions was appropriate for the Chachi context. I asked him to tell me more about the relationship of the Chachis to the highland indigenous people, and I was surprised to hear Yambu respond using explicitly racial terms.

Y: Eyula chulla junku  
The highland indigenous people live there

SF: Aha.

Y: Juntsa ibara, otavalo paatesha, eyula,  
in Ibarra, around Otavalo, the highlanders,

eyula matyu pañee lala' aa apa julaaka eyulabain  
talking about the highlanders, they are our grandparents,

aa apa juuñuu eyula  
like our grandparents, the highlanders

SF: Aha.

Y: **Lala' rasan ju'mitya**, aa apa  
**Beuase they are from our race**, grandparents.

SF: Aha, ah, um, ñulla rasa.  
Aha, ha, um, your race.

Y: **Lala' rasa**, laabain junku eyulaba chumude'mitya,  
**Our race**, because we also lived there with the highlanders,

lala' aa apa juuñuuba.  
they are like our grandparents.

SF: Aha.

Y: **Tsa'mitya lala' rasan deju eyulabain.**  
**For that reason the highlanders are also our race.**

My surprise at hearing the Spanish word *raza* in Cha'palaa discourse is evident on the recording. I was a little unsure of what I had heard and asked Yambu for confirmation, managing to switch the pronouns appropriately: “Your race?” “Our race,” he repeated. While Chachi people have a distinct ethnonym for Quechua-speaking

highlanders, apparently they did not consider them to be a separate race from the Chachis – or at least Yambu did not consider them so, in the context of that moment of interaction. In fact, according to what we know of the history of the northern Andes the Chachi are indeed related to the pre-Quechua highland societies, or at least their language is closely related to the languages that were spoken the adjacent highland areas of Imbabura and the modern national capital of Quito before the period of Inca expansion when Quechua began to replace them. Only the Chachis and a few other indigenous groups from the Western Andean slopes have preserved any of these languages, known as the Barbacoan languages, into the present day. Early colonial accounts (such as those cited in Jijón y Caamaño 1914), archeological evidence (DeBoer 1995), toponymic evidence such as a proliferation of Barbacoan place names in the highlands, and accounts from Chachi oral history all converge on this version of events – but in what sense is this a *racial* history?

Yambu continued to explain that even in the time of his grandparents trade relations with highland people had continued. I was curious to know if he considered other present-day indigenous groups to be racially different or similar, so I asked him about the Tsachila, who speak a language closely related to Cha'palaa. Were they also the same race as the Chachi?

Y: Tsadena tsa'mitya eyulabain keradeju aa apamillala

And so the highlanders were also known, by (our) departed grandparents.

SF: Aha, entonces chachilla eyula main rasa?

Aha, so the Chachis and the highlanders are one race?

Y: Mm hmm.



SF: Tsaachila igual main rasa o [o wera, o wera rasa?  
 Are the Tsachi also one race [or a different, a different race?  
 ]

Y: [Si, main rasa, main raza - jee kumuinchin ma rasa  
 [Yes, one race, one race, yes, they're all one race.

SF: Aha.

Y: Main rasa juu.  
 One race.

SF: Main rasa.  
 One race.

Y: Jee eyulabain, chachillabain y eperabanin kumuinchi.  
 Yes, the highlanders also, the Chachis also, the Epera also, all of them.

Chachi naa indigenelabain lala' rasanju lala' rasa ,  
 People who are indigenous are our race, our race,

mapebuluu chunamudeju  
 we lived in a single town.

SF: Mm.

Y: Tsejturen yalaa regaideiñu maali maali jideiñu, main nuka jiñubain  
 Then they went spreading out, each alone they went, each went wherever.

SF: Maali maali.  
 Each alone.

Y: Jee, maali maali chudilla  
Yes, they live each alone.

If Yambu considered other indigenous peoples to be a single race with a single origin that had little by little split apart to form the distinct indigenous societies living in northwestern Ecuador, what did he think about the racial membership of other groups present in Ecuador today? Now that I had heard Yambu use racial terminology, I decided it was fair to ask him more questions using the same terms. Since I intended to focus my research on the relationship between the Chachis and the Afro-descendants, I asked if there was a racial difference between these two groups.

SF: Aha y juntsa peechulla wera raza?  
Aha, and are the Blacks a different race?

Y: Jee, wera rasa.  
Yes, a different race.

SF: Wera rasa.  
A different race.

Y: Peechullaa afrikashaa jamu deju  
Blacks came from Africa.

SF: Afrikasha  
From Africa.

Y: Afrikasha jamu deju  
They came from Africa.

SF: Aja.

SF: Peechulla timbunuaa enku chumu peeçhulla jutyu,  
The blacks, in the old times the blacks did not live here.

Afirkashaa deñaũ juntsa  
They came from Africa, those ones.

SF: Mm.

Y: Tsaitaa yala de chushaaka junku kuwanka.  
And so they came to live there downriver.

Even though Yambu used the word *raza* and stated that Afro-descendants and indigenous people are different races, after my conversation with him I was still hesitant to ask interview questions to other Chachi people using explicitly racial terms. In Yambu's case I worried that I might have led him to a response he thought I expected by asking whether indigenous people formed "one" race while asking if Afro-descendants were a "different" race.<sup>3</sup> In subsequent interviews I was always careful not to use the word "race" until I heard the interviewee use it first, but I found that virtually all of the Chachi interviewees as well as most of the Afro-descendent interviewees used the word *raza* and other terms associated with race (such as "blood" and a number of strategies for describing phenotype). The same was true for discourse that I observed in daily interaction outside of the semi-formal interview frame, some of which will appear in the natural speech data presented in Chapter 7. Early in my research I realized that the

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<sup>3</sup> In fact, there a specific recipient design aspect *is* evident in this interaction, showing how Yambu was tailoring his responses specifically for me. Now, from the perspective of my increased understanding of Cha'palaa, I can see by looking back at the transcript that there is an aspect of "foreigner speech" in Yambu's turns. Cha'palaa phonologically reduces certain modifiers in noun phrases – so I should have said "*ma rasa*" and "*wee rasa*" instead of "*main rasa*" and "*wera rasa*". Speakers recognize the full forms, but they sound awkward or ungrammatical (a helpful analogy might be imagining a non-native English speaker trying to use the tag question "doesn't it?" but using the non-reduced form "does not it?"). Even so, Yambu answered me by repeating my mistake, probably because he felt I would understand him more easily.

relevant question was not “Do the Chachi participate in racial discourse?” but rather, “How do the Chachi participate in racial discourse?” Explicit racial discourse is only one kind of racialization, but it is one of the most salient and is the principal way that I track social categorization more broadly in this dissertation. While my account neglects some aspects of more implicit social organization, it was necessary to come to terms with overt invocations of racial language as an initial way of approaching the local conditions and participating in discourse at my field site. Keeping in mind that discourse never directly reflects social conditions, many of the strategies used in nationally and internationally circulating discourse to camouflage racial language are rarely used in Cha’palaa or rural Afro-Ecuadorian Spanish. As examples in the following chapters show, locally circulating discourse is extremely blunt and overt about social categories, racial difference and stereotypes, and somehow seems more transparent and laid bare than the racial avoidance tactics of urban Spanish or English discourse. My focus on discourse will only give a partial account of social categorization that could be complemented by other kinds of ethnography and social analysis, but because of the window into social categories that discourse provides here both by own analytical approach and the Chachi preoccupation with race and racial discourse converge on this topic.

#### **1.4 Linguistic resources for racial discourse**

Now that we were discussing the topic of who belonged in the same racial category and who belonged in distinct categories, I continued by asking Yambu if he considered people like me to also be a different race. Here I used the Spanish term *gringo*, a common word for white foreigners in Ecuador:

SF: Wera rasa gringulaa?  
Are gringos a different race?

Y: Gringulabain wera, wera.  
The gringos are also different,

SF: Aa?

Y: Wera.  
Different.

SF: Wera rasa.  
Different race.

Y: **Peechullalabain** wera rasa  
**The Blacks** are also a different race.

SF: Aja.

Y: **Pababaa.**  
(They're) **black** (color).

Yes, Yambu confirmed, gringos are a different race, just as the Afro-descendants are. To follow up this point, he made reference to skin color (*pababa* specifically refers to the color black – *peechuilla* is an ethnonym for the social category of Afro-descendant), the classic phenotypic marker of race, hinting at some of the local perspectives on the body that would be fleshed out (so to speak) as my research continued. Using what might have been too provocative a question, as I reflect later, I followed up by asking Yambu how many different races he thought there were. From his short hesitation I infer that he had to consider the question for a moment before answering, and throughout my research I did not find or expect to find clearly enumerated, exhaustive and rigid categories. Nevertheless he offered an intriguing response:

SF: Nan rasa juu?  
How many races are there?

[short pause]

Y: Pema.  
Three.

SF: Pema.  
Three.

Y: Mm hmm, pema. **laabain fibalabain peechullabain** judee,  
Mm hmm, three, there is **us** too, the **whites** too, the **Blacks** too.



**fibalabain** kayu fiba **lalanu** pulla  
the **whites** are also whiter than **us**.

[gesture out with arms looking down at arms and body]

SF: Mm hmm.

Y: Ura' fiba.  
Very white.

SF: Ha ha. [laughter]

Y: He he he he. [laughter]

The idea of humanity being divided in three races resonates strongly with the history of race in the Americas broadly speaking, in which the three major racial groups since colonial times have been American/indigenous, African/black and European/white (a “racial triangle”; Collins 2006, 34). A key component of my argument in this dissertation is that this racialized social history has been equally important in remote, out-of-the-way places as in the colonial and national urban centers. For any notion of general or broad racial categories to be socially significant those categories must have a tangible manifestations through specific moments of social interactions – the categories shape the interaction, but in the end their substance is made of patterns of consistency and interrelationships across specific interactions. Yambu in this conversation used the resources available to him both in the linguistic forms of the Cha’palaa language and in his knowledge of local oral history in order to articulate one version of how these three hemispheric racial macro-categories work in his particular social space. These were not the only resources he used – he also used his own body as a communicative resource for **multimodal communication**, employing gesture along with speech. Simultaneously to the spoken utterance “*Fibalabain lala kayu fiba lalanu pulla*,” “The whites are also whiter than us,” Yambu tilted his head downward to direct his gaze towards his torso and forearms, moved his arms upward and rotated them, displaying his own skin color as exemplary of “our” skin color. Again he used the first person collective pronoun *lala* in the sense of “we Chachi” in contrast to other social groups, in this case *fiba-la*, or “whites,” with a collective suffix. This is an example of what might be called a **meta-phenotypic gesture**, which is only a technical way of saying “a gesture that uses the body to refer to the form of the body.” In this way Yambu’s own body becomes a resource for racial discourse. A set of other similar examples will make comprise the primary data in Chapter 5 of this dissertation.

In the final excerpt of my conversation with Yambu, I asked him where the urban Ecuadorians commonly referred to as “mestizos” fit into the picture he was sketching. “Mestizos” in popular Latin American racial discourse are usually framed as being descended from both European and American ancestors, and although this is an oversimplification of the constitution of this social category, it raises the question of where they fit in to Yambu’s three-race typology. While often considered a unified social category for official purposes such as census counting, the “mestizo” class in Ecuador actually features extreme internal differentiation, with some so-called “mestizos” sharing much of their social status with indigenous people and others sharing much with white Europeans, and with a broad spectrum of intermediate positions between these extremes.<sup>4</sup> In this instance Yambu identified urban people from the large cities of Quito and Guayaquil as white but in other instances Chachis noted how some mestizos, such as the people known as Manabas (from the province of Manabí), are physically similar to indigenous people. However, many of the urban people that the Chachis come into contact with in their communities are from the social strata of NGO workers and state officials, and many of them are nearly as phenotypically European and I am. Yambu also focused on my own race by using a second person collective pronoun to point out that white urban Ecuadorians are also of “your race”, meaning the racial group that I and people like me belong to. As pointed out above, in Yambu’s discourse the first person collective was aligning with reference to indigenous Chachi people, and now the second person collective was aligning with reference to white people. One of the most frequent ways of talking about race that I observed and documented in my research employed such patterns of **pronoun system alignment** in which the typical speech event roles like “speaker” and “addressee” come into alignment with social categories that are significant far beyond any specific speech event. The pattern shown in Yambu’s discourse emerges repeatedly the data presented in this dissertation.

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<sup>4</sup> This is why I use the term “mestizo” in quotes, because it does not generally hold up as a social category. In Chachi discourse so-called “mestizos” might be classified as white or more indigenous-like and further complicating matters, in Chapter 6 I will show how locally “mestizo” can refer to mixture between Blacks



SF: Aah entonces pema rasa ju.  
Aah, so there are three races.

Y: Mm hm, pema rasa.  
Mm hm, three races.

SF: Aha.

Y: Pañaa pen pen kolor matyu.  
Talking about color, three, three colors then.

SF: Y juntsa kiteñu wayakileñu ee yala ti rasa?  
And those people from Quito and Guayaquil, what race are they?

Y: Yaibain **ñuilla' rasan** deju **fibalabain**  
They are also of **your race**, (they are) also **white**.

negueelabain, pababaabain.

Also *negros*, also black.

**laabain** jude'mitya pen pen rasa, pen koloren judeelaatensh, juntsan juudesh  
and **us** as well, three, three races, I think there are just three colors, they must be.

Tsen naajun ñuchee, nan kulur jun?  
So for you how many colors are there?

SF: Aja?

Y: Nubatsa de jun ñuchee  
Which are they for you?

SF: No se, ha ha.  
I don't know, ha ha. [laughter]

Y: He he he he. [laughter]

Finally, Yambu turned my own question back on me. How many colors or races were there for me? As evidenced in my request for a repetition, at first I did not even understand the question. But once I realized what he was asking me, I had to admit, lapsing into Spanish, that I had no way of answering that question myself at that moment. While as a social scientist I was reluctant to reduce diverse manifestations of race to a finite number of categories, as a student of Latin America I was tempted to agree with Yambu, that a tri-partite racial division is one of the most socially and historically significant dimensions of race in many Latin American spaces.

## **Summary**

In this introductory section I used my conversation with Yambu as an entry point into a discussion of social categorization among the indigenous Chachi, noting that to be able to connect the manifestations of social categories of his discourse at that moment to the roles that those categories play in maintaining social difference and inequality a multi-step analysis will be required. The first step was simply to get a foothold into the Cha'palaa discourse forms. In this transcribed interview I identified some of the major resources that Chachi people use, including a set of ethnonyms, a collective suffix that tends to combine with ethnonyms and other words referring to humans and other animate beings in order to collectivize them as groups, and personal pronouns that also collectivize people within the frame of participation in speech events. I also began to

describe some of the ways that these linguistic resources are integrated, through their use in discourse, into accounts of Chachi oral history and local ways of speaking about social groups and the distinctions among them. In addition, I mentioned multimodal resources in which the body itself becomes a resource for expression of physical variation that becomes significant in social categorization, especially concerning racial categories. While the data presented above was from just one conversation with a single speaker of Cha'palaa, in this dissertation further data from more recorded interviews and specific instances of natural speech will be combined with general ethnographic data based on long-term participation in daily life in various Chachi communities to demonstrate how the conversation with Yambu reflects larger discursive patterns that circulate among Chachi people and, in some cases, beyond into the neighboring Afro-descendant society. While this initial incursion into the world of Chachi social categorization focused on linguistic and discursive data, as will much of this dissertation, it is intended to be a portal into a discussion about the social circulation of categories more broadly in ways that have some notable implications for the status of categories like race in social theory. In order for race to play a role as an organizing principle of historical inequalities it needs to be grounded in real moments of social interaction and articulated with the communicative resources at hand, as I will argue as part of my analysis of those moments through my field data. But before presenting any more primary discourse data collected during my field research, it is necessary to elaborate on this proposition and to further lay out the approach that I am taking here.

## **1.5 Race and ethnicity in northwest Ecuador**

The history of the Americas over the last five centuries can in many ways be understood as a story about the encounter of people from three continents: the peoples of the Americas who occupied the region prior before 1492, the peoples of Europe who colonized the Americas and subjugated its people from 1492 onward, and the peoples of Africa who were brought by the Europeans as enslaved labor to build and maintain their colonies (Whitten 2007). These are the same three races mentioned by Yambu in the conversation presented above. In this dissertation I will attempt to show how this broad hemispheric history relates to particular instances of communicative expression and social interaction in specific locations along the forested rivers of the Andean foothills and the coastal plain of Northwestern Ecuador. To do ethnographic research in the different present-day social spaces of Latin America – research that consists of cumulative moments like my conversation with Yambu – is to confront this history again and again, as his tri-partite division of humanity reminds us.

Despite Yambu's willingness to consider blackness, whiteness and indigeneity in the same conversation, the social science literature on race and ethnicity in Latin America has generally not approached indigenous peoples and Afro-descendants as part of the same discussion. Instead, both of these broad categories have primarily been discussed in binary opposition to whiteness. To some extent this division has split along the borders of the modern Latin American states. In places with large Afro-descendant populations like the Caribbean countries and Brazil (except for in the Amazonianist tradition) research on social categories has largely dealt with African heritage from as far back as the first studies of African "survivals" in the Americas (like Herskovits 1941). In recent times, however, indigenous revival movements have been popping up in places where social difference was thought to be oriented primarily around the binary opposition of blackness to whiteness, such as in southern and northeastern Brazil (Oliveira 1999, Warren 2001), where these newly-visible indigenous people came as a surprise onto the local scene. In contrast, in places with large indigenous populations like Mexico, Guatemala and the

Andean countries, the ethnographic literature has focused almost exclusively on indigenous peoples, a tradition dating back to the enormous multi-volume *Handbook of South American Indians* (Steward 1946-1950) and beyond. In these spaces, on the other hand, significant populations of Afro-descendants have been considered incongruous, and the binary opposition of indigeneity and whiteness has dominated, wrapped up in national mythologies of “mestizaje” and *indigenismo*. In Ecuador, where indigenous studies have dominated the ethnographic literature and where indigenous history is prominent in the national imagination, Afro-descendant people are sometimes treated as being out of place outside of their traditional population centers. In large urban areas like the capital city of Quito they may be asked where they are from, even if they were born in the city (De la Torre 2001).

In his review of *Race and Ethnicity in Latin America* (1997), Wade describes how the race/ethnicity split has resulted in two parallel discourses about Afro-descendants and indigenous peoples, forming two separate bodies of literature that have seldom informed each other. In addition, Wade points out how this parallel development in the social sciences plays out discursively in that the language used regarding indigenous people has almost exclusively been one of ethnicity and ethnic difference while Afro-descendant peoples have been studied in racial terms. I would add that this split circulates far beyond social science discourse – that the social sciences have actually helped to perpetuate it in other official and popular discourses. The implication of the race/ethnicity schism is that indigenous peoples make up one pole on the “mestizaje” continuum but that there is no sharp racial or phenotypic distinction between them and other populations – the difference between indigenous people and whites or mestizos is primarily an ethnic or cultural one. Indigenous people have traditional homelands, languages, customs and so on. Afro-descendants, on the other hand, are considered to have lost most of the markers of their ethnic distinctiveness through the turmoil of slavery, displacement from their homeland and assimilation of European languages. They are racially marked as distinct from other national populations in terms of their phenotype, but they are considered to be a part of their respective national cultures, even if only marginally so.

This division has left deep marks in the social terrain throughout Latin America and can be traced through political negotiations in which indigenous movements (in places like Guatemala, for example) have largely struggled for cultural rights while at times Afro-descendants have sought race-based rights like affirmative action programs (in places like Brazil, for example). In recent years indigenous-style pressure for cultural rights has become the approach most welcomed in many political spheres because it is the most easily incorporated into and blunted by institutional structures under the banner of multiculturalism (Hale 2002, 2005, Hooker 2005). Multiculturalism in Latin America has been part of a complex institutional and discursive development in which minority groups have been granted rights and recognition on paper, both facilitating denials that racial discrimination exists and absorbing and softening any opposition movements. Multiculturalism has been particularly linked to culture- or ethnicity-based positions and has resisted the incorporation of perspectives of racial analysis, which might cut through the language of multiculturalism and show how it works to take the focus off historical inequality and center it on cultural tokens and displays.

Even with these contradictions, however, after observing what seemed like a degree of success at official levels by indigenous movements, in some places Afro-descendants have begun pushing for cultural rights in ways that resemble indigenous demands (for example, in Ecuador's neighbor Colombia; see Restrepo 2004, Hooker 2005). In certain political spaces, then, it seems like the language of ethnicity is gaining ground, and in many places throughout the Americas it has come to completely dominate much of public discourse. Legal documents guarantee cultural or ethnic rights, not the rights of racial minorities – like Ecuador's new 2008 constitution, that only uses racial terms in a negative sense by prohibiting racism, but racism directed against groups defined by their cultural or ethnic difference, not by race.

So why use racial terminology at all? Isn't this move to ethnic language a good sign that we are moving beyond race, as some suggest (Gilroy 2000)? Doesn't continuing

to use racial categories for social analysis continue to perpetuate racial thinking in the social sciences, as others argue (Daynes and Lee 2008)? And won't moving to an discussion of ethnicity that includes all of the different relevant social categories in Latin America help to finally break down the race/ethnicity dichotomy and bring both Afro-descendants and indigenous peoples into the same field of analysis, as well as whites, "mestizos" and everyone else?

There are several problems with such an account that provide reasons for continuing to pursue social analysis in racial terms. First, the dominance of ethnic discourse in many places has largely been confined to specific elite discursive strata. On the ground in indigenous and Afro-descendant communities of Ecuador different terminologies circulate, so that after many years of research it has become obvious that when local people deploy the terminology of ethnicity and related discourses of multiculturalism they are almost always the people with the most life experience in official spheres – perhaps having studied outside of their home community, or having worked in an indigenous organization or an NGO, and having increased their command of Spanish. It has also become obvious that my own presence *attracts* the discourse of ethnicity, since I find such terminology directed exclusively at me rather than in general circulation. In interaction studies this is an example of what is called **recipient design**, referring to a way of analyzing a speaker's own assessment of their addressee through their communicative choices. In these specific cases local people have learned through experience to tailor their discourse for white Ecuadorians and foreigners like me as a way to maximize their chances of receiving benefits such as NGO-funded projects. On many occasions I have observed specific members of indigenous and Afro-descendant communities deploy discourses of ethnicity and multiculturalism in the presence of white visitors, only to shift back to the locally circulating set of terms and their own languages as soon as the visitors had left. This tendency underlines my methodological choice to work as much as possible in the indigenous language – while I realize that I cannot completely mitigate these recipient design effects, I can greatly minimize them by increasing my participation in the more usual daily discourse forms. So while at the more

superficial level of granularity it might seem that ethnic discourse has taken over, on the ground race continues to be a pervasive form of social categorization in indigenous and Afro-descendant communities all over Latin America. The racial terminology (*raza*) that Yambu used in the conversation presented above was echoed by similar expressive forms again and again throughout my field research by Chachi people and Afro-Ecuadorians, as will be shown in the following chapters, while mention of ethnicity as such (*étnicidad/étnia*) was extremely rare in Cha'palaa and relatively uncommon in Spanish as well. This suggests that a racial analysis better reflects the discourse that circulates in Chachi communities, and the ways of approaching social categorization that correspond to it.

The second major reason not to eclipse racial language with the language of ethnicity is that, despite the skewing of racial language towards Afro-descendants and ethnic language towards indigenous people in academic discourse described above, race and ethnicity, in fact, have never been totally separate in discourse, but rather have existed in a complex interplay of substitution through which the cultural characteristics that have been associated with ethnicity have been linked to the forms of the body that are associated with race. There is nothing essential to either of these terminologies and their meanings have been flexible throughout the history of their usage.

As I illustrated in my conversation with Yambu, in my research I attempted to neutral terms as much as possible until I had some evidence of what the locally-circulating discourse was like, and then to use those same terms in future questions. In my own experience, I found local people in a particular remote area of Ecuador to be participating in discourses of race that resonate with history on a broader scale, and I am convinced that there is something important to be said about this that speaks to a number of problems in the social science tradition in Latin America and beyond, and so my approach centers on racial analysis to the neglect of other kinds of social categorization such as gender, sexuality, and religion that intersect with race, but still takes seriously an intersectional approach as described in Crenshaw (1991) and Collins (1990). This



approach to social categories emphasizes the multiple overlaid identities that any social actor can occupy simultaneously, where one axis of identity may be more salient or relevant depending on the social context. This is not an exhaustive account of social categorization in Cha'palaa by any means, and insightful complementary studies in the future could investigate gender or class in a similar way to how I approach racial analysis through language and social interaction. I will go into more depth about what I mean by racial analysis and how it relates to language and discourse later. But first, as a way to return to the social terrain of northwestern Ecuador and to illustrate how racial and ethnic terms can be substituted for each other, in the next section I will review some of the social science literature that deals with the region around my field site.

### **1.6 Racial and ethnic language in academic accounts**

While Yambu estimated that it has been about seventy years since the Chachis stopped following the trade routes through Tutsa' up to the Andean high valleys where they met Quechua-speaking *eyula*, the Chachis are mentioned, by the exonym "Cayapa," as living in their present territory as far back as the Sixteenth Century (Velasco [1789] 1981, other sources in DeBoer 1995), confirming Chachi oral history accounts of leaving the highlands due to subsequent Inca and Spanish invasions. The presence of Afro-descendants in the precise area of Chachi occupation appears to have come later with migration from the area closer to the coast and from the northern territories that are now part of Colombia (Whitten 1965). Both the Chachi and the Afro-descendants were well-established on the Cayapas River and its tributaries by the end of the Nineteenth Century, as they are mentioned in several first-hand accounts from this period (Wolf 1879, Basurco 1902), some of which include early photographs of Chachi people. During this period writers often used explicitly-racial language to describe the region, such as Chilean civil engineer Basurco's comments on the Afro-descendants:

... Let's describe our rowers in broad terms. The blacks of Borbón are excessively courteous and friendly: they give the motto "equality before the law" its highest practical application; the only thing they admit is that they are black, although even this they hide with the title of mulato, which is not accurate in any way, as the race to which they want to belong is written algebraically with the equation:

$$\text{Mulato}=\text{black}+\text{white}$$

But since they lack absolutely the second term of the second member, it must be confessed that they do not know themselves. (11-12)

In this passage Basurco casts himself as a kind of racial police, defending the color line and mocking those who try to cross it to whiten themselves. In describing the Chachis, Basurco also uses racializing language; during this period the terms of ethnicity were not yet in heavy circulation.

The Cayapas are bronze in color, of very well marked physiognomic features, with well-delineated forms and extremely strong. (12)

By exploring the academic literature on the South America's north Pacific we can trace how the explicit racial language of the 19<sup>th</sup> century slowly gave ground to ethnic terms over the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

In order to take stock of how racial and ethnic terminologies have been re-positioned in the social sciences over the past century it is worthwhile to take a sample of the literature on the Pacific coast of northwest Ecuador, as scant as it is. We can begin with Barrett's *The Cayapas Indians of Ecuador*, the first work on the Chachi to undertake an explicitly ethnographic project in the classic Boasian framework of Cultural Anthropology. Barrett was a second-generation Boasian, having been Kroeber's first graduate student at UC-Berkeley shortly after founding the Anthropology department there – and Kroeber was in turn Boas' first student (Barrett himself may have studied directly under Boas at some point, it is unclear if he did so, but the two were surely

acquainted). In some senses we can trace the beginnings of the race/ethnicity split to Boas and his contemporaries' efforts to counter race-based cultural determinism, exemplified in classic works on the "Race, language and culture" framework (Boas 1940, Sapir [1921] 1949). At that time, however, biology, language and ethnicity had not yet been delegated out to the respective sub-disciplines of Physical Anthropology, Linguistics and Cultural Anthropology, but rather field researchers were expected to provide comprehensive documentation in all of these areas. Barrett was part of an expedition linked to Harvard University and the Bureau of American Ethnology that sent researchers to different countries of the Pacific coast of South America, and he spent about a year in 1909 in Chachi territory.

From today's perspective, Barrett's ethnography, published in 1925, reads like a hodgepodge of information on cultural practices, material culture, language and physical anthropology without any coherent narrative or analytical agenda beyond documentation. It is particularly rich in terms of material culture and remains a valuable resource in that it documents hundreds of traditional art forms like textile and reed weaving designs, body painting and canoe painting patterns, wood carvings for tools, religious statues, children's toys and so on. The linguistic information included in Barrett's reveals that he did not make much progress with the complexities of Cha'palaa, which is understandable since I can personally attest that it is a difficult language to learn for speakers of European languages, but as a result some of the cultural information suffers as it was compiled through the use of Spanish as an inter-language. At this early stage in the development of US Anthropology ethnic terminology had not fully emerged and instead a terminology oriented around culture, in the sense of discrete "cultures" comparable to "ethnicities" dominated the ethnography of the time (a use of "culture" that has since been particularly criticized by anthropologists; Abu Lughod 1991). This trend is reflected in Barrett's ethnography, which does not use the terminology of ethnicity *or* race. But a certain kind of racial thinking is evident in Barrett's chapter on physical anthropology – as a good Boasian, he certainly would never imply that any of the Chachi's cultural traits were determined by their race, but they are still described as a discrete physical type as

compared to a neighboring indigenous group (the “Cholos” an old exonym for the Epera people):

In summary, we can say that the Cayapa is well-proportioned, of short stature, of a light brown color, brachycephalous, with black or dark hair, straight or wavy, eyes very dark brown, wide upper lips, high cheekbones and a round face, without strong prominences in the chin or in the ciliary arches. We did not measure the cholos, but they are very distinct from the Cayapas, a bit smaller and more robust, and with a general appearance closer to that of the mongoloid. (337)

Barrett never returned to Ecuador after his year with the Chachi, and he went on to have a long career centered around the indigenous peoples of California, where he never focused strongly on physical anthropology. In his ethnographic work with the Chachi one gets the feeling that he made physical measurements and observations of phenotype out of a sense of obligation based on a certain conception of comprehensive four-field anthropology that was instilled in him as a student at that time. During the following decades four-field ethnography would fade in the rise of increased specialization and cultural anthropologists would no longer be expected to engage in the analysis of the physical human body, a task now assigned to physical anthropologists, who would go on to develop other concerns than race-based phenotype. Some anthropologists, while recognizing the importance of the anti-racist position of anthropologists of Boas’ era, have argued that the division of anthropology into sub-disciplines dealing either exclusively with either biology or with culture has prevented an engagement with the cultural dimensions of race (Visveswaran 1999). My purpose in this dissertation is to attempt to take some steps toward addressing this problem, left over from anthropology’s disciplinary history in which “race, language and culture” were sealed off from each other.

Other disciplines in the social sciences have experienced their own parallel histories to consider while reviewing the early literature on indigenous and Afro-descendant people. Several U.S. academics in geography and related fields published studies of the northwest Pacific coast of South America during the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century that give a glimpse of the kinds of academic discussions of race that circulated before explicit statements of racial determinism became unacceptable in public discourse – followed by the rise of cultural and, later, ethnic terminology as a stand-in for the unspoken. A 1939 issue of *Science* reported on the research of American ecologist Robert Cushman Murphy under the title “Negroes and Indians in Colombia,” a study addressing the relationship between indigenous and Afro-descendant peoples over the Ecuador-Colombia border from the Chachi area. This is a sample of the article:

A racial struggle in America fought, not with guns, but in biological terms of the survival of the fittest, is being won in northern South America by African Negros.

Loser in the struggle, the Chocó Indians of the Pacific coast of Colombia, are apparently doomed to extinction, according to the report of Dr. Robert Cushman Murphy. (11)

Known primarily for his contributions to ornithology such as *The Oceanic Birds of South America*, Murphy framed this relationship in the overtly racial and evolutionary terms of “racial succession”, treating indigenous and Afro-descendant peoples much like bird species competing for ecological niches. Such texts remind us that for a long time the impact of Boas’ critique of racial determinism was limited mainly to his associates in U.S. anthropology, and there was a long delay before it took hold in other fields (more and more as War World II brought some of the more dangerous implications of these ideas to the foreground). Looking at the original article published in *The Geographical Review*, we can see the how this line of racial determinism, armed with evolutionary science, blended biological and cultural assertions, since it is unclear if the kind of succession implied is supposed to be based on physical or cultural characteristics.

(T)he negro enjoyed the prestige that pertained to his association with the white conquerors. He had the white man's language; he inevitably shared the attitude of the Spaniard toward the Indian; and he has remained to this day the confidant of the white rather than of the Indian. In other words, the negro is a Colombian, the Chocó Indian a savage. (Murphy 1939, p468)

In this passage we can also observe the beginning of the race/ethnicity split discussed above: Afro-descendants are seen as sharing in the national culture despite their racial difference and indigenous people are seen as culturally and linguistically distinct, despite being considered racially related to members of the national culture through nationalist "mestizaje" discourses in many countries. But, as pointed out above, this split was never absolute but rather is a complex discursive system of circumnavigating statements and slippage back and forth between different terminologies. Some sociological writing continued to employ racial terms into the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century with respect to Afro-descendant peoples, but in other cases all racial terminology was eclipsed first by culture and then ethnicity. Several decades after Murphy's articles on "racial succession" used biological and evolutionary terms to contrast indigenous and Afro-descendant people the cultural language of ethnicity had gained much ground. For example, in a 1965 article by British geographer D. A. Preston about relationships among Afro-descendant, indigenous and "mestizo" people in northern Ecuador the terminology of "ethnic groups" had completely replaced the racial terms of a generation earlier. However, despite this terminological shift, the article reveals a strong undercurrent of biological determinism, as demonstrated in the following passage about the distribution of human groups according to ecological zone:

The preliminary assumptions were that the different *ethnic groups* would be stratified altitudinally, with the Negroes occupying the lowest areas, the mestizos those areas at a middle altitude and the Indians the highest areas. It was also supposed that the Negroes would have been peculiarly adapted

to their environment since, throughout South America, Negroes are only found at low altitudes. (Preston 1965, 222; emphasis added)

The way that “ethnic groups” are used as a stand-in for race in this article becomes obvious at certain moments, such as when the author employs terms like “pure stock”:

The mestizos are different from the other two ethnic groups. They are not of *pure stock* and had no cultural tradition. (Preston 1965, 234; emphasis added)

In this sense, racial and cultural “purity” were never fully untangled in the social sciences, even when ethnic terminology erases any discussion of race. Ethnicity can be used just as easily as race to hierarchically rank human groups along supposedly-linear scales of civilization. For example, an early Ecuadorian ethnography of the Chachis’ closest linguistic relatives the Tsachila, known historically by the exonym “Colorados” (“red-colored”) due to their practice of painting men’s hair with red achiote dye, cast both the Tsachila and the Chachi as “primitive” (*primitivo*<sup>5</sup>) in ethnic terms:

The Colorado Indians make up a human group that is considered, *from an ethnic point of view*, as the most primitive that has survived, along with the Cayapas, in the present-day territory of Ecuador. (Costales Samaniego 1965, 56; emphasis added)

By the last part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century ethnic terminology came to completely dominate the ethnographic literature on indigenous peoples of Ecuador and of much of Latin America. Later ethnographic work on the Chachi produced in Ecuador would

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<sup>5</sup> To be fair, *primitivo* can also refer in some cases to simply being “first” – and the present-day Barbocoan peoples including the Tsachila and Chachi are in fact descended from the people who inhabited the northern Andes “first” in comparison with the Quechua-speaking Inca. However, there seem to be some

largely follow this same format (Carrasco 1983, Medina 1992) and in recent years hardly any ethnographic information on the Chachi has been published at all, by Ecuadorians or otherwise (with some exceptions such as Praet 2009 and materials published by Chachi author Añapa Cimarron 2003).

The first ethnographic studies of Afro-descendants in Ecuador appeared long after those of indigenous peoples, who have been the classic object of anthropology in the Americas. The opening up of this space of analysis is due largely to the pioneering work of Norman Whitten beginning in the 1960s. To some extent looking over Whitten's early work confirms the idea that a terminological split has developed with indigenous peoples discussed in terms of ethnicity and Afro-descendants discussed in terms of race. However, as I mentioned above, a terminological shift to ethnicity does not mean that literature on indigenous people has left racial thinking behind. By not falling into that kind of pattern, I would argue that Whitten's work holds up much better than some of his contemporaries because rather avoiding the topic of race, it offers complex analysis of the interactions and mutually-constraining social forces of economic class, cultural practices, nationalism, phenotype and racism. In this passage he offers a powerful counterargument to the ethnicity-based understanding of identity reflected in sometimes-heard statements that in Latin America it is possible to shift one's social category by making cultural changes.

[It] does not matter that some members of the black category will rise in status with or without the "lightening" genes; what matters is that the social category defined by national cultural criterion of blackness is cognitively relegated to the bottom of the economic and social hierarchy. When racial features are associated with class and cultural features, and built into a national cultural category, then the viability of a particular

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deeper assumptions about "primitiveness" in this text that mix some view of cultural development with historical chronology.



Afro-Hispanic mode of cultural adaptation is blocked or limited by racist social constraints (1974, 199).

Whitten anticipated the “social construction” approach to race that would later come to prominence in anthropology; he focused on the interplay of socio-cultural factors and biological aspects such as phenotype. While sciences dealing with human biology intermittently continued to use racial terminology for both indigenous and Afro-descendant peoples throughout the Twentieth Century, not fully replacing it with ethnicity as was the case in the ethnographic literature on Latin American indigenous people, these terms were limited to referring to biological population groups studied in frameworks such as genetics and epidemiology and have seldom addressed the significance of cultural factors. Several studies of the Chachi and Afro-descendants of Esmeraldas have been published under this approach, such as a 1989 article from the *European Journal of Epidemiology* on the relative prevalence of onchocerciasis (“river blindness”) in the different racial groups of the region. In this example the biological terms of race are overt (and the Chachi are inexplicably referred to as a “Caucasian indigenous tribe”):

*Both races*, a Caucasian indigenous tribe (Chachi) and the Blacks (Afro-hispanics), carried the same rate of positivity, although the Chachi had a higher intensity of disease. (Guderian et al 1989, 294; emphasis added)

A set of racial terms long ago rejected by most anthropologist appears to have remained current in some areas of human biology, including not just the word “race” but other terms for talking about people according to continental descent groups like “Amerind,” “Causasoid,” “Negroid,” “Mongoloid” and so on. The Chachi have been subject to a surprisingly large number of genetic studies (including Solder et al. 1996, Garber et al 1995, Rickards et al 1999 – some of them mistakenly describing the Chachi as speakers of a Chibchan language, see Constenla Umaña 1991 and Curnow 1998 for clarification of this unfounded grouping). These studies compare Chachi DNA to that of

other people of the region, such as one that found the Chachi to be relatively pure “Amerinds”, with little “African admixture” (Scascchi et al. 1994). In this research race is treated as a biological category linked to continental descent groups without any particular social implications. In contrast to the biological sciences, recent social science work with the Chachis has primarily employed the terminology of ethnicity, as discussed for ethnography above. For example, we can compare the 1930s approach exemplified in Murhpy’s work on “racial succession” cited above with more recent work in cultural geography done in the same region of northwestern South America. One article attempts to correlate different kinds of ecological interactions with the different social groups of the region, here discussed in terms of ethnicity:

There are three ethnic groups in the region: Chachis, Negros<sup>6</sup> and Colonos. Chachis, indigenous South Americans, and Negros, descendants of African slaves, have lived in the region for at least two centuries. Colonos are primarily mestizo immigrants who began arriving in large numbers approximately 30 years ago from other rural areas in Ecuador and from neighboring Colombia. (Sierra et al. 1998, 139-140).

A follow-up to the same research entitled *Traditional resource-use systems and tropical deforestation in a multiethnic region in North-west Ecuador* attempts to compare these three ethnic groups by reducing each to a variable in a mathematical equation “where  $P(c, h, n)$   $i$  is either Colono ( $c$ ), Chachi ( $h$ ) or Negro ( $n$ )” (Sierra 1999, 138), the groups apparently being defined by their different cultural traditions. However, the cultural basis for distinguishing these human groups at times slips into a racial concepts like “blood mixture”:

Colonos, on the other hand, are not an ethnic group proper but rather a heterogeneous ensemble of a *varied blood-mix* of Indian, European and often Black ancestors. (Sierra 1999, 139; emphasis added)

It seems nearly impossible to deploy the terms of ethnicity without, at some point, the biological understandings of race seeping back in.

I began this section by pointing out two reasons for focusing on race over ethnicity in this dissertation: first, because doing so corresponds with the most prevalent discourse that I heard and participated in during my research in Chachi communities, and second, because in the history of the social sciences, even when researchers have made an effort to exorcise racial terminology by deploying the terms of ethnicity, these terms often become simply a stand-in for race. I purposefully juxtaposed Yambu's reflections on the different social groups of northwestern Ecuador with excerpts from the social science literature on the region to bring these different discourses into dialogue. It is important for the approach taken here not to privilege academic discourse over local conversation or to dichotomize these kinds of discourse, but rather to consider them both as different aspects of larger circulations of meaning related to social categorization.

My short review of the literature on social groups of Northwestern Pacific South America demonstrates how different kinds of academic discourse deployed the terms of race and ethnicity in different ways, along different fault lines. One line splits ethnic and racial terms between indigenous and Afro-descendant peoples, within the social science literature. Another line splits ethnicity and race between the social sciences and the biological sciences, reflecting the history of U.S. anthropology in which countering scientific racism led to a near-total silence around issues of race. The result has been reluctance by the biological sciences to discuss cultural factors, a corresponding reluctance by the social sciences to approach human biology, and an unstable discursive terrain in which racial and ethnic terminologies stand in for each other at different moments with few explicit statements on what either set of terms means, how they related to each other, and what the precepts behind them are.

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<sup>6</sup> Later work would substitute the term "Negro" with "Afro-Ecuadorian" (Sierra and Tirado et al 2003).

In this dissertation I make an effort not to substitute the terms of ethnicity for what by most definitions has to do with race. In local discourse such as my conversation with Yambu I found explicitly racial terms circulating in Chachi communities and I can find no good reason to substitute them with ethnic terms in my analysis. A good example of the problematic nature of such substitution can be found in a recent ethnographic article on the Chachi that, in one passage, addresses traditional Chachi laws that prohibit intermarriage with other members of other social categories.

The Chachi have tried to protect their *ethnic identity* with strict rules against mixed marriages and a series of institutions aimed at preserving *ethnic endogamy*. (Rival 2004, 4, emphasis added)

I will address this strict preference for endogamy at length in Chapter 6, but to quickly summarize my findings, I will point out here that among the Chachi endogamy has strong and explicit racial components in terms of cultural understandings of descent and phenotype. For example, while I found that inter-marriage with members of other indigenous groups was discouraged in some cases, it was interracial marriage – understood as marriage with Afro-descendants and peoples of European descent (although only one such case is known) – that is the main focus of this prohibition. Many interviewees explicitly stated that other indigenous people were preferable marriage partners as compared to whites and black since they were at least “from the same race.” It is unclear how the ethnographer cited above decided to use ethnic terms – perhaps they were used by Spanish-speaking Chachis accustomed to creating recipient-designed terms for foreigners – but below I will make a convincing case that what the Chachi are worried about is, to a large extent, *racial endogamy* and preserving their *racial identity*. One of the key ingredients of racialization among the Chachis and elsewhere is the linkage between attitudes towards cultural transmission and group belonging and ideas of biological descent; only when culture and descent are coupled does *endogamy* become *racial endogamy*. One place where these social formations are mediated is in discourse of

descent, the body, and cultural difference like that seen in the examples included in this dissertation.

With respect to the division between studies concerning Afro-descendants and indigenous people in the Latin Americanist literature, my research framework recognizes that much of the general patterns of race around the Americas concern descent lines and body types in which three major continental groupings are significant: Americans, Africans and Europeans. The tendency to polarize either indigenous Americans or black Africans with respect to white Europeans has been an obstacle for discussing blackness, whiteness and indigeneity in a more unified framework. In a few places around Latin America Afro-descendants and indigenous people live as neighbors, but ethnographers have yet to really use them as a resource for unifying different fractured approaches.<sup>7</sup> It is my hope that Esmeraldas, Ecuador, will provide a fruitful ethnographic context for thinking about a specific local articulation of the historical trajectories of the three continental groups in the Americas. Specifically, once we break free of the black/white or indigenous/white binaries we can begin to ask complicated questions: If Afro-descendants and indigenous people have both been dominated by European colonial power and its modern inheritors through distinct kinds of racialization, what does that history imply for their current situations of contact and conflict? Social hierarchies that privilege people of European ancestry are relatively easy to explain vertically through the principles of white supremacy, but what do they mean for horizontal relationships among different people of color in the same social spaces?

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<sup>7</sup> Although some ethnography based in the Caribbean coast of Central America (Hale 1996, Gordon 1998, etc) and at least one ethnography addresses these issues for the Colombian Pacific (Losonczy 2006).

## 1.7 Linguistic analogies and linguistic analysis

Before going any further into the analysis of primary data it is necessary to further clarify my approach. The reader may have noticed that I have been rather sparing with my quotation marks, especially avoiding putting the word “race” in quotes, as has become common in much anthropological writing. This is due to my feeling that, despite long-standing calls for anthropologists to become more conscious of their ethnography as a written form (Clifford and Marcus 1986), we still do not seem to have developed much reflexive awareness about our habitual textual practices and their discursive forms, including the use of quotation marks. What exactly is the meaning we hope to convey by putting words in quotes in academic discourse? In the case of “race,” it seems that we are still preoccupied with sustaining the Boasian break with scientific racism, so if we are forced to use the term at all, we wish to signal to readers that we are well aware that race is a social construction, that we personally do not consider it to be biologically real. But if we are to put all social constructions in quotes, why stop with race? “Ethnicity” is no less a social construction, as are all of the other intersectional identity categories we apply (“gender,” “class,” etc.). “Society” and “culture” are social constructions, as are academic disciplines such as “anthropology.” The idea of a “social construction” is a social construction as well. The approach taken here considers that there is nothing in the social world that is not, at least in part, a social construction, so flagging some social descriptors with quotes and not others is conceptually inconsistent.

The use of quotation marks is a reported speech construction in written form, and as such is a kind of **evidential** marker that a writer (or speaker, with the common two-fingered gesture) can use to attribute information to another person, sometimes with the effect of mitigating responsibility (see Hill and Irvine 1993, Aikhenvald 2004, Michael 2008). Many indigenous languages of the Americas including Cha’palaa use reported speech constructions to mark information attributable to others’ discourse – in the data in this dissertation much of the oral history cited includes such marking (usually translated as “they say”). When we use “race” in quotation in anthropological writing we mitigate

our own responsibility for the term by signaling that we recognize that it has no biological basis. Yet biologically real or not, I found race to be as much a *social reality* as anything else in my research with Chachi people, and as such I see no reason to give it any exceptional textual treatment here. To avoid ambiguity, in most cases when I use quotation marks it is to mark something that was stated by a specific spoken or written source under discussion, not in a vague sense to mark a circulating discourse that I do not take responsibility for. This permits me to some degree to avoid dichotomizing the terms used by local people at my field site, like Yambu, and my own academic terminology by treating all of these terms, in the end, as social constructions.

So if my ethnographic and discursive encounter with indigenous and Afro-descendant people in northwest Ecuador has led me to confront the social reality of race in a specific way, what do I mean when I employ racial terms in this context? Rather than attempt a concise definition of race, I will describe it as a social process, embedded in a history where it has functioned as a principle of difference and inequality, and articulated in specific instances through social interaction. In this last part of my description I am affiliating with social constructivist approaches. However, as some anthropologists are beginning to point out, the consensus that race is a social construction has not been enough to have the kinds of broader conceptual impacts that many social scientists have hoped for (see Hartigan 2005). Here I want to suggest that part of the problem is that declarations of race as a social construction have been treated more like research results than research hypotheses. In the absence of a biological basis for the race concept, it must be a social construction. But this is not an answer, it is a research problem. What kind of social construction is race? How do social constructions work to shape the social order? What is the place of ethnography in understanding these processes? When we say race is a social construction, what does that imply about the power of race in social life to produce and maintain conditions of difference and inequality? How are the current dimensions of race related to their history of social construction? What can this approach teach us about the way race has been a mechanism of hierarchical and unequal social structures? And how can a social constructivist approach help to see race as an instrument

of power even in ambiguous ethnographic contexts like my field site where the major social actors are indigenous and Afro-descendant people from the bottom of the hierarchy? In short, what can we ask *after* we agree that race is a social construction?

In a general sense social constructivism is a kind of post-structuralism that comes into the social sciences from several different angles. Its basic insight is that in social terrain we cannot expect to find firm structures but rather, to the extent that such structures can be said to exist at some abstract level, they are the aggregate of unstable processes produced, reproduced and changed through social life. Language has played a special role in social constructivist interventions because, when we abandon any fixed idea of social or cultural life, we float off into a world where social meaning is made through dynamic processes, and language is the classic apparatus of meaning-making. The development has often been framed as **a linguistic turn** in the social sciences and philosophy. Oddly, however, for all the different linguistic analogies that have been circulated by social theorists, very few of them have paid any attention to the tools and techniques developed over many decades by the discipline of linguistics for approaching language. Anthropologists in particular have sometimes tried to insert simplistic versions of linguistics into their approach without considering the full complexity of language and communication (a point made in Briggs 2002). A good example is Geertz's (1973) analogy of culture as a "text" that can be interpreted by an ethnographer, an idea that draws from the theory of Paul Ricoeur (1981). In such interpretive approaches, any serious consideration of linguistic form has usually been either rejected as a return to structuralism or, more frequently, ignored altogether. The usefulness of linguistic analogies is unclear, however, when they do not draw meaningfully on traditions of the study of language. What I hope to do in this dissertation is approach the social world through linguistic analysis, not linguistic analogy.

A distinct problem arises out of a different line of social constructivism expressed in Garfinkel's ethnomethodology and related approaches – although both Ricoeur's textual hermeneutics and Garfinkel's ethnomethodology can be partially traced back to



the origins of phenomenology in the work of Husserl and others, the most important aspect of which for the present discussion is its suspicion of broad abstract concepts unless they are instantiated through here-and-now experiences like moments of social interaction. This line of philosophy, further developed by Shutz in a direction more suited to adaptation by social scientists, has been taken up in a number of social constructivist works,<sup>8</sup> but it was a dissident branch of sociology that took its cues from phenomenology that began to move in a direction of more interest for seriously considering the role of linguistic form and usage in social construction. Garfinkel (1967, 2002) developed his approach in reaction to traditional sociology that takes for granted the facticity of the social elements under study, calling it “ethnomethodology” because of its focus on actual social actors’ analyses of the interactions they take part in. Rather than sometimes-dubious abstractions regarding social order, ethnomethodology looks for the social order in specific instances. From this perspective, such instances are the cumulative building blocks of larger-scale social constructions, and as such become primary sites of interest for social analysis.

Ethnomethodology has influenced several different fields, but perhaps where its strongest influence can be seen is in the tradition of analysis of conversational data, beginning with work by Sacks and Schegloff (Sacks 1972; Sacks, Schegloff and Jefferson 1974, Sacks and Schegloff 1979). Work in conversation analysis has opened up a new field of study of great significance for social theory, but it is notable that as a field it has never had much interest in far-reaching social theories. Instead, conversation analysts often reject the imposition of broad social categories onto conversational data until there is some empirical justification for such categories at an interactional level (Schegloff 1987, 2007). This has led to disputes between conversation analysts and practitioners of other kinds of discourse analysis (Mey 2001). It seems fair to be skeptical about our received social categories, and many of them have certainly been applied in brute and uncritical ways, but there are different ways to confront this extreme

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<sup>8</sup> Such as *The Social Construction of Reality* (Berger and Luckmann 1966) and *The Construction of Social Reality* (Searle 1997).

constructivist way of thinking. Particularly for the practice of ethnography, basic questions arise about how ethnographic knowledge is generated. Levinson points out that the provocative ideas coming from Schegloff (1987) and other conversation analysts can have strong and weak interpretations from “interactional reductionism” to “interactional constructivism” (2005, 451). A looser perspective of interactional constructivism can help to avoid a strong interactional reductionism that rejects ethnographic data when it addresses levels of social life more abstract than instances of conversation, an approach that would place extreme limits on the scope of social analysis. Ethnography, at its heart, largely deals with conversational data as well, as it is based on many different kinds of social interaction that the ethnographer participates in, records and synthesizes in a written account. The interactive dimension of ethnographic research has not been often considered, but ethnographic data is generated by long-term experience of a researcher participating in the daily life of a speech community, an information-rich interactive setting. Ethnography is a different analytical filter for what is basically the same kind of primary data examined in interaction studies, providing a complementary perspective to conversation analysis rather than an antithesis. To follow through on the theoretical implications of interactional constructivism means considering how the findings of close-level analysis are also reflected in information generated from less constrained spaces and from different scales of social analysis.

My methodology in this dissertation connects the close analysis of discourse with the ethnographic methods of cultural anthropology, based on the ethnography of communication approach (Hymes 1962 and 1964, Bauman and Sherzer 1975). Sherzer (1987) and Urban (1991) built on this tradition to formulate a “discourse centered” approach that went a step further by suggesting that a key location of the social is at the interface of language and culture, another kind of social constructivist position that combines analysis of instances of language use with long-term ethnographic research. The specific approach to culture in in this methodology draws of classic questions of the relationship of language to culture from the Boas-Sapir-Whorf perspective, which has been much debated from many different points of view (Hoiyer 1954, Hill and Manheim

1992, Gumperz and Levinson 1996, Lucy 1997). My methodology draws on this approach specifically in that it considers language and culture to be convenient analytical divisions for the study of social activity and conditions, but acknowledges they are basically different angles of viewing the same object, and when they are not analytically separated they are coterminous, integrated, and mutually-constituting. Whorf's original formulation never simply concerned static grammatical features but rather concerned the dynamic interaction of different grammatical features as used in social interaction in a "certain frame of consistency."<sup>9</sup> In my research I sought to identify frames of consistency that fomed in recurring patterns of discourse structure and to find resonances between the relative perspectives offered by ethnographic and linguistic analyses. Tracking such resonances is a way of synthesis between those perspectives, putting language back together after analytically separating them.

### **1.8 Points of articulation**

Keeping in mind the social constructivist approach outlined above and the special place of discourse within it, I want to return to the question of the status of social categories like race within such a perspective. Following a different trajectory from the ethnography of communication, developments within the Birmingham circle of cultural studies in the 1970s took their own linguistic turn in the search for more dynamic and less deterministic theories of historical materialism. These developments were influenced by the cultural approach of Antonio Gramsci that many members of the Birmingham circle draw on, and especially his intrervention of earlier incarnations of Marxism with his use

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<sup>9</sup>Full quote: Concepts of "time" and "matter" are not given in substantially the same form by experience to all men but depend upon the nature of the language or languages through the use of which they have been developed. They do not depend so much on ANY ONE SYSTEM (e.g., tense, or nouns) within the grammar as upon the ways of analyzing and reporting experience which have become fixed in the language and integrated as "fashions of speaking" and which cut across the typical grammatical classifications, so that such a "fashion" may include lexical, morphological, syntactic, and otherwise systematically diverse means coordinated in a certain frame of consistency. (Whorf 1941: 92)

of the concept of hegemony, which frames social structure as never fully unified or finished, bringing Marxist theory closer to other post-structuralist approaches that focus explicitly on language (1972). Ives (2004) argues that Gramsci's hegemony concept itself is modeled on how linguistic systems are constituted, reproduced and changed. This aspect of Gramsci's approach leads Birmingham circle theorist Stuart Hall to pose the question of race as specifically as a discourse-centered question:

It's only when these differences have been organized within language, within discourse, within systems of meaning, that the differences can be said to acquire meaning and become a factor in human culture and regulate conduct, that is the nature of what I'm calling the discursive concept of race. Not that nothing exists of differences, but that what matters are the systems we use to make sense, to make human societies intelligible. The system we bring to those differences, how we organize those differences into systems of meaning, with which, as it were, we could find the world intelligible. (Hall 1996 p10)

In the context of a materialist approach, Hall's assertions might seem too strong: certainly real material conditions are an important factor for Hall, but the relationship of humans to them is mediated by culture, circulating in discourse. If Hall's point seems suspicious for some interested in critical race analysis, then it is only because it has been mistakenly taken for an ahistorical perspective. Much to the contrary, historical factors are central to any Gramscian approach, since culture is never stable over history, meaning that any hegemony must be constantly reproduced in order to survive. All such production of meaning, however, is also constrained by regional and global histories, especially the social meaning of race at this post-colonial moment.

What Omi and Winant call "racial formation" (Omi and Winant 1994, Winant 2000) is a way of thinking about how race as a system of social difference and hierarchy is formed through local socio-cultural activities that operate with a certain kind of consistency among them that constitutes larger-scale systematicities across disparate

times and places. This approach helps to reduce some of the problems of top-down analysis by considering how “the racial order is organized and enforced by the continuity and reciprocity between micro-level and macro-level of social relations” (Omi and Winant 1986, 67). The implications of this approach for both ethnography and analysis of linguistic interaction is that somehow we should be able to *see* pieces of the structure of social inequality in empirically-observable moments and to link these moments back to the more abstract social configurations that they cumulatively produce. Those moments will show evidence of being structured by racial formation, defined as “the process by which social, economic and political forces determine the content and importance of racial categories, and by which they are in turn shaped by racial meanings” (Ibid. 61). In the current moment of racial formation that grew out of global historical processes of colonialism and European expansion, “racial meaning” orients around the unifying concept of white supremacy, so from this perspective ethnographers should be able to find manifestations of white supremacy whether in the context of context of the US civil rights movement, South African apartheid, state violence against indigenous people in Guatemala, or even in post-colonial states without a major Euro-descendant population, where the history persists in the form of what Williams (1991) refers to as the “ghost of hegemonic dominance” in her ethnography of racial and cultural politics in post-colonial Guyana, a concept that I will take up again in Chapter 7 of this dissertation. Taking a racial formation approach to ethnography means finding a balance between respecting local specificities and being able to see commonalities that resonate globally as a result of interlocking historical trajectories.

Historical events generate present conditions, which is why Hall’s concept of discursive systems of racial meaning are not unconstrained – their limits are prefigured by their history<sup>10</sup>. The analytical status of social history can sometimes be unclear from a phenomenological standpoint that seeks empirical manifestations of the social order.

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<sup>10</sup> Adapting a classic Marxist perspective to the study of meaning and discourse: “Men make their own history, but they do not make it as they please; they do not make it under self-selected circumstances, but under circumstances existing already, given and transmitted from the past.” Marx 1852; Open access publicaiton: <http://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1852/18th-brumaire/ch01.htm>

Several readers of Fanon have considered part of his *Black Skins, White Masks* to be a historicizing intervention of phenomenology, and particularly to be in dialogue with Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology of the body (Weate 2000, Salamon 2006). In his chapter, "The Lived Experience of the Black Man" Fanon describes the role of the "historico-racial schema" in socially mediating our experience of bodies ([1952] 2008, 111). When Hall frames racial categorization as something that "writes itself indelibly on the script of the body" (1996, 14), the "script" must be seen as developing through and reflecting social history, which, as Fanon points out, shapes our perception of the body and how we read it. In this way Fanon provides tools for the difficult task of locating race and race-based inequality in specific moments of interaction. But are those racial histories that we read on the body primarily rooted in local experience or in broader racial formations?

A particular problem that arises is how to reconcile broad historical developments with the high degree of specificity of ethnographic studies of discourse at particular sites. This problem has manifested itself in disputes around locally specific understandings of race versus more global scales of racial formation; for example, Bourdieu and Wacquant (1999) charge Hanchard (1998) with "imperialist reason" for drawing parallels between African-American and Afro-Brazilian political culture. While respect for local specificities is laudable, such protests seem to fall flat since there is clearly good reason for some level of comparison across cases throughout the Western hemisphere and beyond, and clear linkages to be made in the history of Afro-descendants as well as indigenous peoples in the United States, Brazil and the Andean countries. Such comparison does not necessarily constitute an imperialist imposition of outside perspectives on a particular ethnographic context, but rather can demonstrate an eye for social patterns at a very broad scale. Some approaches to race in Brazil have assumed that because a great many racial terms beyond "Black" and "White" circulate in discourse that a black/white distinction is inappropriate in Brazil, but this is a simplistic view of discourse as a transparent reflection of the social world rather than a site of negotiation that can hide or negate social conditions as a complex way of constituting them. A history

of the colonial encounter between Europe, Africa and the Americas has shaped the development of the historico-racial schema that permeates postcoloniality with similar kinds of racial logic everywhere. Ethnographers should be able to keep track of this history even when its local articulations are diverse and contradictory.

It is with these considerations that I approach the specific ethnographic space of my research among indigenous and Afro-descendant people living as neighbors in a remote corner of Ecuador, lawless and forgotten by governments, troubled by proximity to the unstable Colombian border. In order to situate this specific location within a broader racial formation without erasing its specificity, I will borrow another idea from Hall: the concept of **articulation**, as adapted from Althusser (Hall 1985). From a Gramscian perspective, social conditions are continuously being reproduced, maintained, and modified through specific instances of cultural activity, and these instances can be considered articulations of larger, more abstract patterns. In linguistics articulation is usually thought of as the specific phonetic realization of a sound that corresponds to a more abstract phonological system or as a specific token of a construction type. The double meaning of the term as I use it here is on purpose: it is as true for linguistics as for cultural anthropology that to be able to make any generalizations regarding social groups, it is through seeing patterns among different articulations reflecting their general conditions. To describe the way that specific articulations pattern together across moments of social interaction, I will borrow a word that has been used in several related senses, here using a sense from the discourse-centered approach to language and culture, described above. Urban (1996) uses the concept of **circulation** to address the sociality of discourse, and this concept can help to make linkages between specific moments of articulation. The concepts of articulation and circulation are the key ideas that I will use in this dissertation to connect the specific discursive instances and broader social and historical contexts of racial formation.

To take seriously a constructivist proposition for social categories in general and for race in particular requires coming to terms with specific discursive articulations and

the way that they configure meaning. To simply use linguistic analogies for describing social life is too limited an approach. Following Riceour and Geertz, Hall also uses the analogy of a “text”: “The body is a text. And we are all readers of it” (Hall 1996, 15). This analogy is meant to describe the cohesion of form and meaning found in circulating discourses, but it stops short of taking a linguistically-informed look at discourse in the investigation of social issues. A real linguistic turn in the social sciences could take advantage of the existing tools for analyzing language and discourse, including descriptive linguistics, conversational analysis, and poetics. This dissertation starts with Hall’s concept of race as a discursive construct and considers this question for the analysis of specific examples of discourse relating to racial categories in Cha’palaa and Afro-Ecuadorian Spanish. Examples will be considered in terms of grammatical dimensions, discourse pragmatics, and their links to ethnographic data. From the perspective of linguistic anthropology’s joint analysis of language and culture, it is the interface of linguistic and ethnographic data in instances of discursive usage that is the key site of analysis. Discourse is complex, and no simplistic linguistic determinisms will provide good analysis. Discourse is designed for multi-level social interaction, and often the relationship between discourse and social conditions is not transparent; for example Vargas (2004) points out how overt negation of the significance of race is a key ingredient of race relations in Brazil. So while social actors may argue that racism and even race do not exist, their vehement denial itself is a manifestation of race, a situation that calls for caution when considering correspondences between discourse and other social dimensions. In my research site, by comparison, people were remarkably candid, but the mutually-constituting relationship between discourse and social organization is never entirely straightforward, and it is best approached ethnographically rather than with precise correspondences in mind. So while it is true that I focus on the most salient and explicit instances of racial discourse here to the neglect of other less obvious sites of racial formation, it seems fair to say that in this context the disjunct between the structures of social behavior and of discourse is not particularly sharp. Especially when working with a undescribed indigenous language simply approaching the basic terms of social categorizing discourse is a challenging enough of a task, and offers an entry-point



into ways for thinking of the relationship of racial discourse to other kinds of manifestations of race.

The shifting terminology of race and ethnicity in social science literature that I discussed above is meant to be considered as another area of social discourse data, similar in many ways to the account of Yambu, cited before it. A social constructivist approach looks for how both academic discourses in English and Spanish and locally circulating discourses in Cha'palaa can equally be articulations of related patterns of racial formation. Considering both kinds of discourse together shows how both derive from the same general social history, but one is part of widely-circulating elite written discourse that little by little bleached racial language into more neutral-sounding codes while the other is a popular oral discourse that circulates much more locally. So while these different discourses reflect the same conditions of racial formation, they represent two distinct positions within the same structures of inequality. Both discourses together take complementary places in the spectrum of local manifestations of social conditions. The mechanisms by which elite discourse in European languages works to reproduce inequality are a fruitful topic for study, but popular discourse in Cha'palaa poses an even greater analytical challenge; the language is just beginning to be seriously studied, and it is in some ways sharply different from the profile of most well-known European languages. The major task of this dissertation is to get deeply into the expressive resources of the Cha'palaa language and to ask, given Chachi peoples' historical position within racial formation in the Americas, how is it that Chachi people reflect on and produce these social conditions in their own grammatical and discursive forms?

## **Presentation**

This dissertation offers an ethnographic and discourse-centered account of social categorization and race in the indigenous Chachi society, particularly focusing on the relationship of the Chachi and their Afro-descendant neighbors. It does so under the

social constructivist perspective outlined above, which approaches social life as continually reproduced and changed through social interaction, and sees ethnography as a way of keeping track of the **social circulation** of culture. Such circulation as a process is necessarily made up of different instances of interaction that I consider **articulations** of broader patterns, and as such link specific moments to the history of social conditions more broadly, and specifically to the conditions of racial formation in Latin America that are a result of a history of centuries of racial inequality. The dissertation makes several different contributions to linguistics and anthropology: It is one of the few ethnographic studies on Latin America that has looked in detail at the relationship between indigenous and Afro-descendant peoples. It takes a novel approach by combining historical and critical race theory approaches with those of descriptive linguistics and approaches to the relationship of language to culture. And in addition it provides ethnographic information about the Chachi people and their Afro-descendant neighbors, and gives detailed linguistic description of some of the features of Cha'palaa, a language that is largely undescribed in published literature.

Social interaction can take place by way of many different media, but spoken language holds a privileged place as the place of social interaction where meaning becomes explicit in its most codified form, and so the primary supporting data for my account of race in Ecuador consist of selections of transcribed discourse from different kinds of interactions. The data was collected during over a year of fieldwork in 2008 and 2009, and is supplemented by further data from pilot research in 2005, 2006 and 2007; it was recorded with a digital video camera and linked to various texts and notes compiled while living in Chachi communities and working with a Chachi linguistic consultant in Quito. To approach this data the text of the dissertation alternates between an ethnographic register and a register of descriptive linguistics, both of which provide formats for making particular kinds of generalizations across instances of articulation to provide a picture of the social circulation of racial categorization among Cha'palaa speakers. When I use the register of descriptive linguistics I will refer to Cha'palaa grammar as a coherent system in which some constructions are grammatical, others are

not, and speakers have relatively uniform shared conceptions of these parameters. This abstraction is a convention of descriptive linguistics and is useful for taking stock of grammatical patterns, but it glosses over some of the social aspects of language. I hope that switching periodically into a more ethnographic register will function as a counterbalance by putting the sociality of language into the foreground. This strategy is meant as a way to follow through on the linguistic analogies sometimes proposed in social theory with a real ingredient of detailed linguistic analysis. I will approach the linguistic forms and cultural knowledge reflected in Cha'palaa discourse according to how they constitute a specific set of resources for sharing in and articulating larger circulating social processes.

Although this dissertation juxtaposes linguistics and ethnography throughout all its chapters, it will take a general path from describing linguistic features that are resources for social categorization to looking at those forms as they are deployed in discourse and social interaction. I connect those different domains within a single narrative by following increasing levels of analytical scale: at the most fine-grained level the most relevant details concern features of linguistic form, at a higher level those linguistic forms combine in discourse, and at a still higher level those discourses circulate in the social world. Taken as a whole narrative, including these different levels of scale together provides ways for reflecting on their interplay. Following this introduction, Chapter Two will describe collective marking in Cha'palaa, which is a common grammatical resource that Cha'palaa speakers use for referring to human groups constituted by social ties. Chapter Three will consider the properties of Cha'palaa ethnonyms, which are especially dedicated to reference of social categories, and which are often used in combination with collective marking. Chapter Four will describe the Cha'palaa pronoun system, which allows speakers to anchor social categories to participants in speech events. Chapter Five will then take a broader view of discourse to show how multimodal resources are used together with linguistic resources for social categorization. Chapter Six will go into a more ethnographic register and will consider Chachi and Afro-Ecuadorian perspectives on each other through interview data from both

groups. Finally, Chapter Seven will analyze examples of natural speech to show some of the manifestations of social categorization in everyday conversation and discourse. The same linguistic forms and discourse structures described in the earlier chapters will be shown in usage in examples of social interaction in later chapters, allowing the linguistic data to speak to the ethnographic account and vice versa.

## Chapter 2: Grammatical and social collectivity

### 2.1 Social relations into the afterlife

What kind of a category is race for Chachi people? On the one hand, Chachi discourse frequently reflects broad patterns of racial formation in the Americas; it is largely oriented around classic racial ideas of descent, the body, and a three-part division of continental origin: Black, White and indigenous. But even though it participates in these larger trends, Chachi social categorization is strongly informed by complex conceptions of the nature of the human spirit and the afterlife. According to some Chachi discourses, the soul of a Chachi person is of a different quality than that of a Black or a White person. For this reason, only Chachi spirits can go on to heaven in the afterlife. For Black and White spirits, a different fate awaits. In one conversation Wilfrido and Guillermo explained:

W: Tsaa juee titaa kuinda kemudee rukula  
This is what the old men tell about,

chachillaren junga kai'sha lu' chu'  
that only Chachis go up to heaven

tsenmala peechullala peyadeishu juntsalaya niwijcha ne tiyaimudeeti  
and when Black people die those ones go as clouds, they say.

Niwijcha  
Cloud.

G: Paba niwijcha.  
Black cloud.

W: Jee paba niwijcha,  
Yes, black cloud.

Tsenmala fibala uyalala peyadeishu juntsaa  
And then the Whites, the gringos when they die

fiba niwijcha fibaba'mitya.  
they are White clouds, because they are white.

Sometimes Chachi people will unexpectedly lose consciousness for hours at a time; I am not aware of any physiological explanations for this, but I heard about such cases many times and observed several. Family members accompany the unconscious person until they return to consciousness, when they often tell about how they saw visions of heaven and the afterlife. In heaven they encounter the spirits of the dead and they sometimes come back with messages from long-deceased family members. Crucially, heaven is populated only by the spirits of Chachi people. The spirits of whites and blacks do not go on to heaven after death, but rather become clouds (*niwijcha*). The darker or lighter shade of the cloud corresponds to the race and skin color of the dead person. Wilfrido uses the standard color terms “black” (*paba*) and “white” (*fiba*) similarly to the way they are used as nominal referents for racial groups in English or Spanish as well as in their capacity as descriptive modifiers: *paba niwijcha* “black cloud” and *fiba niwijcha* “white cloud.” Through these different shades of clouds, the physical differences of human bodies continue after the spirit has left the body.

The Chachi conception of race as I encountered it in interviews, conversation and sharing in daily life is a conception of social difference at a spiritual level. Wilfrido went

on to describe some of the physical consequences of the different qualities of the spirits of Chachis and Afro-descendants:

W: Juntsaayaa timudee tiña

That is what they say (the old men about the blacks),

tsenmi naa espiritubain tiba katawatyumeetenshee

and I don't think that their spirits are even encountered,

chachillachee espiritu kataamuee, kume katawa'kerake,

like Chachi spirits are encountered; seeing encounters with bad spirits,

kume ika'kerake tibain tinaaju.

seeing encounters with bad spirits, and anything can happen.

Kusasbain detse'tudaikemu lalaa,

All kinds of (bad) things can happen with us,

lala chachilla depeshujuntsaa kume kakaamin ee.

we Chachis can die when we catch a bad spirit.

Aniimaanubain maty jui eekaanujtuutyuka, animaabain bullakemu,

And we have to protect against creatures, creatures that bother us,

espiritu pure' puu lala' kueepunu

the spirit in our bodies is a very large amount,

mainjuuwe tennan pureña.

even just being one (person), it's a lot.

The great quantity of spirit held by “even just one” Chachi as compared to other races makes Chachis more vulnerable to afflictions of the spirit and more attractive to dangerous classes of beings that live in the forest surrounding their communities.

This excerpt is a good example of one of the most commonly-repeating discourse structures found over and over again in Chachi racializing discourses, the referential alignment of collective ethnonyms and personal pronouns (“we” = “collective:Chachi” in the first person, above; mirrored by “they” = “collective:Afro-descendants” in the third person, below). In this sense, cultural resources for making sense of social groups like the Chachis’ metaphysical perspectives on the human spirit are difficult to separate from linguistic resources like **ethnonyms**, **collective morphology** and the **pronominal system**. Individual cases of alignment of these cultural and linguistic resources in discourse can be considered moments of articulation of race as a social phenomenon, both in terms of the cultural perspectives and the linguistic systems they relate to. The extent to which similar patterns are reproduced and distributed socially constitutes the circulation of discourse forms beyond specific instances of articulation.

## 2.2 Collectivity and the animacy hierarchy

In order to put these pieces together, however, I will first need to address the different linguistic resources at play by separating them out as topics for description. In this chapter I will give a descriptive account of how Cha’palaa deals with references to social groups as collectives through morphological collective marking of nouns. The following excerpt, continuing Wilfrido’s comments on spirits and the afterlife, illustrates this morphological combination:

W:     Tsa'mitya wee wee dejeshee  
       That is why there are differences



tsaaren **peechullalachee**, yaichee peshujuntsaa juntsaren juu ne,  
for the Blacks, they die just like that,

kume ityu deju yalaa, dilutyu deju  
they don't get bad spirits, they don't get sick.

**Chachillaa** kumechi i' kerake bu'chullachi i' kerake, ne...  
Chachis get bad spirits and see other mountain animals,

ne tsaikemutuutyuka **chachillaa**,  
that's how Chachis are,

tsaaren **peechullalaa** juntsaachi dilutyudee  
but the Blacks do not get sick

yalaa, matyu, peshujuntsa niwijcha ne tiyadei'mitya.  
them, when they die they become clouds.

In the lines above, the collective suffix *-la*, with alternate form *-lla*, occurs with the ethnonyms *chachi* and *peechulla*. What I am calling grammatical “**collectivity**” in Cha’plaa is slightly but systematically different from **plurality** (in English I translate Chachi collectives using plural forms). The term “collective” has been used inconsistently in the literature on grammatical number (see Corbett 2000, p171), so my application of it here is partly adapted to Cha’palaa grammar for descriptive purposes, and should be considered largely a Cha’palaa-specific category. In general, however, the semantic aspects of collectivity have to do with (1) forming single units consisting of multiple individual members in the noun phrase and then (2) implying collective (“one for all”) action versus distributive (“each one for itself”) action in the verb phrase (Landman 1995, McKay 2006).

In Cha'palaa, collectivity has its own specific dimensions, in that its usage is governed by an **animacy hierarchy** (see Silverstein 1976), meaning a grammatical pattern that distinguishes inanimate objects from animate, living beings. Morphological collective marking in Cha'palaa is restricted to animate nominal referents, largely to human beings and other sentient beings such as spirits or demons. Animals can only be marked collectively in restricted circumstances, and inanimate referents cannot usually take the collective suffix at all.

Inanimates < Animals < Humans/Spirits

When referring to inanimates there are several strategies for indicating that the referent is more than one entity without marking for collectivity. For example, it is possible to use a quantifier like “many” or a numeral:

(2.1a) Jele-sha     chi=bain **pure'** de-chu-min.  
 Forest-LOC1 tree=also **many** PL-be/sit-HAB  
 In the forest there are also usually **many trees**.

(2.1b) Jele-sha     **pem** chi=bain de-chu-min.  
 forest-LOC1 **three** tree=also PL-be/sit-HAB  
 In the forest there are also usually **three trees**.

Inanimates, however, cannot generally be marked for collectivity:

(2.1c) \*Jele-sha   chi-**la**=bain de-chu-min.  
 forest-LOC1 tree-COL=also PL-be/sit-HAB  
 \*In the forest there are usually trees.

Animal referents are usually not marked for collectivity, and generally would use one of the quantifier strategies shown above instead, but speakers may opt for collective marking when emphasizing referents' status as collective groups.

- (2.2a) Jele-sha nuka-a jele-ñu=bain, **animaa-la=bain de-pu-min,**  
 forest-LOC where-FOC forest-EV.INF=also **SP:animal-COL=also PL-be.in/on-HAB**  
 In the forest, wherever it seems to be forest, there **are** usually also **animals**.

Above, the nominal subject *animaa* (“animal,” from the Spanish) is marked for collectivity and, in addition, the verb *pu* (“to be in/on”) is marked with the plural prefix *de-*. As will be further explained below, this is not simple number agreement; collectivity in Cha’palaa is an independent value with respect to plurality. In addition, both values are optional for indicating quantities of more than one, which are often not marked at all but are rather inferred from discourse context. Generally animals take no collective marking at all, as in the first line of the example below.

- (2.2b) Kaa=**animaa**-bain ke-nu ju-ba,  
 DIM=animal-also do-INF be-COND  
 (Someone) must also make [draw] small animal(s);

**chaandutu, neetyushu** ju-u-de-e-shu=juntsa-bain ke-nu ju-ba  
**toucan small.boar** be-CL:be-PL-be-IRR=DM.DST-also do-INF be-COND  
**toucan(s) (and) small boar(s)** that’d be around, those must be made [drawn].

As can be seen in the dependent clause in the second line of the above example, groups of more than one animal can occur as the subject of a verb phrase with overt plural marking on the predicate,<sup>11</sup> and no collective marking appears in the noun phrase *chaandutu, neetyushu* (toucan(s) boar(s)). While both verbal plurality and nominal

collectivity imply a group of more than one entity, the fluid, non-obligatory and not rigidly-agreeing patterns seen in Cha'palaa reveal an array of subtly distinct expressive possibilities.

(2.3a) No COL or PL:

Jele-sha animaa=bain pu-we  
forest-LOC1 animal=also be.in/on-DSJ

In the forest there is an animal. *or* In the forest there are animals.

(2.3b) COL on noun phrase:

Jele-sha animaa-la=bain pu-we  
forest-LOC1 animal-COL=also be.in/on-DSJ

In the forest there is an associated group of animals.

(2.3c) PL on the verb phrase:

Jele-sha animaa=bain de-pu-we  
forest-LOC1 animal=also PL-be.in/on-DSJ

In the forest there are animals individually distributed.

(2.3d) COL on the noun phrase and PL on the verb phrase:

Jele-sha animaa-la=bain de-pu-we  
forest-LOC1 animal-COL=also PL-be.in/on-DSJ

In the forest an associated group of animals are individually distributed.

In Cha'palaa, plurality and collectivity are two independent semantic values whose morphological marking is not obligatory, but which depends on subtle differences of emphasis when characterizing referents and actions. Put simply, **verbal plurality** conceives of groups as members that each individually partake of an action or state, while

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<sup>11</sup> The predicate casts the subjects as iteratively distributed as well, through reduplication of the secondary verb of the complex predicate, which is a productive process in Cha'palaa. The details of complex

**nominal collectivity** conceives of groups as having a measure of shared volition and accountability, so that one member might act on behalf of the collectivity. Plurality is **distributional** in space and time and is based on coincidence and likeness of group members, while collectivity is based on **association** of group members. This last point suggests that examining the usage of collective marking in discourse should be a revealing way to look at Cha'palaa conceptions of social relations. In fact, the associational requirement of collectivity in Cha'palaa is quite plausibly analyzed as the primary principal behind the animacy hierarchy in that generally only animate beings are capable of sharing volition and social ties.

Collective marking becomes more frequent with referents ranking above animals on the animacy hierarchy. The most common of such referents are human beings, which can be referred to as collective groups by a number of strategies. For example, a frequent way of collectivizing humans is in terms of gender, combining words like *ruku* (man) and *shimbu* (woman) with the collective suffix to refer to social groups constituted by only men or only women:

(2.4a) Matyu yuma-a **ruku-la-**'        historia Ibara-na-a ura    chu-mu-de-e    de-ti-ña  
 so now-FOC    **man-COL-POSS** history    Ibarra-LOC-FOC live-AG.NMLZ PL-say-DR  
 So now **the men**'s story is that they lived in Ibarra, they say.

(2.4b) **Shimbu-la** llaki ke-tu naa dius-kama-ba    de-pensa-ke-ke-mu.  
**woman-COL** sad do-SR how god-until-COM COMPL-worry-do-do-AG.NMLZ  
**The women** were being sad, as they even thought of god (in their sadness).

The collectivized terms above do not just refer to groups constituted by maleness and femaleness – there are separate terms *llupu* and *supu* for that contrast. Rather, they refer to groups constituted by social characteristics, in this case referring to people considered to be fully adult Chachis, in contrast to the terms for adolescent males and

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predicate semantics are too complicated to address at any length here.

females *musu* and *panna*, respectively. The transition between adolescence and adulthood in Chachi society is marked by marriage, and graduating to a different referential form is part of the discursive constitution of these social categories.

Other terms for humans that receive collective morphology include kinship terms, such as *naatala* (sibling), seen in the example below. In addition, any term that can refer to humans or other animates anaphorically or through discourse structure may also receive collective morphology, such as the distal demonstrative *juntsa* (that), which is co-referential with the kinship term *naatala* in this example.

(2.5) **Juntsa-la-a**        ura ju-nu        chu-mu-de-e=shee,  
 DM.DST-COL-FOC good there-LOC2 live-AG.NMLZ-PL-become=AFF  
**Those ones** lived well for sure,

ya-’    ben-nan    tisee Primitivo milla-ba    ya-’    **naatala-la**    jun-ka.  
 3-POSS front-be.in.POS so Primitivo DEC.REF-COM 2-POSS **sibling-COL** DM.DST-LOC3  
 in front of him (his place), deceased Primitivo with his **siblings** there.

A close analysis of different collectivized terms can reveal complex combinations of collective values – for example, the word *naatalala* seen above can in fact be shown, at least from a historical perspective, to contain three separate instances of collective marking. The first collective suffix is no longer transparent because of Cha’palaa’s tendency for phonological reduction, but the nominal root of *naa-talala* can be analyzed as *na-la*, a collectivized form of *na* meaning “small” or “child”; the intervocalic consonant of *nala* is deleted, forming a single syllable with a long vowel *naa*. The second collective suffix is part of the clitic =*tala* used for marking reciprocity; while its historical development is unclear, it is very likely that the second syllable of the clitic comes from the collective suffix, due to the semantic connections between collectivity and reciprocity. The translation for the term *naatala* (sibling) would be something like “among collective small ones”. However, despite the inherent relationality in the term

*naatala* it does not have any inherent plurality and can occur with quantifiers as either a single or a multiple referent:

(2.6a) *ma naatala*  
one sibling

(2.6b) *taapai naatala*  
four sibling(s)

Because the predicate in the previous example above is marked for plurality with the prefix *de-* the actors partaking in the action would be considered plural without collective marking; collectivity, then, gives extra information about how the actors partook of the action, in this case “living” or “inhabiting”, which is thought of as a collective or associational act; this is the third collective suffix in the word:

(2.7) *naatalala*  
na-la=tala-la  
small-COL=RECIP(COL)-COL  
“siblings” or  
“a collective made up of those who were collectively small amongst each other”

In such cases, when collective marking occurs as part of a more highly conventionalized combination of form and meaning, a question arises regarding the productivity of the individual parts of a word like *naatala*. The conventionalized definition above is “siblings” but another definition could make each of the components explicit, as in the second definition above. I will suggest that the solution lies somewhere between these two definitional approaches. I will not spend more time on this topic here, but questions of the frequency of certain morphological combinations to refer to collective human groups will come up again in the discussion of collectivized ethnonyms in the following chapter.

As the terms for referring to men and women above demonstrate, terms for kinship relations are also saturated with social meaning – as seen in the analysis of the word *naatala* which does not just imply biological siblinghood but relates to the social process of growing up together. I will address in further detail below more kinds of social information that is encoded in different referential strategies applied to human groups. For the present discussion of collectivity, however, it should be kept in mind that because collectivity is largely limited to human referents by the animacy hierarchy, the words that form the morphological anchor for the collective suffix tend to be rich with such kinds of social meaning.

In addition to humans, the other highly animate beings commonly referred to in Cha'palaa discourse are different kinds of forest entities sometimes known as *ujmu* (“spirit”), *dyabulu* (“devil,” from the Spanish *diablo*), *bu'chulla* (“mountain dweller”), etc. Like humans, these beings are capable of some level of social relationship and cooperative activity, and can be referenced as collectives. For example, in the interview excerpt below, Yambu describes the Chachi practice of giving offerings to the spirits of the dead, marking these spirits with collective morphology. The Chachi were in sporadic contact with Spanish colonial society, in the time of their migration out of the highlands, and they have adapted their own versions of the major Christian holidays including Christmas, Holy Week and All Souls Day, during some of which offerings to the dead are mandated by traditional Chachi law. These celebrations take place at an area known as *pebulu* (from the Spanish for “town”), a ceremonial center where Chachis from the surrounding area congregate according to the ritual calendar (see DeBoer 1995). Before the grade schools were built and towns sprung up around them, the Chachis lived in isolated homesteads, and so congregation at the ceremonial center was a major space to facilitate greater cohesion among dispersed people. The centers include a large ceremonial house, a chapel, and the cemetery. Some events call for *fandangu*, a Spanish word of possible African origin adapted to refer to Chachi celebrations featuring marimba music – an instrument also probably of African origin.





Figure 1. Ceremonial house; a Chachi village is visible in the distance.

A key part of some of the different *fandangu* celebrations includes an offering of food to the dead, when the living leave plates of food and drink on the graves in the cemetery adjoining the ceremonial house. When Yambu described this practice he used the collective suffix in combination with the noun *ujmu*, or “spirit” and the nominalized verb *pemu*, “the dead”, showing how collectivity can be extended from living humans to spirits (the dative case marking that the offerings are “for the spirits”):

(2.8)

Y: Pe-ya-de-i-shu                   juntsa paate=bain, timbunu-ya **ujmu-la**-chi  
die-REFL-PL-become-IRR DM.DIST part=also time-FOC **spirit-COL-DAT**  
For the ones that are dead too, in the old times, for **the spirits**,

ufeeda ke-'=bain ba'ki-tyu-de-e-ña                   **ruku-la**,  
offering do-SR=also divide-NEG-PL-become-DR(?) **man-COL**  
making offerings also, very carefully (?) **the men**,

ufeeda ke-tu pure' ke-ke-la   **pe-mu-la**-chi.  
offering do-SR many do-do-COL **die-AG.NMLZ-COL-DAT**  
making offerings, they make many of them for **the dead**.

SF: Hmm, ujmu-la.  
hmm spirit-COL  
Hmm, the spirits.

Y: Jeen, **ujmu-la**-chi.  
yes **spirit-COL-DAT**  
Yes, for **the spirits**.

SF: Ujmu-la-chi.  
spirit-COL-DAT  
For the spirits.

Y: **Ujmu-la**-chi   jee **ujmu-la**-chi   ufenda ke-tu,  
**spirit-COL-DAT** yes **spirit-COL-DAT** offering do-SR  
For **the spirits**, yes, making offerings for **the spirits**,

juntsa-a      lala-'      ley juntsa-ya      lala-' ley  
 DM.DST-FOC 1COL-POSS law DM.DIST-FOC 1COL law  
 that is our law, that is our law.

In this same excerpt Yambu also applied the collective suffix to human beings (*ruku-la*, “men”), its most canonical usage. The collective suffix is also part of the first person collective pronoun *lala* seen in the last line above – pronouns will be addressed in depth in a later chapter. For now I will only point out how collectivity in this example is being applied to different groups and how these different collective groups having specific relationships between them: in the afterlife living Chachis like the collectivized “men” become collectivized “spirits” or “dead,” and the proper relationship between these two collectivities is governed by “our (collective) law,” the special properties of the pronoun linking these collectivities to Yambu himself as the speaker and then extending to all Chachis as a group (“our law” being “Chachi law”). As I will describe later, it is the pronominal alignment with the different collectivized animate nominal referents that ties the semantics of the linguistic forms used for social categorization to the social actors participating in specific speech events, for example, locating them as sharing in socio-cultural institutions like traditional Chachi law.

The semantic connection between collectivizing living humans and collectivizing their spirits after death is not difficult to see – when Chachis describe visions of the afterlife they describe the deceased as living in intact families and communities in similar kinds of collective configurations as seen among the living. But the Chachi universe is populated by a great many spirits and monsters, some quite inhuman. Cha’palaa grammar also treats such creatures as animate and collectivizable, as seen in the following example:

(2.9) Matyu ma      akawan-ki-tyu-n=mala      ya-la  
 so      again finish-do-NEG-NMLZ=when 3-COL  
 So then if they don’t finish they

mish daa-ka-na-a      tsa-n-ke-n-de-tsu-ba,      aa matyu **diabulu-la**.  
 Head cut-grab-INF-FOC SEM-NMLZ-do-PROG-COND ah so      **devil-COL**  
 will cut off (his) head, that is what they are doing, ah, **the devils**.

From the Spanish *diablo* (“devil”), the Cha’palaa term *dyabulu* refers to a class of forest demons that are dangerous to humans, although they share in many of the same social behaviors of humans such as speech and the capacity for intentional, collective action.

The application of the collective suffix can also be seen as a derivational process as well, as it often combines with other elements to form complex nouns out of multiple morphemes. The name of another kind of forest demon is derived in this way, creatures known as *pe’putyula* or “(ones) without asses.” Often the forest creatures Chachi people talk about feature altered physiology, like the brain-eating *fayu ujmu*, with a beak instead of a mouth, or the *chu’pa ujmu*, with an extremely large, single breast. These strange beings, the ones without asses, are also said to have existed in the early times of Tutsa’, the lost Chachi homeland mentioned by Yambu, above. A full analysis of their name can parse five separate morphemes:

(2.10)	pe	-	juru	-	pu	-tyu	-la
	excrement		hole		be.in/on	-NEG	-COL

Some of the properties of phonological reduction in Cha’palaa were touched on above. In this example another principle of reduction is at work. The word *pejuru* (ass) is a compound of “excrement” and “hole.” Words in Cha’palaa can sometimes drop one or more syllables starting at the right edge, but in some cases the deleted material leaves a glottal stop as a kind of phonological residue left by the reductive process. In this way, the compound *pejuru* reduces to *pe’*. This form is then further combined with a negated verb root, and the entire combination is derived as a collective nominal. A conventional

combination for referring to this particular kind of animate creature, it is again difficult to negotiate conventionality and productivity here. This example from an account of the times the Chachi lived in Tutsa' shows some instances of reference to *pe'putyula* in discourse:

(2.11)

S: Uma-a **pe-juu-pu-tyu-la-**'<sup>12</sup> ju-n-ka ji-maas (?)  
now-FOC **excrement-hole-be.in/on-NEG-COL** DM.DST-NMLZ-LOC3 go-PFTV(?)  
Now (they) went to the place of **the (ones) without asses**.

SA: Yaa.  
Okay.

S: **Pe'-pu-tyu-la-**' ju-n-ka.  
**ass-be.in/on-NEG-COL-POSS** DM.DST-NMLZ-LOC3  
The place of **the (ones) without asses**.

SA: Mm, yaa.  
Mm, okay.

S: **Pe'-pu-tyu-la-**' ju-n-ka ji-la-a.  
**ass-be.in/on-NEG-COL-POSS** DM.DST-NMLZ-LOC3 go-COL-FOC  
They went to the place of **the (ones) without asses**.

---

<sup>12</sup> This example shows different degrees of phonological reduction in different tokens from the same speaker. The first mention has undergone consonant deletion (*juru* > *juu*) but subsequent mentions show greater reduction, as *juru* is totally replaced by a glottal stop. The use of a more transparent term in the first mention has to do with information structure and a kind of long-range anaphora among discourse referents, allowing later mentions to be more opaque once common knowledge has been established.

**Pe'-pu-tyu-la-'**                      ju-n-ka              ji-mi      menen ju-n-bi=bain  
**ass-be.in/on-NEG-COL-POSS DM.DST-LOC3** go-PFTV again DM.DST-LOC4=also  
 To the place of **the (ones) without asses** they had gone, to there also again.

In addition to forming part of the derived nominals in this example, the collective suffix *-la* is also used for collectivizing a verb: *ji-la* (go-COL). The collective marker is able to act as finite verb morphology, coding collectivity on the verb – a collective action – versus on the noun – a collective actor. Verbal collectivity is the topic of the following section, but before moving on I want to describe one final property of collective marking in Cha'palaa that adds another dimension the properties of collectivity in the language.

In some languages there is a property that has been called the “associative plural,” meaning that the pluralized referent cannot be applied to all members of a group but rather the group is defined by some kind of association with the nominal referent (see Corbett 2000, Moravcsik 2003). For example, a group might be referred to with a proper name (like “John”) in combination with plural morphology (“Johns”) not to refer to multiple clones of that person, but rather referring to a group that is associated with the person. In Cha'palaa this property is best referred to as the “associative collective” as it uses collective marking, not plural marking. In this discussion I have been showing ways in which collectivity in Cha'palaa is based on associativity, so it makes sense that collective marking rather than plural marking would be used for this particular kind of associativity in the language. In addition, plurality is only marked with verbal morphology, while collectivity can be marked on nouns as well as verbs (the next section will further expand on this distinction). In the examples below, the proper noun *Umberto* occurs with a collective suffix to refer to a man named Umberto and his companions:

(2.12a) Kuwan=mitya              ma-ja-n              i-n-de-tsu                      **Unbertu-la.**  
 down.river=towards again-come-NMLZ become-NMLZ-PL-PROG **Umberto-COL**  
 They are coming downriver, **Umberto and company.**

(2.12b) Ai mi'ki-mu-la ma-ja-n i-n-de-tsu  
 fish seek-AG.NMLZ-COL again-come-NMLZ become-NMLZ-PL-PROG  
 The ones that have gone fishing are coming back,

**Unbertu-la** tyunchilaa-chi.

**Umberto-COL** pole-with

**Umberto and company** with poles.

The associative principal can be applied to other forms of reference beyond proper names, as in the following example where the group being referenced is the family of a man referred to by a complex construction involving a diminutive, a nickname (“dog leg”) and a deceased referent marker that is obligatorily applied to any referent who is no longer living. When this construction is collectivized in the second line, below, it refers to “deceased little Dog Leg and company”.

(2.13) Bueno, juntsa familia-ya entsa nejtun,  
 Well MD.DST SP:family-LOC DM.PRX well  
 Well, that family, here, well,

**kaa=kucha enbu=milla-la-a,** juntsa ura,  
**DIM=dog leg=DEC.REF-COL-FOC DM.DST** good  
**deceased little “Dog Leg” and company,** that, well,

tisee, Perdumitu' ya' kaa=apa=milla-la-a  
 so Perdomito-POSS 3-POSS DIM=father=DEC.R-COL-FOC  
 so, Pedromito’s little deceased parents

ura chu-mu-de-e.  
good sit-AG.NMLZ-PL-become  
lived well.

In addition to human referents, in Cha'palaa associative reference can be made with the names of places as well. In this example from an interview regarding a land dispute between a Chachi community and a Black community – an issue that will be taken up in Chapter 7 – the speaker applies collective marking to the name of the town where the Blacks live. Since collective marking is limited to animate beings, the interpretation is “the people associated with the town of Juan Montalvo”.

(2.14) Ajke-sha kayu ne de-ku-daa-wi'-ba,  
in.front-LOC1 more just PL-give-cut-enter-with  
Later on if they cut further into (Chachi territory)

firu' ajke-sha chu-kee-nu-u-ñu=bain mi'kee-tyu-we peechulla-la-ba,  
ugly in.fron-LOC1 sit-see-INF-be-EV.INF=also seek-NEG-DSJ Black-COL-with  
it is uncertain if we are going to live with problems with the blacks

besindaa ju-de-e-wa-shu-juntsa, **Juan Montalbu-la-ba-ya.**  
SP:neighborhood be-PL-become-PFTV-IRR-DM.DST **Juan Montalvo-COL-with-FOC**  
the ones we are neighbors with, **the people of Juan Montalvo.**

These examples of associative reference help to further illustrate why it is important to distinguish between associativity and plurality in Cha'palaa in the noun phrase. The following section will continue with a discussion of the distinction between these two values in the verb phrase.



## Summary

In Cha'palaa there are different ways of referring to groups with multiple entities. For inanimate objects the main way to do so is to quantify a noun with a number or a word like “many.” For animate beings there is an additional way for referring to multiple entities by characterizing them as collectives with a collective suffix, which is restricted to animate referents, especially humans and human-like beings. Collective terms differ from plurals in that plurals are primarily distributional while collectives are associational. Like plurals, collectives imply groups of multiple entities, but beyond this, they signal some kind of association among the members of the group. This is the principle behind the animacy hierarchy reflected in collective marking, because only living animate human-like beings have associative properties. Examples demonstrated how collective marking applies to a different animate referents in different instances of discourse, including its use for associative reference based on proper names and place names (what has been called “associative plural” in other languages). The associative properties of Cha'palaa collective marking make it more significant for a study of social categorization than plurality, which constitutes groups distributionally. In languages like English, both collectivity and plurality are conflated in a single plural marker, but Cha'palaa separates these two values allowing for an analysis of explicit collective marking where in English collectivity must be implied or marked periphrastically.

### 2.3 Collectivity in predicates

Before continuing with my account of how collective marking is applied to social categories, a more comprehensive description of the Cha'palaa collective suffix *-la* must also point out that collectivity does not just apply to the noun phrase, but that collective morphology also forms finite predicates in the verb phrase. As a highly derivational language with overlap among most of the major word classes, morphological options are often very fluid and, rather than requiring any system of rigid number agreement, marking of number on the verb phrase – either plurality or collectivity – is not obligatory

when number is marked on the actor or when it can be inferred from context. In the following example collectivity is marked with the pronoun, but there is no number marking on the verb:

(2.15) Lala=ren **mee-mi-ya** ya-nu tsaa ka-' jui-ke-'  
1COL=EMPH **hear-PTCP-FOC** 3-ACC SEM get-SR pull-do-SR  
We heard how (someone) grabbed and pulled

ne-mishu-nu aa-ne-mishu-nu  
foot-finger-ACC AUG-foot-finger-ACC  
his toe, his big toe.

When there is not an overt reference to a collective noun, collectivity can instead be marked on the verb with the same suffix used for nouns (-*la*). This characterizes the predicate as collective, meaning that one or a few members of the group can partake in the action in place of the whole group – a different but related kind of collectivity as that seen in nominal collectivity, described in the previous section. The following excerpt is a continuation of the story of the “(ones) without asses” and shows two collective predicates as well as a plural predicate.

(2.16) Mati de=tapau ki' **juu-ki-la** piyaa- aa=piyama  
so COMPL-SP:steamed.plaintain do-SR **hole-do-COL** pot- AUG=pot  
So they made “tapado” (steamed plantain) and **opened** the po- the big pot,

tsaa yai-che-e ne niwijcha ne **kush-ja-de-i-we**  
SEM 3COL-DAT-FOC just cloud just **drink-come-PL-become-DSJ**  
but there were just clouds that **they came to drink.**

niwijcha ne kujcha-de-e-mitya tsaa de-fi-’            **tyai-ki-la-n** tsaa  
 cloud    just drink-PL-be-because SEM COMPL-eat-SR **finish-do-COL-NMLZ** SEM  
 since they were just eating clouds, after they ate, **finishing up** like that.

The Cha’palaa predicate system is very complex and I cannot give a detailed account here.<sup>13</sup> To briefly characterize the system: Cha’palaa only has a limited number of true verbs that can take finite verb morphology, so that most predicates consist of one of these verbs, carrying the finite morphology at the right, and one or more additional elements to the left that contribute to the semantics of the complex predicate but that are not technically verbs.<sup>14</sup> For example, in the first predicate above, the elements *juru* (hole), reduced to *juu*, and *ki* (do) combine for the meaning “to open.” In this case, the opening of the cookpot was probably done by only one or a few of the assless creatures, but the storyteller casts the activity of cooking the *tapau* (steamed plantains with meat) and opening the pot as a collective action. When they opened the pot, however, they only drank up the steam – probably because, in their assless condition, eating solid food might cause them problems. The complex predicate in the second line, above, is marked for plurality (*de-*), implying that each creature came individually to drink up the clouds, rather than a collective act of drinking in which a few members acted for the group. The third complex predicate in the example, in the third line, is also marked for collectivity, implying that here each creature did not individually finish up the steam, but that they collectively did so as a group.

Collective marking on verbs is restricted by a similar kind of animacy hierarchy as that which applies to nouns, so collective predicates will tend to have animate subjects. However, this constraint is flexible and open to semantic stretching, in cases when apparently inanimate objects can be framed as partaking in collective action – as in this example which describes individual coconut palms in a grove as growing up collectively together:

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<sup>13</sup> See Dickinson 2002 for a dissertation-length account of Cha’palaa’s sister language, Tsafiki.

(2.17) Laa-che-e-ba            naa in,            challa ma    **awa-la,**  
1COL-DAT-FOC-COM how become-NMLZ now again **grow-COL**  
For us, now that (the trees) **have grown up** again,

uu-kera-de-na-shu.  
nice-look-PL-come.intoPOS-IRR  
they'll look nice.

Cases in which inanimates are characterized as collectives are exceedingly rare, however, and are limited primarily to trees in groves or plants in crops that, at a certain time scale, can be seen as acting somewhat collectively. By contrast, plural marking on predicates with inanimate subjects is common and unconstrained by the animacy hierarchy. This split between collectivity and plurality in relation to animacy is strongly confirmed by elicitation data consisting of the recorded responses of ten different Chachis of different ages and genders to a set of about sixty distinct photographs of things like bottles, balls and cassava roots in different configurations designed for eliciting positional verbs.<sup>15</sup> Stative, positional predicates are among the most common predicate types tending to have inanimate subjects and, as predicted by the animacy hierarchy, of the sixty responses by each of ten participants less than one percent had any collective marking – and these cases largely involved descriptions of trees, which can sometimes be cast as pseudo-animates, as mentioned above. In contrast, nearly half of the responses contained plural marking on the predicate, showing that unlike collectivity, plurality is freely marked in relation to inanimates. The following are some examples of elicitation responses in which participants described the position of different assortments of multiple objects with plural-marked predicates; the first features a general positional verb:

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<sup>14</sup> Similar to what are called “co-verbs” in other languages, including many Australian languages see Schultze-Berndt, 2000.

<sup>15</sup> Thanks to the Max Planck Institute for Psycholinguistics Language and Cognition Group for use of their Positional Verbs elicitation photograph set.

(2.18a) Ju-n-tala=bain                      chi ejke tape=bain **pure-de-na**                      nara-na  
 DM.DST-NMLZ-among=also tree dry leaf=also **many-PL-be.in.POS** pretty-be.in.POS  
 Around there also **there are many** trees and also dry leaves, it is pretty.

Cha'palaa is very specific about the positions of objects; here the cassava roots are described as “lying” because they are resting on their oblong sides:

(2.18b) Tu jandala taapai kujchu **de-tsu**  
 earth on.top.of four cassava **PL-lie**  
 On the ground four cassava roots **are lying**.

Objects that have inherent standing or sitting postures can change their positional verb depending on their orientation, as here where two different plural predicates describe the different positions of the bottles in the image:

(2.18c) Mesa jandala pen lemeta **de-chu**  
 table on.top.of three bottle PL-sit  
 On the table three bottles **are sitting**,

tsen-mala, taapai lemeta tsu-ji'      **tsu-de-na**  
 SEM-then four bottle lie-go-SR lie-PL-be.in.POS  
 then four bottles, on their sides, **are lying**.

Plural marking can exist alongside different kinds of quantifiers, like here where the “balls” are quantified with the numeral “two” combined with the shape-classifier for spherical objects:

(2.18d) Pishkali-nu sapuka **pai-puka de-pu-ñu-we**,  
 carry.basket-LOC2 ball **two CL:sphere PL-be.in/on-EV.INF-DSJ**  
 In the basket there appear to **be two (spherical)** balls,

pishkali juru-sha  
carry.basket hole-LOC1  
inside the basket.

While plural marking extends to both animate and inanimate subjects, like collective marking it is not obligatory for predicates whose subjects number more than one entity if that information is recoverable pragmatically. For this reason plural marking in Cha'palaa is fundamentally different from rigid number agreement systems seen in languages like English or Spanish. The following set of examples, also responses from the positional verb elicitation set, show how speakers opt not to use overt plural marking on predicates just as much as they opt to use it. Sometimes the multiplicity of objects is signaled with quantifiers like *pure'*, with no number marked on the predicate:

(2.19a) Mulu **pure' tsu-na-we** chipa-nu  
bean **many lie-be.in.POS-DSJ** bark.floor-LOC2  
**Many** beans **are lying** on the bark floor.

(2.19b) Sapuka mesa-nu **pure' tsu-na-we.**  
ball table-LOC2 **many lie-be.in.POS-DSJ**  
**Many** balls **are lying** on the table.

At other times numerals can be used to quantify objects, often with shape-based numeral classifiers, again with no number marked on the predicate:

(2.19c) Kujchu tu-sha **pen-papa tsu-we**  
cassava earth-LOC1 **three-CL:oblong lie-DSJ**  
**Three (oblong)** cassava roots **are lying** on the ground.

(2.19d) Pishkai juru-sha sapuka **pai-puka pu-we.**  
 carry.basket hole-LOC1 ball **two-CL:sphere be.in/on-DSJ**  
**Inside** the basket **there are two (spherical)** balls.

Unlike a rigid number agreement system, in which plural arguments must agree with plural marking on verbs (and sometimes elsewhere, such as on adjectives or articles), the Cha'palaa numbers system is more fluid in that speakers can opt to mark plurality, collectivity, both or neither. With the option of marking collectivity on both verbs and nouns as well as plurality on verbs, Cha'palaa is able to make a number of fine semantic distinctions about groups of multiple entities and their actions. The following elicited examples show some of the possibilities, using a complex two-part predicate with the verb *chu* and its verb classifier *na*, classifying the predicate as a stative positional. If no collective or plural marking is present – and in the absence of any other implicatures of number – predicates are seen as having a single default actor:

(2.20a) Ya-sha **chu-na-we.**  
 house-LOC3 **sit-be.in.POS**  
 He/she **sits/lives** in the house.

If a nominal actor argument is collective, the predicate can be unmarked for number and still involve multiple actors:

(2.20b) Ruku-la ya-sha **chu-na-we.**  
 Man-COL house-LOC3 **live-be.in.POS-DSJ**  
 The men **are siting** in the house.

When there is no nominal argument number can be marked on the predicate<sup>16</sup> with the plural prefix *de-*.

(2.20c) Ya-sha      **chu-de-na-we.**

house-LOC3 **sit-PL-be.in.POS-DSJ**

(They) **are sitting** in the house (each on their own).

The involvement of multiple actors can also be conveyed in a predicate through collective marking – which unlike nominal collective marking, constitutes a finite predicate. In contrast with the plural-marked example above, which implies that people were sitting distributed throughout the house, the collective-marked example below implies that the people in the house were sitting together in a group.

(2.20d) Ya-sha      **chu-na-la.**

house-LOC3 **sit-be.in.POS-COL**

(They) **are sitting** in the house (together in a group).

While rare, it is possible to mark both plurality and collectivity on a predicate, if a speaker is highlighting both distribution and association among actors.

(2.20e) Ya-sha      **chu-de-na-la.**

house-LOC3 **sit-PL-be.in.POS-COL**

(They) **are sitting** in the house (together in groups).

This excerpt from a story shows an instance of collective and plural marking on a single verb root in natural discourse:

(2.21) Ñu salva i-i-nu                      palaa ju **de-ti-la.**

2    save    become-become-INF word be **PL-say-COL**

“You can save it,” those words **they said** (individually but together)

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<sup>16</sup> There is no person marking on predicates in Cha'palaa, only number marking.



While it is possible to mark both collective and plural on a single predicate, it is more common for speakers to alternate between these two strategies for characterizing the actors. The following example shows a typical range of different kinds of collective and plural marking in discourse. Across the discourse these values help to organize and track multi-entity referents and to characterize them semantically:

(2.22) Ya-’ mati **ben-supu-la-a** tsaa **remediu ki-mu-la**  
 3-POSS so **front-female-COL-FOC SEM** remedy do-AG.NMLZ-COL  
 His **lovers** were **ones who made remedies**,

mati ne ya-’ **ruku-la-nu** man-**throw.out-ki-la** tsen ya-nu=tene  
 so just 3-POSS **man-COL-ACC** **again-throw.out-do-COL SEM** 3-ACC=LIM  
 so they just again **got rid of (collectively)** their **husbands** and were just for him

**naa ju-la-ba** ya-nu=tene ma-**mitya** **di-n-de-tsu**  
**how be-COL-COM** 3-ACC=LIM **again-lean.on come.into.POS-NMLZ-PL-PROG**  
**however they were**, they **began to approach (each individually)** only him.

This story tells of a man with superhuman power who is the referent of the third person pronoun in the first line, above. This pronoun forms a possessive noun phrase (his lovers) with the collective term *bensupula* (lovers), and then equates it with a second collective noun phrase *remediu kimula* (remedy-makers) in a zero-copula construction. This collective referent (his lovers = remedy-makers) is co-referential with the third person pronoun in the second line, which in turn is part of its own possessive noun phrase with the collective term *rukula* (men), that when possessed has a conventionalized meaning as “husbands”. This possessive noun phrase (their husbands) is then the object of the collective predicate *mankepukila* (get rid of - collectively), which corresponds to the subject *ya’ bensupula* (his lovers). This same subject then holds for the two predicates in the third line, the first the collective expression *naa julaaba* (however they were) and then the pluralized predicate *mitya dindetsu* (be approaching – each individually) – the

object of this last predicate being once again the man with superhuman power, who is referenced by the last two pronouns in lines two and three. It is a little difficult to keep track of these relationships; this diagram will help sort them out (S = subject, O = object, Pr = predicate, NP/VP = verb/noun phrase, 3 = third person, X = anaphoric referent):

S = NP [his (3 = man X) lovers (collective) = remedy-makers (collective)]  
O1= NP [their (3 = S) husbands (collective)]  
Pr= VP [get rid of (collectively) = S to O1]  
O2= NP [him (3 = man X)]  
Pr= VP [however they are (collectively)], [approach (each individually) = S to O2]

Cha'palaa is a language that relies heavily on discourse structure for disambiguation of arguments, since there are no person markers and no obligatory overt subjects. In the absence of overt marking, referent tracking through discourse in Cha'palaa relies on anaphoric relationships and discourse structures linking pronouns to other nominal referents and to predicates arguments, with the assistance of a switch-reference system. Characterizing referents as singular or multiple entities in different ways, as described above, is another aspect of tracking these individual entities or groups through syntax and discourse, and as such it is a central part of Cha'palaa grammar.

With my descriptive account of collective and plural marking in Cha'palaa I am painting a picture of discourse structure that represents how different nominal and verbal constituents relate to each other to characterize and organize multi-entity referents, because at a basic level this is the core of how social categorization is achieved in discourse. The final example in this section provides the first step towards understanding how collective nominal terms referring to social categories are used together with collective and plural predicates; this topic will be taken up at length in the next chapter.

In the following excerpt from an account of the early history of the Chachis during the time of the Spanish invasion, Guillermo, the speaker, uses the collectivized

terms *chachilla* (Chachis) and *españolla* (Spanish), along with several different collective and plural predicates to describe some of the earliest-known events in Chachi oral history. The Chachis first lived “up to Quito”, using what I call an “endpoint locative” construction to refer to the area between the speaker and Quito, passing through the highland city of Ibarra and the historical Chachi town of Tutsa’. As Guillermo puts it, since the Chachis did not want to be enslaved by the Spanish they retreated, first from Quito to Ibarra, and then over the western range of the Andes and down into the tropical cloudforests at Tutsa’:

(2.23) Uma ajke' **ja-la-ya**

now in.front **come-COL-FOC**

Now how (the Chachis) **came at first**,

Tutsa'-sha chu-ta-a de-ja-n-tyu-ka?

Tutsa'-LOC1 sit-SR-FOC PL-come-NMLZ-NEG-DUB

they came having lived in Tutsa', right?

Ura ajke' komiensu ma ke-ke-n=mala-ya, vivieron Ibara-nu

good front SP:start again do-do-NMLZ=when-FOC SP:they.lived Ibarra-LOC2

Good, if we are starting from the beginning, they lived in Ibarra.

Primero **chachi-lla** ajke' chu-la-ya,

first **Chachi-COL** in.front sit-COL-FOC

First **the Chachis** before lived,

Quitu-bi-ee chu-mu-de-e tisama, Quitu-bi tsen=mala

Quito-LOC4-FOC sit-AG.NMLZ-PL-become well(?) Quito-LOC4 SEM=when

they were inhabitants up to Quito, up to Quito, and then

allí se llegaron los españoles,  
 SP:then SP:3REF SP:arrived SP:the SP:Spanish  
 then the Spanish arrived,

t<sub>sen</sub>=mala **español-la** de-ja-n=mala-a  
 SEM=when **Spanish-COL** PL-come-NMLZ=when-FOC  
 and then when **the Spanish** arrived

umaa **chachi-lla-a** t<sub>taa</sub> esclavo de-mu-tya'-tyu'=mitya..  
 now-FOC **Chachi-COL-FOC** SEM SP:slave COMP-want-feel-NEG=because  
 since **the Chachis** did not want to be slaves (they fled).

The predicates from the fourth and fifth lines of the excerpt above are a good example of different ways that the possibilities of Cha'palaa's predicate system can refer to activities of collective, animate actors. Here the *chachilla* (Chachi-COL) is the subject of, first, a collective predicate *chula* (sit-COL) and then a plural predicate, involving the same verb root *chu* (sit/live) but in a nominalized form (sit-AG.NMLZ-PL-become).

(2.24a) Primero **chachi-lla** ajke' **chu-la-ya** . . .  
 first **Chachi-COL** in.front **sit-COL-FOC**  
 First **the Chachis** before **lived** (collectively) . . .

(2.24b) Quito-bi-ee **chu-mu-de-e**.  
 Quito-LOC4-FOC **sit-AG.NMLZ-PL-become**  
**they were inhabitants** up to Quito (in distributed settlements).

The first construction above characterizes the Chachis as living collectively in this early phase of their history, while the second construction has a more distributional reading, probably referring to the traditionally dispersed Chachi settlement pattern. Cha'palaa's range of options for creating cohesion among constituents about the number

of referents and actors involved in discourse has more play (following Sherzer 2002) than a number agreement system. When the Chachis transmit knowledge about the history of social groups, as in the example above, this is the range of expressive grammatical resources available to Cha'palaa speakers to be deployed in discourse. Chachi accounts of how their ancestors refused to be enslaved by the Spanish and instead fled the Andes into the forest to live autonomously are considered by Chachi people to convey important knowledge about their collective history; in my field research, people living in many different parts of Chachi territory cited similar accounts when we discussed the history of the social groups in the area. The next chapter will look specifically at how the resources provided by Chachi discourse forms are applied to making reference to social categories.

## Summary

Beyond simply endeavoring to provide a more well-rounded description of the uses of collective marking in Cha'palaa, the purpose of the discussion above is to illustrate how, unlike in languages with rigid, obligatory number agreement systems (in which nouns agree for number on verbs, adjectives, articles, etc.), in Cha'palaa much of the expressive resources for describing the composition and actions of groups of more than one entity are much more optional and fluid. Verbs can express collectivity, plurality, both or neither, depending on what information is available pragmatically and what emphasis the speaker chooses to make. When collectivity or plurality *are* expressed, then, it is not simply triggered by grammatical number agreement, but rather is a choice that speakers make about how to convey meaning regarding the referents being discussed. Collectivity is limited to animate referents, reflecting the animacy hierarchy discussed above, and implies some kind of associational state in which members of a group act together, while plurality can be marked for both animates and inanimates and implies a distributional state or activity in which members of a group participate individually. The importance of discussing the fluidity of number marking in Cha'palaa for the larger discussion of social categorization in this dissertation is that, when Chachis refer to their own and other social groups in discourse, the grammatical dimensions summarized in the previous sections structure the discursive possibilities that are available for the task. The next chapter will show how those strategies are used in combination with Cha'palaa ethnonyms, as a special set of words used for referring to social groups.

## **Chapter 3: Ethnonyms and group reference**

### **3.1 Ethnonyms in history: Chachilla and uyala**

The previous chapter dealt with collectivity in Cha'palaa. When collective marking is used in discourse, it is most frequently found with words that reference humans and other animate beings. As an important subset of referential words for human groups, ethnonyms are among the most common words in the language to occur with collective morphology. Reference to human groups presents a complicated problem for analysis, because words for human groups cannot correspond to discrete physical human classes, but rather are part of more flexible semiotic systems (Agha 2007, pp268-271). But in another sense, ethnonyms themselves delimit social groups when used in reference, and if individuals can be included referentially in more than one term this is simply the linguistic dimension of intersectionality, as it has been discussed in critical social theory by Black feminist scholars (Crenshaw 1991, Collins 1990). From the discourse-centered approach I am taking here, social categorization is articulated in specific moments of reference. From a grammatical point of view, ethnonyms are the heads of noun phrases used for reference to social groups. As they have been described by Allport from the perspective of social psychology, they are “nouns that cut slices” (1954, p178) into the social world, abstracting past heterogeneities in order to more conveniently cluster individuals. But rather than addressing whether or not social categorization arises from basic human practices of classification at a level that is separate from those categories' incorporation into social inequalities, as Allport does (perhaps with some cause), I am concerned with these categories as a social reality situated in specific human histories.

This chapter will describe the set of ethnonyms in Cha'palaa in terms of linguistic form and usage, and use that analysis to situate ethnonyms within Chachi history. For

speakers of Cha'palaa to take part in broader formations of race shared among postcolonial spaces and indigenous and Afro-descendant societies around Latin America, they must participate in the circulation of discourses beyond their immediate environment, but they necessarily draw on their own local resources as a means of articulation on the ground. The locally-available terms are, in turn, embedded in the local history in ways that mediate lived experience through cultural and linguistic lenses. Evidence both in the linguistic forms and the oral histories of the Chachi provide windows into the history of social categorization, and how it shapes current articulations.

As an entry into this discussion, I will first engage with an account of Chachi oral history about their historical encounters with another group of people, known as *uyala*, or *indios bravos* (warlike Indians). Traditional stories are the best documented genre of Cha'palaa discourse, with several published compilations (Añapa Cimarron 2003, Vittadello 1988, Mitlewski 1989, etc.) all of which mention the *uyala*. The battles between the *uyala* and the Chachi are part of the historical tradition shared widely by Chachis throughout the province of Esmeraldas, and as such are central to the Chachi imaginary of their history as a social group. The *uyala* are a kind of inverse version of the Chachi, as evidenced by their inhuman cannibalistic ways. The contrast between these two social groups as discourse referents is set by Guillermo in the first lines of the story presented below, and it then maintains throughout the discourse.





Figure 2. Wilfrido (left) and Guillermo (right) tell the story of the shamanic spear.

In this recording two young men, Guillermo and Wilfrido, took turns telling parts of this story of the Chachis' wars with the *uyala* while several neighbors listened in. We agreed to record the story because Guillermo and Wilfrido had told me part of it during an earlier conversation and I asked them if we could make a video of the full story.

G: Ya, timbunu yan **uyaala chachi** fifikemu **chachilla uyalalaba**.  
Okay, long ago the wild **foreigners** would eat **Chachis, Chachis** with **foreigners**.

**Chachilla** jayu bulu ne chunamuwa deju enku tusha,  
Few **Chachis** lived close by one another, around here on the land,

baka' baka' ne chunamu deju fafain ne chunamudeju **chachilla uyalachi**.  
each lived separately, and living (thus) **the Chachis** got eaten by **the foreigners**.

Tsainduren ma malu pai pannala pekenu dejila

So it was like that, and one day two young women went to relieve themselves,

pekenu jila jeebaasha,

they went to relieve themselves into the forest,

timbunu na'baasa pe ne kekemudeju'mitya

since back then they used to go relieve themselves wherever,

tsai' dejiña uama uyalala juntsa pai pannalanu

going like that, now the foreigners, those two girls

ka' mijiilaaka pai pannalanu,

they grabbed them and took them, the two girls,

ka' mijideitu umaya finu deke'mitya, juntsa pai pannalanu

they captured them because they intended to eat them, the two girls,

mainnaa ajkee taawasha dekekaaña,

one of them they put to work first,

ma pannanu narake deteepe' chujña kadenachi miijutyu **uyalala**.

and the other they left bound with chain so she wouldn't escape **the foreigners**.

Tsen ma pannanaa taawasha kekaanu ti' ka'jimi,

So one girl they put to work, they took her and went

pishuaa de iikaaña yala' yasha.

to grind corn, at their house.

In the first line of this excerpt describing how two young Chachi women were abducted by the Uyala, Guillermo, the storyteller, uses the ethnonyms *Chachi*, an autonym for Cha'palaa speakers, and *uyala*, an exonym that I translate as “foreigners.” What the “Uyala” may have called themselves is unknown, but they may have been the people known in historical documents as “Malaba;” in the 16<sup>th</sup> century Spanish colonial records mention the Chachi seeking assistance against Malaba attacks at the mission post at Lita (DeBoer 1995). In the transcriptions I translate the term *uyala* more broadly as “foreigner” rather than following the usual Spanish translation *indios bravos* (“warlike Indians”) due to changes in its recent usage that I will describe in detail below. In terms of the analysis in the previous chapter where I pointed out that collective and plural marking is optional in Cha'palaa, here the two ethnonyms are unmarked for number initially. This results in ambiguity with respect to whether individuals or groups are being referred to. However, the speaker provided disambiguation immediately, with the same ethnonyms in collectivized form. This example shows the line from above in greater detail:

- (3.1) Timbu-nu yan **uyala chachi** fi-fi-ke-mu,  
 Time-LOC1 fierce foreigner person eat-eat-do-AG.NMLZ  
 Long ago the fierce **foreigners** would eat **Chachis**,
- chachi-lla uyala-la-ba.**  
 person-COL foreigner-COL-COM  
 the **Chachis** with the **foreigners**.

As the narrative continues, these two collectivized ethnonyms become two of the main referents that are tracked across clauses in the story. Collectivized ethnonyms have a broad semantic range, from specific groups of enumerated individuals to broad sectors of the population in general, and these multiple meanings vary even through short stretches of discourse, like in these excerpts from a traditional story. They interact with other referents and sometimes share overlapping kinds of co-reference, as with the phrase

*lala' aa apala* (“our grandparents”), below, which overlaps with one meaning of *chachilla* that appears in the story, one that refers to the Chachis of several generations past. This phrase also contrasts with the term *uyala*, as seen below, in a similar way as the autonym *chachilla*. In the following excerpt the narrators continue the story, the foreigners have already eaten one of the Chachi girls, but the Chachi shamans are now making efforts to assist the second girl. They use their powers to give her the idea to escape while helping her to make the foreigners fall asleep:

G: Tsaiñu bene **lala' aa apala** yaibain miruku de'mitya  
So then, since **our grandparents** are also shamans,

majanki kentsula juntsanuya,  
they were making efforts for her to return,

nejtaa asu ma ratu pensajutyuba, jei pensa chujanmalan  
so when one moment she was not thinking of it, and then that thought came

juntsa pensa imudeenka lalanu wera' dekiñaa tsainujtu deetyuka.  
when we come to have that thought, when another person makes us, that's what happens.

Asu juntsa panna tsanketu dekatsu' piyaimaa timudeesh  
Now that girl, doing that, had made them all fall asleep, they say,

juntsa **uyalala** tsanke' fiesta ke' chaya deintyuka  
the **foreigners** had a party and had been at it until dawn,

tsenmalaa juntsa dekaswaatu dus mayanbu' maanu kentsumi.  
so once they had been put to sleep she was made ready to escape.

While escaping, the Chachi girl noticed a spear of the *uyalala* hanging there. The Chachi shamans gave her the idea to take the spear with her – it was a magic spear that was able to speak and reveal secret information. Below it is described as *aa=uyala-la-chi tsuta* (AUG=foreigner-COL-POSS spear), incorporating the collectivized ethnonym into the descriptive phrase. The girl was able to escape with the spear:

Main tsuta timbu, **aa uyalalachi tsuta** main juwaa detiña.

A spear, in that time, there was **a big spear of the foreigners**, they say.

Kai'sha yanamaa peredin ma yanamuaa detiña juntsa

They kept it hanging above, making noise, hanging up they say, that one.

Tsenñu juntsa shinbu, tsanke mirukulabain,

So that woman, with the shamans also doing like that,

keepumula tsanke jankindekenmala **chachibain** tsai jitu indyuka.

giving her that idea, it seems that the **Chachi** (woman) also did as (they wanted).

Juntsa tsuta daachiti daachitiren juntsa tsaa.

She pulled and pulled at that spear, that one.

In the excerpt above the word *chachi* is used to refer to the individual Chachi girl, giving one example of the semantic range of this autonym, a topic that will be discussed in greater detail later in this chapter. Like many indigenous peoples whose **autonyms overlap with the general word for human beings**, the sense of specific uses is highly dependent on the immediately surrounding discourse structure as well as on the broader social knowledge of interacting speakers. In the excerpt below, continuing the story from above, a switch-reference clause in the third line signals the re-introduction of the collectivized group *chachilla* (Chachi-COL), which in this case refers to the Chachis who were back in the town when the girl arrived carrying the spear. Here its meaning stretches

between the idea of a general social group *chachilla* and the specific group of Chachis who are part of the story.

Once the *uyala* awakened they followed the girl, who escaped by riding a jaguar sent by the Chachi shamans and then finally arrived back near the other Chachis:

Tsainduren juntsa shinbu junka mati,  
So then that woman there,

miñu demankeekamin maali miimaa deti juntsa lansa taju.  
she recognized that path and she went alone, they say, holding the spear.

Umaa juntsa lansa ta'ñaa.  
Now she was carrying the spear, [switch reference]

**Chachilla** pake'meemu deeti  
and **the Chachis** asked it questions, they say.

tsai' pake'meeta mijamu deeti,  
Asking it (the spear) questions in that way they learned, they say,

aamiruku tila **chachillabain**.  
to become great shamans, **the Chachis** also.

**Uyaa lansachee** aamiruku tila **chachilla**.  
With **the spear of the foreigners** they became great shamans, **the Chachis**.

In the last line of the excerpt above a phonologically reduced form of the word *uyala* is used as a modifier for the word “spear”: the “foreigner spear.” In Cha’palaa, many ethnonyms have special phonologically reduced forms that are used to modify

other nouns, which is a property that makes the most common ethnonyms cohere as a linguistic class. This property of ethnonyms will be discussed at length below, as it is a key resource for compounding racial ethnonyms with referents for other social categories in Cha'palaa. First, however, I will conclude my discussion of the Chachi conflicts with the *uyala*.

By threatening to burn the spear if it did not reveal its secrets the Chachis forced it to teach them strong magic for use in war. Using this magic they set off to take care of the *uyala* for good. In this concluding excerpt notice how the Chachis are not referenced with the ethnonym *chachilla* but rather are established earlier in the discourse and tracked through continued-reference marking combined with plural and collective predicates and several pronouns (non-overt pronouns in parenthesis in the translation, below):

Guerra kenu dejiña nana dewiikeña,  
(They) went to make war, (they) made a balsa raft,

nananuren tsaa yala timbunu aamiruku de'mityaa tsaa .....  
with balsa itself in the old times, as they were great shamans,

maty lancha tirekejdekintyuka naa i jinu ti'bain  
(they) could turn them into boat so that they could go

tsamantsakila tsai' pebulusha jimin uyalala'junka jimin ke'  
with a great force to the town of the foreigners,

ke' ji ke'ji tsamantsa deki millankaadetsu  
attacking and attacking, forcefully doing away with them,

ma kaapebulunu faajimiren mainun larakare'  
arriving at one town and leaving only one (person alive).

Mantake' nukaa dechun tinmala ta'malaren yaila mantute' kepu' ji  
When (they) had them (captured) they killed them and threw them aside,

mantute' kepu' jiitsu, tsai' ultimusha,  
and having killed them and thrown them aside, at the end,

kaashimbu kaarukuban maty na kenu pudejtuu.  
there were only old women and old men left, who could not have children

Rukulaban chun nanmala, “Ñuilla tsana'ba pedei” titaa.  
When (just) the old men were living, saying “We leave you to die”.

yailanun laakaakemudee uyalalanu millanke tu'nuunuren,  
Leaving just them (alive) they did away with the foreigners, killing them.

Tsanke' delaakare' demaataa  
Having left them like that, (they) came back,

umaa timbunu yaila uyalalanu detute'maayu ti'mitya  
now, long ago, saying that they had come back killing the foreigners.

The story of the Chachi conflict with the *uyala* ends with the Chachis using the stolen spear to exterminate their enemies and it is an important part of how the Chachis remember how they came to populate the rivers of Esmeraldas and live without fear of attack.

On the occasion when Wilfrido and Guillermo first mentioned the story of the wars with the *uyala* to me, we had been talking about the magic objects that the Chachis used to possess. Some stories tell of canoes that could travel long distances



instantaneously and similar kinds of items. The magic spear, they explained, could be sent to kill anyone just by telling it the name of the target. The Chachis could simply tell the spear who they wanted it to kill and then wait at home while the spear went to complete the task alone.

Wilfrido and Guillermo told me that some people believe that the magic items still exist today, but that they are hidden far in the forest where the Chachis can no longer find them. They said that this was for the best because if the location of the magic spear were known today, surely the *gringos* would come looking for it to use it for purposes of war. The ethnonym *gringo* is a Spanish word used in Ecuador and other places in Latin America to refer to white foreigners like myself. As I will discuss in more detail below, in Cha'palaa the word usually used to refer to white foreigners is *uyala*, the same word used to refer to the Chachis' traditional enemies mentioned in their oral history. If the present-day *uyala* were able to find the magic spear it would be almost as if the historical *uyala* had returned from the dead to finally regain their old weapon, perhaps to take revenge on the Chachis at last.

The purpose of discussing these episodes from Chachi oral history of inter-group relations before exploring the use of ethnonyms today has been to point out how Cha'palaa speakers draw on the terms of their historical experience, as understood through their oral history, to make sense of contemporary social relations. When Chachis use the word *uyala* to refer to present day white people, it carries with it a degree of connotative connection to the *uyala* of their oral history. This is one of the major ways that history shapes how Chachi people participate in racial formation more broadly, encountering it through their cultural resources. When friction develops between social groups like the Chachi and the Afro-descendants of Esmeraldas, the oral history can also provide terms in which to understand it.

When Guillermo and Wilfrido first told me about the magic spear the Chachis had stolen from the *uyala*, they had commented that the spear had been hidden away in order

to prevent more wars. They told me that some people say if the Chachis found the spear again they might use it to kill all of the Blacks and *gringos* in order to just live among Chachis. This statement impacted me for its articulation of violence, although it is possible that such things are said less as a real call to violence and more as a pessimistic commentary on the sometimes-poor relations between Chachis and Blacks; I will describe some of these disputes in more detail in Chapter 7. This last excerpt immediately follows the conclusion of the *uyala* story in which Guillermo again speculates about the possibility of war if the spear were ever found again.

G: Tsaaren enumee akawa iña lala',  
So here is the end of our (story)

tsa'mitya juntsa lansa mankata'ba dekeeshujuntsaa  
so for that reason if that spear was ever found again

chachilla mawinkenun deju, chachilla mawinkenun deju,  
the Chachis would have to fight, the Chachis would have to fight,

juntsa lansachi, porke timbu- timbunu lala' aa apala tsanke'  
with that spear, because long- long ago our grandparents did the same,

deñu'mityaa, diusaparen mas peletu jutyusa tya'ba tyamutaa  
and because of that, god himself did not want any more trouble

juntsa lansa mankataatyutyuka juntsa lansa tsaami challa.  
so he hid it so that the spear would never be found; that spear is the same today.

Mankata'ba kishujuntsaa, chaibain tsaren peletu purena'mitya  
If it was to be found, then there would really be a lot of trouble,

**guerra mafaanu ju chachilla.** Aquí se terminó.  
**the Chachis would go to war again.** Here it ends.

The idea of a return to war for the Chachis, armed with the weapons of “our grandparents,” the great shamans, is a way of bringing the history of Chachi territorial disputes to bear on the current social tensions around control over land and natural resources. Retellings of the old stories help to bring out these connections, and the stories as instances of discourse show certain patterns of linguistic form. As with the terms *chachilla* and *uyala* used in the story discussed above, the referential terms like ethnonyms that delineate social categories are an important part of how social categories are instantiated in discourse and interaction. To begin to explore these processes, the next section will give a descriptive account of the most common ethnonymic terms used in Cha’palaa.

### **3.2 The autonym and indigeneity**

As mentioned above, the autonym that the Chachis use to refer to themselves is *chachi*, and as in many languages, the word is ambiguous between one specific social group and human beings in general. In the story discussed in the previous section, the more specific meaning of *chachi* predominated, in contrast to another human group, the *uyala*. In contrast, in the following interaction the term is used in relation to a non-human being (a devil) and the relevant contrast is human vs. inhuman, not Chachi vs. non-Chachi. “Who did the devil order to clean the grove?”

The speaker SA a visitor to the speaker S’s community where he accompanied me in order to help elicit traditional stories during my pilot research. In this example SA asks S for clarification and S responds by identifying the referent in the story with the single word “chachi”:

(3.2)

S: Panda-pala-na-a ajke' daa-wii-kaa-we de-ti, diabulu-  
Plantain-grove-COL-ACC-FOC before cut-enter-order-DSJ PL-say devil  
He ordered him to clean brush from the plantain grove, they say, the devil-

SA: Mu-nu daa-wii-kaa-tu.  
who-ACC cut-enter-order-SR  
Who did he order to clean (the grove)?

S: **Chachi-nu**  
**Chachi-ACC**  
**The Chachi/person.**

SA: **Chachi-nu.**  
**Chachi-ACC**  
**The Chachi/person.**

S: **Chachi-nu** tsai daa-wii-kaa-mi . . .  
**Chachi-ACC** SEM cut-enter-order-PFTV  
**The Chachi/person**, he had made him clean it like that.

This conversational sequence shows S offering a referent for recognition by SA, who then confirms that he has successfully identified the referent by repeating the phrase, at which point S continues his account. Because ethnonyms like *chachi* have many different kinds of usages and meanings in discourse, their semantics are not easily described in a concise account.

Often in Cha'pala ethnonyms do not occur as the head of referential noun phrases, but rather as part of morphologically complex modifier phrases. Phonological reduction is very common in the language, but some of the most common ethnonyms

feature special patterns of reduction that are probably linked to these words' frequent usage in modifier position. Phonological reduction in Cha'palaa usually leaves some kind of residual evidence that reduction has taken place. In the case of the word *chachi*, the reduced form drops the second syllable and replaces it with a glottal stop: *cha'*. An illustration of this reduction can be observed in the last line of the example below, part of an interview response to a question about how Blacks came to live in the area. The speaker suggested that they came to the area seeking land (*tu*), and then uses the term *cha' tu* to refer to the area as "Chachi land." In this case, *chachi* does not refer to people in general but specifically to Chachis in contrast to Blacks, and to the indigenous peoples' dominion over land, a recurring theme in conflicts between the two groups.

(3.3) Neguee-la pai ruku-n ja-' chu-di-mu,

SP:negro-PL two man-NMLZ come-SR live-come.into.POS-AG.NMLZ

Two *negro* men came to live,

pai familia tsejtu=ren yaila ja-' chu-mi-n

two SP:family SEM=EMPH 3COL come-SR live-PTCP-NMLZ

two families like that, they came to live,

tu taj-de-tu'=mitya ja-' de-chu **cha' tu**-sha ja' de-chu-tu

land have-PL-NEG=RES come-SR PL-live **Chachi land**-LOC1 come-SR PL-live-DR

because they didn't have land, they came to live on **Chachi land**

tse-de-ti-we yaila-ya . . . ya ki-nu de-ju.

SEM-PL-say-DSJ 3COL-FOC house do-INF PL-be

that is what they say, they would build houses.

The modifier form of *chachi* also combines with other terms for human beings such as gender terms. In this example *chachi* modifies *shimbu-la* (woman-COL) and refers both to the people's status as Chachis and as women:

- (3.4) Mati lala-’ supu-la mati **cha’ shimbu-la**  
 so 1COL-POSS female-COL so **Chachi woman-COL**  
 So our women, so the **Chachi women** . . .

In my interviews when I asked questions about interracial marriage I often heard complex two-part referential terms where interviewees described scenarios of Chachis with non-Chachi spouses. The following example is one such case in which an interviewee speculated that some Chachi women may marry into Black families if they show signs of affluence, like owning an outboard motor that allows them to travel quickly and not with oars and poles. .

- (3.5) Ja-ku Camarun-sha-a  
 DM.UP-LOC3 TPN:Camarones-LOC1-FOC  
 There in Camarones

ya anchapa mutur ta-ya  
 3 father-in-law motor have-FOC  
 their father-in-law has an outboard motor,

juntsa-i-we ti-’ kee-pu-na-a de-na-sha-a-ka  
 DM.DST-become-DSJ say-SR see-be.in/on-INF-FOC PL-be.in.POS-IRR-FOC-DUB  
 he is like that, and they watch him.

Jun-ka **cha’ supu** miya-la-a.  
 DM.DST-LOC3 **Chachi female** have-COL-FOC  
 There they have **Chachi women** (as wives).

The noun phrase *cha’ supu* (Chachi female) above is not marked for number even though it refers to more than one entity, according to the principles described in the

previous chapter. The predicate *miya* (to have – a relative) is marked for collectivity and this allows a collective reading to extend to *cha' supu* as well.

In a later chapter I will discuss Chachi discourse about interracial marriage at length. Here I will continue looking at the word *chachi* in modifier position of noun phrases. As an autonym it can flag many different terms for human beings as belonging to the Chachi class of human beings. It can be used in combination with other ethnonymic modifiers to set up contrasting social groups, such as in the example below where “Chachi children” are contrasted with “*negro* children” (from the Spanish *negro* – the different terms used to refer to Afro-descendants will be discussed below). The following is a partial response from an interview in which I had asked how well the Chachis get along with their Afro-Ecuadorian neighbors:

(3.6) Juntsaa=tene aaju-de-e-we tse'=mitya  
 DM.DST=LIM angry-PL-become-DSJ SEM=RES  
 Just like that, they get angry because of that,

**cha' kai-lla negee kai-lla-ba**  
**Chachi child-COL SP:negro child-COL-COM**  
**the Chachi children with the *negro* children,**

ura' lleva de-ju-tyu-we in-chi-ya.  
 good SP:get.along PL-be-NEG-DSJ 1-DAT-FOC  
 they do not get along, in my opinion.

Statements reflecting attitudes of racial aversion like that expressed in this example are formulated based on speakers' resources to be able to constitute the different social groups in question through discourse and interaction; to accomplish this they rely on linguistic forms like ethnonyms. When ethnonyms are used in the morphosyntactic position of a modifier of a noun phrase, they add a semantic element that, referentially,

must resonate with the social categories that speakers of Cha'palaa encounter in their lives in order to be meaningful. In this way, ethnonym usage in discourse both relies on and helps to constitute social categories. In the example above the social categories are overt but their contrasts remain relevant in many kinds of everyday discourse where they may be less explicit, as later examples will show.

The following example shows an interesting contrast between the autonym *chachi* in its full and reduced forms. In the second line the modifier noun phrase *cha' supu* refers to “Chachi women”, and then in the third line *supu* occurs alone, followed by a clarifying phrase (“a woman, a Chachi”) that categorizes *supu* more periphrastically.

(3.7) Uwain yai=bain cambia de-i-we  
 right 3COL=also SP:change PL-become-DSJ  
 Right, they also change (marriage pattern)

**cha' supu** ka-' kera-ke Zapayu-nu=bain main cha'-  
**Chachi female** get-SR see-do TPN:Zapallo-LOC1=also one Chachi  
 marrying with **Chachi women**, in Zapallo a Cha-

**manawa ruku** main supu ka-' chu-we, **chachi-nu**.  
**Manaba man** one female get-SR live-DSJ **Chachi-ACC**  
**a Manaba man** lives married to a woman, **a Chachi**.

The interview from which this example was taken was conducted in a small town upriver of the larger town of Zapallo where the “Chachi woman married to a Manaba man” mentioned in this example lives. People from smaller towns where interracial marriage is rare often reflect on how it is more common in the larger population centers. In my discussion of interracial marriage in Chapter 6 I reflect further on the discourse about Chachi marriages with people from other social groups and I will include excerpts from interviews in Zapallo with the same Chachi woman mentioned here. In this example



she is contrasted with her husband, a *manawa ruku* (Manaba man), meaning he moved to the area from Manabí, Esmeraldas’ neighboring province to the south.

The possibilities of discourse to set up such contrasts between social categories are in turn shaped by the grammatical possibilities of the language the discourse is expressed in. In Cha’palaa ethnonyms can be incorporated into verb phrases in addition to noun phrases. In this example from another account of the *uyala*, the word *chachi* in modifier form occurs as part of a complex predicate construction. In one sense, the verb form *cha’ fifiki* could be translated as “to cannibalize” but in another sense it could specifically refer to how the *uyala* specifically cannibalized the Chachi people.

(3.8) Uyala-la      suutadu-la      mati  
foreigner-COL SP:soldier-COL so  
The foreigners, the soldiers, well,

**cha’**    fi-fi-ki-mu-la                              suutaduu-la ja-n-de-tsa-a.  
**Chachi** eat-eat-CL:do-AG.NMLZ-COL soldier-COL come-NMLZ-PL-PROG-FOC  
**people**-eaters, the soldiers were coming.

Like with the examples of nominal modification shown above, this kind of predicate embedding of the word *chachi* into the predicate co-exists with other more periphrastic constructions, such as the object noun phrase *chachi-lla-nu* (Chachi-COL-ACC) in the example below. This phrase also shows collective morphology, described in the previous chapter, affixed to an ethnonym, a combination that is central to social categorizing discourse in Cha’palaa. The next example continues the account of the conflicts between the *uyala* and the Chachis:

(3.9) Mas      chu-ke-ya-nu      pude-jtu-we,  
SP:more live-do-REFL-INF be.able-NEG-DSJ  
They couldn’t manage to live (there) anymore,

tsen-mi jeen **uyala**=bain ja-' fi-fi-de-ki-ñu **chachi-lla-nu**  
SEM-PTCP wild **foreigner**=also come-SR eat-eat-PL-do-DR **Chachi-COL-ACC**  
as the wild **foreigners** came and ate **the Chachis**,

tse'=mitya de-akawa ii-de-tsu-yu ti-ta-a pele-sha de-ma-ja.  
SEM=RES COMPL-end become-PL-PROG-CNJ say-SR-FOC below-LOC1 PL-again-come  
it was because of this they were dying out (being eaten), they came down (river).

In the previous chapter, I characterized collectivity in Cha'palaa as having associational properties in that, when used in reference, the multi-entity group that it refers to does not simply co-exist but rather has some sort of association as a collective group. I pointed out how these properties of collectivity are related to usage patterns reflecting the animacy hierarchy, because collective marking is generally used only for animate referents and primarily for human groups. Unlike groups of inanimate objects, human groups show the kinds of associational properties that speakers of Cha'palaa tend to classify as collectives. I also pointed out that collective marking of animates is optional, so in the example above *chachi-lla* takes collective marking while *uyala* does not, even though both ethnonyms refer to multiple people.

### 3.3 Ethnonyms, oral history and whiteness

As I begin to discuss some of the Cha'palaa exonyms that are used to refer to other groups alongside the autonym *chachi* that they apply to themselves, I want to consider the semantics of the combination of collective marking with ethnonymic words. Here it is necessary to approach a number of problems related to questions asked in prototype theory and related approaches to categories and category gradation (Rosch 1973, Lakoff 1987). In prototype-based categories, category membership is not considered to be shared equally among members, so that there is no sharp line between what (or who) is a member and what (or who) is not. Applying this perspective narrowly

to social categorization rather than to categorization more broadly leads to a particular set of problems, since while with any system of categorization it is possible to explore a type's composition, identify its more canonical and more peripheral members, with systems of social categorization the categories turn back reflexively onto the same social world where they circulate. I do not want to undertake a fine-grained semantic analysis along those lines, however. Instead I wish to focus on the point where the semantics of ethnonyms at a grammatical level overflow into meaning that draws on social memory. When an ethnonym is articulated in combination with a collective suffix in reference to a human group in any instance of social interaction, it presupposes that such a group exists in shared social perception, that it can be identified by an interlocutor, that its members are understood to share certain identifying characteristics, and that they all could be described individually with the same ethnonym. The meaning of any singular or group reference using an ethnonym is enriched by the speakers' social knowledge and experience of social categories, including discourse like the oral traditions surrounding the ethnonym *uyala*. It can sometimes be unclear where to locate the point where grammatical semantic dimensions give way to cultural context and pragmatics as the relevant level of analysis.

In contrast with the example above in which *uyala* appeared unmarked for number, in the following example *uyala* is overtly marked for collectivity, implying that the *uyala* are an animate group with some kind of associational relationship capable of collective action:

(3.10) Mi-ji-'            ja-'            mi-ji-i-n-tu=ren  
 again-go-SR come-SR again-come-become-NMLZ-SR=EMPH  
 When they (the Chachi) returned, going and returning again,

**uyala-la**-chi            fa-fa-i-tu-de-i-n  
 foreigner-COL-DAT be.eaten-be.eaten-become-SR-PL-become-NMLZ  
 they ended up getting eaten by **the foreigners**.

The kind of associational relationship that the members of the group have, however, is filled in from social knowledge. For the word *uyala* this knowledge includes knowledge of oral history, providing details about the historical cannibalistic practices of the *uyala* as a group and their inter-group conflicts with the Chachis.

In addition to its use to refer to the historical enemies of the Chachis, the word *uyala* is also used in Cha'palaa to refer to white foreigners like me. During my field research, when Cha'palaa speakers referred to me in third person (or even sometimes in second person) they often used the term *uya ruku* (foreigner man), using the phonologically reduced modifier form of *uyala*. When speakers use this word from their oral history to refer to co-present people by their social category membership, what connection does this usage have to do with the historical usage? A version of this question was one of my standard interview questions. In the example below a speaker describes how the term has multiple applications – in the translations I have been using “foreigner” as a convenient translation, but it does not really cover this full range of meaning:

(3.11) **Uyala=bain** juntsa-la-a **uyala** uwain **uyala=bain**  
**foreigner=also** DM.DST-COL-FOC **foreigner** right **foreigner=also**  
The **foreigners**, those ones, the **foreigners**, right, they are also **foreigners**,

wee wee **uyala** de-e-we  
different different **foreigner** PL-be-DSJ  
there are different (kinds of) **foreigners** (from history and modern-day),

mati yai=bain tsaa=ren **uyala**.  
so 3COL=also SEM=EMPH **foreigner**  
so they are also (called) **foreigners**.

While there are two distinct groups that can be referred to by the word *uyala*, the fact that they share this label is not arbitrary. Some people say that, like modern-day white people, the historical *uyala* also had light-colored skin. In addition, there are pervasive discourses about white foreigners' cannibalistic practices that connect the modern-day *uyala* with their historical counterparts. On many occasions during my field research Chachi people asked me if they would be eaten if they traveled to the United States, the land of the *uyala*. Several people told me about a Chachi man who had married an *uyala* woman and gone to live with her in the United States; he had been at the table eating meat with his in-laws when he went into the kitchen and saw butchered human limbs. This tale is circulated among different Chachi communities and is often cited as second-hand confirmation of *uyala* cannibalism. Other white researchers in the area have reported experiences similar to my own, when curious Chachis asked them if it was really true that *uyala* eat people (Praet 2009). Stories of white cannibals have been recorded throughout the Andes and in other parts of South America (Weismantel 1997, 2001), and are part of broadly circulating discourses of race that the Chachis participate in through the specific articulations that I am focusing on here. An insightful way to analyze the analogy of the historical cannibals to modern-day white people as an interpretation of race relations that sees social conditions through a cultural lens of cannibals, monsters and devils (Taussig 1980). Similarly, in the framework I am using here *uyala* is a social category that constitutes an articulation of the wider racial category of white European descendants by drawing on the specific resources of Chachi language and culture.

In one interview, the interviewee made a chain of connections from the historical *uyala* to the modern-day *uyala* connected by phenotypic whiteness and then directly to the basic three-part racial and phenotypic categorization scheme reflecting the three major continental divisions. The speaker explained how the historical *uyala* were known as *jeen uyala*, meaning "wild" or "of the forest," and that their name has been borrowed for foreigners because of their shared whiteness:

(3.12) Ke-mu de-e-ñu'=mityaa **jeen uyala** ti-la-a-ka  
do-AG.NMLZ PL-become-DR=RES **wild foreigner** say-COL-FOC-DUB  
It is because they do that that they call them “**wild (forest)**” **foreigners**,

jele-sha palaa-yaa jeen uyala tsen=mala challa **uyala** ti-la-ya  
forest-LOC1 word-FOC wild foreigner SEM=when now **foreigner** say-COL-FOC  
the word for “from the forest”, now the ones they call **foreigners (gringos)**,

ya-la timbu-nu=ren **fiba-la-na-a uya-la** ti-mu de-e-ba  
3COL time-LOC2=EMPH **white-COL-ACC-FOC foreigner** say-AG.NMLZ PL-become-COM  
since long ago they have called **the whites “foreigners (uyala),”**

**uyala** **fiba**-de-e-ñu'=mitya,  
**foreigner white**-PL-become-DR=RES  
since the **foreigners** were **white**.

Asu **peechulla-la**-nu=bain **yapijtutu**-u=mala-a **peechulla** de-ti-shu,  
as **Black-COL-ACC=also dark-be=when-FOC Black** PL-say-IRR  
Like **the Blacks** are **dark**, that is why they are called “**peechulla**”

tsen=mala **lala**-nu=bain **normal** ju-u=mala **chachi** de-ti-sha-a-ka.  
SEM=when 1COL-ACC=also **SP:normal** be-CL:be=when **Chachi** PL-say-IRR-FOC-DUB  
and they call **us “Chachi”** because we **are normal-colored**.

My interviewee explained that, just as the foreigners are white, the Blacks are dark and “we” Chachis are “normal” color. The alignment of the “we” pronoun with the ethnonym Chachi is a topic that I will address in the next chapter. Here I am interested in the three-part ethnonymic division, its relationship to the naturalization of racial categories, and the speaker’s explicit ethnocentric nomativity from the position of a Chachi person. The people known as *uyala* can be variable referred to with the

overlapping category of *fiba-la* (white-COL), seen in the example above. The phenotypic whiteness of the *uyala* is a bridge for integrating the category *uyala* in Chachi oral history with the present-day racial category of whiteness. As noted in the introduction, the Spanish word *rasa* (race) has been incorporated into Chachi discourse, and in this example it is equated directly with whiteness as a racial category. The example is taken from an interview section in which I asked whether other white people visit the area frequently.

(3.13) Wee      **rasa-la**    ja-tu      matyu ñu'ne-  
 different **race-COL** come-SR so      2 just  
 Different **races** coming, as you [ask]-

**fiba-la**    ja'=bain            pasee-ne-'            yai-ba      nuka ji-n-tya'-ba.  
**white-COL** come-SR=come SP:go.around-SR 3COL-COM when go-NMLZ-feel-COM.  
**the whites** can come up and take a trip wherever they want.

In the introduction I described how I developed the ethnographic interviews I used in the field by attempting to listen first to the terms that commonly circulate in discourse and then using those terms in my questions. In this example, immediately following the previous example in the transcript, I used MM's word *fibala* from her previous turn to frame a question back to her using the same terms she did. I include this example to demonstrate how, in comparison to the early interactions with community members, by the time of this interview about six months into fieldwork, I was able to comprehend faster, to form longer sentences and to interact more smoothly in general.

(3.14)  
 SF:    **Fiba-la,**    e-nu            chu-nu, e-nu            ne-mu?  
**white-COL** DM.DST-LOC live-INF DM.PRX-INF go.around-AG.NMLZ  
**The whites,** they live here, or come around here?

MM: Ji' pasaa-ne-' (ne) mi-ji-i-mu de-ju  
 go-DR SP:go.around-go.around-SR again-go-CL:become-AG.NMLZ PL-be  
 The go, they come around for a trip and then they go back.

In her response the interviewee is referring to white people who travel in motorboats along the Cayapas River for tourism, as visiting doctors, NGO workers or anthropologists. These are the new *uyala* that are returning for the first time since the Chachi exterminated them hundreds of years ago.

### 3.4 Blackness and history encoded on ethnonyms

Compared to the long tradition of stories about the *uyala*, most of my interviewees claimed ignorance about the origins of Blacks in the region beyond a few generations back. In the following excerpt, an interviewee who had more formal education than most of the Chachis I worked with and who was aware of Afro-descendants' African origins. This speaker placed the arrival of Blacks at the same historical depth as the Chachi clashes with the *uyala*.

(3.15) **Uyala-la** guerra de-ki-ñu

**foreigner-COL** war PL-do-DR

**The foreigners** made war,

de-ne-piya-' ja-mu-la-a **afrikanu-la**,

COMP-go.around-disappear-SR come-AG.NMLZ-COL african-COL

and **the Africans** came escaping,

de-ti-we **peechulla-la-nu**, jun-ka guerra de-ki-n-tu

PL-say-DSJ **Black-COL-ACC** DM.DST-LOC3 war PL-do-NMLZ-SR

they say, (the foreigners attacked) **the Blacks**, attacking there,



de-venga-' i-n-tu, ne-piya-' ja-ta-a  
 COMP-revenge-SR become-NMLZ-SR go.around-disappear-SR come-SR-FOC  
 taking revenge, and escaping back,

tsa-i-mu-de-e **peechui** de-sera-a de-ti-ee  
 SEM-become-AG.NMLZ-PL-become **Black** COMPL-increase-FOC PL-say-DSJ  
 and doing that, **the blacks** have increased, they say.

In the example above the speaker uses the term *peechulla* to refer to Black people, along with its phonologically reduced form *peechui*; this ethnonym reduces similarly to the form in which *chachi* reduced to *cha'*, inserting a front vowel in place of the omitted lateral-initial syllable. I will further compare these phonological reductions below. In the following excerpt, I will continue with more of the same speaker's account of the early history of the Blacks in Ecuador, as one of the few examples in my data that mentions the history of the Spanish colonial slave trade.

(3.16) **Peechulla-la-ya** ma historia ke-ki-n=mala  
**Black-COL-FOC** one SP:story do-CL:do-NMLZ=when  
**The Blacks**, when we tell the story,

yala-ya **españoles-la** de-taa-ña-a de-ja'=mitya,  
 3COL-FOC **SP:Spanish-COL** PL-have-come-DR-FOC PL-come=RES  
 they were brought by **the Spanish** when they came,

mi-jta-a-ña naa i-ta-a e-nu  
 know-NEG-FOC-DR how become-SR-FOC DM.PRX-LOC2  
 I don't know how they came here,

Zapayu-nu=bain            de-tyui-na            ja-ñu=bain.  
TPN:Zapallo-LOC2=also COMPL-fill-be.in.POS come-DR=also  
how they came here to populate Zapallo.

Ne tu    mi'kes-ne-n-ta-a-ba  
just land look.for-go.around-NMLZ-DR-FOC-COM  
Just looking for land.

Common accounts of Black colonization of the region usually tell of how a few families, often identifiable by name, came seeking land, settled one region and gradually increased in number. Chachi oral history has the Chachi people settling the area from upriver, coming down the Andes, and the Blacks from downriver, coming up from the coast and Colombia. This history of encounter is encoded in the etymology of the ethnonym *peechulla*, which can be analyzed as *pele-chu-la* (down-live-COL) or “those that live collectively downriver.” This term with its historical meaning is, in turn, co-referential for a number of other words for the same social group, some of them drawing on phenotype and skin color. Here one interviewee listed several different terms for Blacks:

(3.17) Pababa, pababa-la, peechulla-la, yapijtutu-la.  
black    black-COL Black-COL    dark-COL  
Black, the blacks, the Blacks, the dark ones.

These collectivized terms are co-referential among each other and are all ways of referring to Afro-descendants as a collective group. Here I translate *peechulla* as “Black” in uppercase, *pababa* as a lowercase color term “black”, and the Spanish borrowing *neguee* as “*negro*,” to use a cognate term. When speakers make any kind of specific or general characterizing reference to Afro-descendants, they select from these different ethnonyms to communicate to their addressee which group of people they are talking about and the addressees can presumably identify the same social category.

While it is unclear how long the word Spanish *rasa* (race) has circulated in Chachi discourse, and it may only have relatively recent currency, the social category referred to with the ethnonym *peechulla* and related terms is to a large extent a racial category. In this example another Spanish word *casta* is used in a similar sense as *rasa* – the term “*casta*” (caste) is a way of talking about race that was popular during the Spanish colony, and while it is no longer used the same way in Ecuadorian Spanish, Cha’palaa preserves the racial meaning of the word. Before the word *rasa* was adopted, *casta* could have had a similar meaning. Here it is used together with the ethnonym *peechulla* for talking about phenotype, specifically body size:

(3.18) **Peechulla-la** ju-de-e-shu-juntsa-la

**Black-COL** be-PL-CL:be-IRR-DM.DST-COL

There are **Blacks**

mu-n aa=**kasta** peechulla-la-n

who-NMLZ AUG=**SP:cast** Black-COL-NMLZ

who are of a large “**caste,**”

Aa=**kasta** ju-' tsaa=ren **peechulla-la** ju-de-e-shu-juntsa

AUG=**SP:cast** be-SR SEM=DSJ **Black-COL** be-PL-CL:be-IRR-DM.DST

they are a large “**caste,**” (some of) **the Blacks** that are like that.

Application of ethnonyms for racial stereotyping in Cha’palaa discourse is sometimes about physical phenotype but is just as much about behavior. One common stereotype is violent behavior, often related to drunkenness, as mentioned in this excerpt from an interview with an older Chachi woman from a town on the Rio Cayapas where Chachis and Blacks live in adjacent settlements:

(3.19)

MM: Ura-de-e-we,            ura-de-e  
good-PL-become-DSJ good-PL-become FOC  
They are good (the Blacks), they are good,

yai-ba     firu' aja'-wi'-muj-che-e  
3COL-COM bad angry-enter-want-INSTR-  
but they can get angry,

ajaa wi-ta-a        chachi-lla-nu     winke-nu pude-de-e  
angry enter-SR-FOC Chachi-COL-ACC fight-INF SP:be.able-PL-become  
and when they get angry they can fight with Chachis;

fiesta   ki-tu ajaa   wi-mu-de-e  
SP:party do-SR angry enter-AG.NMLZ-PL-become  
when they have parties they get angry.

SF: Ajaa wi-n=mala        ti-ee     ke-nu.  
angry enter-NMLZ=when what-FOC do-INF  
When they get angry what do they do?

MM: Peechulla-a?  
Black-FOC  
The Blacks?

SF: Aja, peechulla.  
yes Black  
Yes, the Blacks.

MM: Peechulla chachi-lla-nu de-winkenmala  
Black Chachi-COL-INF PL-fight-NMLZ=when  
When the Blacks fight with the Chachis,

peechulla matyu wiña-n-chi-ya  
Black so get.drunk-NMLZ-INSTR-FOC  
when the Blacks are drunk,

peechulla chachi-lla-nu tu'-mu  
Black Chachi-ACC kill-AG.NMLZ  
the Blacks kill Chachis.

Tu'-nu de-ju tse'=mityaa ura-jtu wiña-n-chi  
kill-INF PL-be SEM=RES good-NEG get.drunk-NMLZ-INSTR  
They kill them, that is why it is not good to get drunk,

Peechulla-la fiesta pu-de-na-shu-junts-ee  
Black-COL SP:party be.in/on-PL-CL:be.in.POS-IRR-DM.DST-FOC  
the Blacks that are at a party,

chachi-lla firu' de-ke-n=mala  
Chachi-COL bad PL-do-NMLZ=when  
when Chachis behave badly,

pistojla-chi ke-ke-'=bain tsan-ki-nu-u ju-de-e  
SP:pistol-INSTR do-CL:do-SR=also SEM-do-INF-FOC be-PL-CL:do  
they could even do it with a gun, doing like that,

ajaa wi-mu            de-e-ba            tse'=mitya chachi-lla=bain.  
 angry enter-AG.NMLZ PL-become-COM SEM=RES Chachi-COL=also  
 they can also get angry for that reason, the Chachis too.

Sometimes ethnonyms are used in Cha'palaa discourse as part of extremely negative statements about other social groups, particularly their closest neighbors, the Blacks. Part of the problem I will address in Chapter 7 is how to approach interracial conflict between indigenous and Afro-descendant peoples like that discussed in this example from an interview from a town where Chachis and Blacks live in integrated neighborhoods:

(3.20) In    punto de vista-ya    chachi-i=tenee    ura'    chu-kee-nu ju-we,  
 1POSS SP:point.of.view-FOC Chachi-COL=LIM good sit-see-INF be-DSJ  
 In my point of view we will live well if there are only Chachis,

peechulla-la-ba-ya    ura'    chu-ke-ya-tyu  
 Black-COL-COM-FOC good sit-do-REFL-NEG  
 with the Blacks, living well is impossible,

peletu    pure' ju-nuu ju-we  
 problem many be-INF be-DSJ  
 there will have to be many problems,

historia    wan-ti-n-bala-ya,            peletu    pure' tsu-na tsaa=ren.  
 SP:story long-say-NMLZ=when-FOC problem many lie-be.in.POS SEM=EMPH  
 telling the whole long story, there have really been a lot of problems.

Discourse like that shown in the example above complicate romantic approaches that assume any natural solidarity between indigenous and Afro-descendant people. Negative discourse is in heavy circulation and reflects one important articulation of these

two different social groups in this particular ethnographic context. Even so, in another part of the interview cited above the same speaker observed that Chachis and Blacks share a similar class position:

(3.21) Bueno, chachi-lla-ba peechulla-la-ba kompara ke' kee=bala  
SP:well chachi-COL-COM Black-COL-COM sp:compare do-SR see=when  
Well, if we compare the Chachis with the Blacks,

Peechulla-la=bain, yai=bain yala' matyu, naa -  
Black-COL=also 3COL=when 3COL-POSS so how  
the Blacks also, they also, they, how -

pobresa-nu pa-ñu=bain peechulla-la-bain tsa=ren de-ju,  
SP:poverty-ACC speak-DR=also Black-COL=also SEM=EMPH PL-be  
speaking of poverty the Blacks are just like that,

chachi-lla-ba paree ju-de-ju.  
Chachi-COL-COM SP:same be-PL-CL:be  
they are the same as the Chachis.

Indigenous people and Afro-descendants on the rivers of Esmeraldas province are living within the course of their histories of settlement in the region, coming into it from different directions, finding plentiful natural resources, and then slowly becoming entrenched in territorial disputes as populations increased and resources were depleted. Today interracial conflict largely springs from these disputes, which are fuelled by faceless extractive industries that keep Chachis and Blacks alike in relationships of perpetual debt. Another interviewee reflected on the land disputes:

(3.22)

MR: Juntsa peechulla-la tu peletu ke-ke-de-ke-sha-a-ka  
DM.DST Black-COL earth problem do-do-PL-do-IRR-FOC-DUB  
Those Blacks are causing a land dispute,

aan-ku ja-ku bej-ee-sha Saabi-sha.  
DM.MED-LOC3 DM-LOC3 in.front-(?)-LOC1 TPM:Saabi-LOC1  
over here on the other (side) in Saabi.

SF: Saabi-sha?  
TPN:Saabi-LOC1  
In Saabi?

MR: Saabi-sha ura' de-chu-tyu mati  
TPM:Saabi-LOC1 good PL-live-NEG so  
They don't live well in Saabi,

tsa'=mitya-a mati naa ke-n-cha-a ne chu-de-na  
SEM=RES-FOC so how do-NMLZ- INSTR-FOC just live-PL-be.in.POS  
because of that, they live without (knowing) what to do,

tsa='mityaa mati de-tu'-nu pa-' kera-ke, tsan-ti-n-de-tsu-n  
SEM=RES so PL-kill-INF speak-SR see-do SEM-say-NMLZ-PL-PROG-NMLZ  
because (Blacks) are talking about killing (Chachis), that is what they are saying,

yala-n de-tu-ten-de-tyu-ya de-chu-sha-a-ka.  
3COL-NMLZ COMPL-kill-feel-NEG-FOC PL-live-IRR-FOC-DUB  
and while they don't kill them they are still living there.



The pressure for land and resources is one of the main issues underlying conflict between Chachis and Blacks. It is part of what is behind suggestions that if the Chachis still had possession of their magic weapons they could exterminate the Blacks and live only among Chachis. It is also a part of stereotypes of violent behavior attributed to Black people. In most discourse, the different social groups involved are referenced and tracked by the ethnonyms I have been describing here, which as terms of reference do not have any negative connotations on their own. I wondered if there might be other terms that are considered not just a reference to a social group but rather constitute racial slurs and insults, and in my interviews I sometimes included the question, “When the Chachis and Blacks are angry at each other, what kinds of things can they say?” One particular word came up several times in response to this question:

(3.23) Peechulla-na-a juyunku ti-mu de-e-sha-a-ka  
 Black-ACC-FOC howler.monkey say-AG.NMLZ PL-become-IRR-FOC-DUB  
 They used to call Blacks *juyungo* (“howler monkey”),

Yapij ruku de-e-ñu'=mitya,  
 dark man PL-be-DR=RES  
 because they are dark men,

chachi de-ju-tya-a ti-ta-a tsa-n-ti-la-a-ka  
 Chachi PL-be-NEG-FOC say-DR-FOC SEM-NMLZ-say-COL-FOC-DUB  
 to say that they aren’t human/Chachis, they would say that.

This use of the name for howler monkeys as a negative referential term for Blacks resonates with other dehumanizing discourses about Afro-descendants in many different social spaces around the world. When the Chachis articulate a version of this discourse they share in this larger process of circulation with the specific resources of their language. I wondered if there was a similar term in circulation that other groups used to refer to the Chachis. Interviewees often mentioned the word *cayapa* or *cayapo*, the

exonym by which Spanish speakers have historically identified the Chachis. The word has never had any currency in Cha'palaa, and Chachis consider the word to be offensive:

(3.24)

S: Peechulla-la naa de-ti chachi-lla-nu?  
Black-COL what PL-say Chachi-COL-ACC  
What do the Blacks call the Chachis?

MR: Peechulla-la naa ti-mu-de-e-n-ka,  
Black-COL how say-AG.NMLZ-PL-become-NMLZ-DUB  
What the Blacks might say,

mati **kayapu** ti-la-a-ka  
so **Cayapo** say-COL-FOC-DUB  
well, they might say “**Cayapo.**”

S: Kayapa ti-n=mala ura-a u ura-jtu?  
Cayapa say-NMLZ=when good-FOC SP:or good-NEG  
When they say “Cayapa” is that good or bad?

MR: Ura-jtu  
good-NEG  
It's bad.

ura-jta-a-ba ju-tya-a-n-ka  
good-NEG-FOC-COM be-NEG-be-FOC-NMLZ-DUB  
It's bad, it shouldn't be done,

yai-ba tsa-n-ti pa-mu-de'=mitya ura-jta-a-n-ka.  
 3COL-COM SEM-NMLZ-say speak-AG.NMLZ-PL=RES good-NEG-FOC-NMLZ-DUB  
 with them saying that, when they speak (that way) it isn't good.

*Cayapa* was the common exonym used by all non-Chachis to refer to Chachis, and has only recently been replaced by *chachi* in most Spanish language spoken and written discourse. However *cayapa* continues to circulate in Spanish discourse as an insult, and I heard Blacks using it from time to time in reference to Chachis. In contrast, while living in Chachi communities I never actually heard the word *juyungo* used to refer to Black people outside of the context of interviews about race relations. Instead, the word is usually used in reference to actual howler monkeys, but since the monkey population is seriously depleted in the area, it is not even used often in reference to them anymore. Once I heard children using it to comment on the DVD of the Hollywood movie *King Kong* that they were watching (in an augmentative form: *aa=juyunku*, AUG=howler.monkey). Some younger people claimed to never have heard the word in relation to Blacks, but most older people were familiar with this usage. It appears to have been current several generations ago, and is referenced in the title of Afro-Ecuadorian author Adalberto Ortiz's 1943 novel *Juyungo* about a Black protagonist who grew up among the Chachis (called "*cayapas*" in the novel) and who was given the nickname *juyungo* in reference to the word the Chachis used for him. Eventually the protagonist is rejected by the Chachi characters in the novel, partially due to their fear that if he died in the community there would be nowhere to bury him. "*Donde entierra cayapa no entierra juyungo*" says the Chachi authority, "Where Cayapa buried, *juyungo* (monkey) not buried" (1957, 66). As I discussed in relation to Chachi accounts of segregation in the afterlife, Chachi cosmology considers racial categories to continue into the afterlife, and according to the traditional laws that prohibit different kinds of interracial contact, even in burial the races should be separated. This tradition is continued today in the cemeteries by the Chachi ceremonial centers, where offerings to the ancestors are made and where only Chachis can be buried.

In his influential work in the psychological literature on prejudice, Allport discusses the relationship between ethnonyms and epithets from a cognitive standpoint, describing epithets as a class of ethnonyms (“nouns that cut slices”) that have a strong emotional charge (or, alternatively, that use more neutral ethnonyms in an emotionally-charged tone) (1954). Later developments following Allport’s approach have looked specifically at emotional responses to epithets (using the technical term “ethnophaulisms”; see Mullen and Leader 2005, Rice et al. 2010). From a more ethnographic perspective, I am interested in how such words evoke social history and inter-group relationships, which is what specific articulations of words like *juyungo* draw to create meaning when they occur in emotionally-charged interaction. In the example below, one interviewee points out that *juyungo* is a word that is used for speaking rudely, when Chachis are angry at Blacks.

(3.25) Juntsa juyungu palaa pa-mi-ya

DM.DST howler.monkey word speak-PTCP-FOC

That word “juyungo” is spoken,

lala firu' pa-ta-a juyungu ti-mu-de-e-ba,

1COL bad speak-SR-FOC howler.monkey say-AG.NMLZ-PL-become-COM

when we are speaking rudely to them, we say it,

firu' pa-tu yala-nu.

dad speak-SR 3POSS-ACC

insulting them.

Lala-nu yala de-ajaa-wi-kaa-pu-ña-a

1COL-ACC 3COL COMP-angry-get(?)-put.in/on-DR-FOR

When they make us get angry

**lala juyungu ti-mu-de-e-ba,**  
**1COL howler.monkey say-AG.NMLZ-PL-become-COM**  
**we say “juyungo” to them,**

**juyungu kera-de-e-ñu'=mitya tsan-ti-la tsaa=ren**  
**howler.monkey see-PL-be-DR=RES SEM-say-COL SEM=EMPH**  
**because they look like monkeys, that is what (they) say.**

palaa clave jayu, juntsa-de-e-ba  
word CL:key a.little DM.DST-PL-be-COM  
That is somewhat of a key word; that happens,

jayu, jayu ura' kishtyanu' chachi-j-de-tu-ba  
a.little a.little good SP:Christian Chachi-NEG-PL-NEG-COM(?)  
and it is not even a little bit Christian (behavior) for Chachis,

lala awii-ta-a juyunku ti-mu-de-e-ba.  
1COL get. angry-SR-FOC howler.monkey say-AG.NMLZ-PL-become-COM  
we get angry and say “juyungo.”

The interviewee above points out how using such racial epithets in conversation is not “Christian” behavior. As in Ecuadorian society more general, explicitly racist insults have come to be less and less acceptable in public discourse as overt racial discourses become to some degree more covert in Cha’palaa, and the racial application of the word *juyungo* is falling out of use. While in earlier times the Chachis participated in explicitly dehumanizing discourses, the currently-circulating discourses can be less blunt in the way they racialize social groups. Systems of ethnonyms and related words for racial categorization are frequently unstable over time. The present-day configurations of these systems need not be constant throughout history for the social groups it refers to to be distinguished, and in fact it is through historical trajectories of racial formation that they

change. The current terms may not directly reflect previous patterns of usage, but this is part of the dynamic of how broad social categories like race are articulated locally through heterogenous and unstable means.

### 3.5 Other exonyms and inter-indigenous differentiation

Currently Chachi people are coming into contact with other indigenous groups of Ecuador in new ways, through participation in nation-wide indigenous political movements as well as simply through increased mobility for traveling around the country. Currently some of these groups do not have dedicated ethnonyms in Cha'palaa, so the language has adopted and incorporated a number of Spanish words to compensate.

In this example from an interview with Lucrecia, she lists a number of collectivized ethnonyms in response to my question “In addition to Chachis and Blacks, what other people live in Ecuador?” Lucrecia is a Chachi woman from a small, remote town but has lived in other parts of Ecuador and who is married to an indigenous Awá man. She is aware of a number of different social groups:

(3.26) Serranu-la=bain      blanku-la=bain,      awaa-la=bain..

highlander-COL=also SP:white-COL=also Awá-COL=also

Also highlanders, also Whites, also Awá (indigenous people),

eepera-la=bain, cholo-la=bain      gringu-la=bain, a ver . . .

Epera-COL=also Cholo-COL=bain gringo-COL=also SP:let's see

also Épera (indigenous people), Cholos (indigenous people) and gringos, let's see-

While there is not a singular or dominant account of the Chachis' relationship to other indigenous groups as compared to their relationships to Afro-descendants and white people that circulated in Cha'palaa discourse, many speakers point out that unlike these

other social categories, members of different indigenous groups are phenotypically similar to Chachi people. Some go as far as Yambu did in his account cited in the introduction, grouping all indigenous people together as a single racial category in opposition to Blacks and Whites. In the following example one interviewee explains how the indigenous people known as “*paisanos*”, another name for the Awá, physically resemble the Chachis.

(3.27) Paisanu-la=bain, paisanu main juntsa=bain,  
 paisano-COL=also paisano one DM.DST=also  
 The “Paisanos” are also one (group), they also

Juntsa=bain **chachi kera**-de-e-sha-a-ka,  
 DM.DST=also **chachi see**-PL-become-IRR-FOC-DUB  
 they also seem to **look like Chachis**.

Juntsa=bain Buubun pee-sha-a de-chu-ña  
 DM.DST-also TPN:Borbón down-LOC1-FOC PL-sit-EV.INF  
 they also appear to live downriver from Borbón.

Other interviewees contrasted the physical similarity of the Chachis to other indigenous groups with cultural differences, such as language. Here an interviewee mentions the Épera, a population mostly centered in Colombia with some recent migration to Ecuador, who are also occasionally referred to as *cholos*. The Épera are speakers of a Chocoan language that is unrelated to Cha’palaa:

(3.27) Ya' idioma y el asiento wera' ta-a,  
 3-POSS SP:language SP:and.the.accent different have-FOC  
 Their language and accent is different,

tsen=mala epera=bain **chachi keraa** ju-'=bain  
SEM-when Épera=also **Chachi see**-FOC be-SR=also  
but even so the Éperas also **look like Chachis**,

yaila-' palaa asentu=bain wera' ju  
3COL-POSS language SP:accent=also different be  
but their language and accent are different.

Throughout my research Chachi interviewees consistently described Blacks, Whites and indigenous people as different races (*wee rasa-la*, different race-COL), reflecting the three major racial categories that have historically been relevant in Latin America. As these categories have existed historically in different places, they have tended to elide internal differentiation while sustaining these three categories in different forms. For example, within the slave economy and throughout the later history of structural racism and discrimination, both official and unofficial, Afro-descendants with different cultural, linguistic, and geographical origins within Africa and in the Diaspora have been constituted as a single racial group, regardless of their cultural heterogeneity. The same has largely been true for descendants of people from different European countries, who may be culturally distinct but are all racially White.<sup>17</sup> For the Chachis cited above who observe physical similarities among indigenous people despite their linguistic and cultural differences, a similar kind of racial logic is at work.

Indigenous people of Ecuador, including the Chachis, do sometimes remark on phenotypic differences among indigenous groups. For example, the Chachis often point out that their southern neighbors the Tsachila speak a language that is so closely related to Cha'palaa that they can sometimes mutually understand a few words of it, but they also note that the Tsachila tend to have lighter skin and hair than the Chachis. However,

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<sup>17</sup> In US society some Euro-descendants have historically had ambiguous status such as the Irish (Ignatiev 1995), Jews (Brodkin 1998) and Italians (Guglielmo and Salerno 2003), however I would argue that the major continental racial categories have been relevant, if perhaps not absolute, since the early part of the history of European colonial expansions.



the interviewee in the example below uses explicitly racial language to describe first, the social terrain of different racial groups, and then within the indigenous race, a number of different peoples speaking different languages but having a single blood (*ma asa* – one blood) and a similar skin color (*ma color* – one color).

(3.28) Pure-de-e-we            wee        wee        rasa de-ju-we  
 many-PL-become-DSJ different different race PL-be-DSJ  
 There are many different races,

ma rasa-a    de-ju-tyu, wee        wee        rasa de-ju,  
 one race-FOC PL-be-NEG different different race PL-be  
 there is not just one race, there are many different races.

Koloraadu-la=bain de-ju, awaa chachi-lla-ba.  
 Colorado-COL=also PL-be Awá Chachi-COL-COM  
 There are also Colorados, and Awá people.

pa-ñu-ba        **lala asa-ya    ma asa-a    de-ju-yu,**  
 speak-DR-COM **1COL blood-FOC one blood-foc PL-be-CNJ**  
 (but) speaking about (them), **we are all a single blood**

tsaa=ren    idioma=ren        wee        palaa    ta-de-ju  
 SEM=EMPH SP:language=EMPH different language have-PL-be  
 but there are different languages.

**Ma asaa ta-de-ju,    piel=bain    ma color=ren        ta-de-ju,**  
**one blood have-PL-be SP:skin=also one    SP:color=EMPH have-PL-be**  
**They have one blood, and their skin also is one single color,**

epera-la=bain culaadu-la-la=bain  
Épera-COL=also Colorado-COL-COL-also (?)  
the Épera also, the Colorados also,

kulaadu-la' palaa-nu-ya jaya-a aseeta i-mu-we  
Colorado-COL-POSS language-ACC-FOC a.little-FOC understand become-AG.NMLZ-DSJ  
but the Colorados' language can be understood a little,

jaya-a aseeta i-mu man-palaa-la-ya,  
a.little-FOC understand become-AG.NMLZ again-language-COL-FOC  
a few words can be understood,

naa ti de-pa-ñu-ba jayu ju-nu  
how say PL-speak-DR-COM a.little be-INF  
when they speak, it is a little,

lala-' palaa=ren jayu pa-mu-de-e-we.  
1COL-POSS language=EMPH a.little speak-AG.NMLZ-PL-become-DSJ  
our same language they speak, a little bit.

Tsaa-tu=ren, restu en-ku,  
SEM-SR=EMPH SP:rest DM.PRX-LOC3  
However the rest (of the indigenous people) around here,

epera-la-' palaa ju-u-shu-juntsa naa aseeta i-tyu-we,  
Épera-COL-POSS language be-CL:be-IRR-DM.DST how understand become-NEG-DSJ  
the language of the Épera cannot be understood,

tsen=mala awaa-la-' palaa-nu-bain aseeta i-tyu.  
 SEM=when Awá-COL-POSS because-ACC=also understand become-NEG  
 and the language of the Awás cannot be understood either.

Chachis who are not familiar with the circulation of ethnic terms in Spanish language discourse do not tend to describe the differences among indigenous groups as “ethnic” differences. In this example the interviewee Antonia, who is a political activist and is familiar with such terms, uses the Spanish word *etnia* (ethnicity) in a discussion of different indigenous people in Ecuador, also extending ethnicity to groups referred to by the collectivized ethnonyms *fibala* (whites) and *chinula* (Chinese – with a small population in Ecuador).

(3.29) Jayu wee wee lala **etnia** de-chu,  
 a.little different different 1COL **ethnicity** PL-live,  
 We are several different **ethnic groups** that live (here),

de-chu-ka-ya=shee entsa ecuadur-nu  
 PL-live-get-REFL=AFF DM.PRX Ecuador-LOC2  
 they live here in Ecuador.

Fiba-la=bain de-chu-ña, chinu-la=bain de-chu-ña.  
 white-COL=also PL-live-EV.INF Chines-COL=also PL-live-EV.INF  
 There are also whites living (here), and also Chinese people living (here).

But as discussed in the introduction, ethnic terminology is primarily used by bilingual Chachis like Antonia who move in Spanish-speaking circles. My impression of Chachi understandings of social difference among different indigenous people referred to by the ethnonyms in these examples is that they are not entirely cultural or ethnic but also have elements of racial categorization. As will be described in detail in a later in Chapter 6 the Chachi have traditionally had strong prohibitions against marriage with non-

Chachis, and while most Chachis say that unions among members of different indigenous groups are preferable to marriage between Chachis and Blacks or Whites, they are also conscious of phenotypic differences among indigenous people and take them into account. In this example an interviewee describes the groups referenced by the ethnonyms *eyu* (highlander), *awaa* (Awá), and *epera* (Épera) as each having their own body type, which results in physical changes in offspring from inter-group unions regardless if they are among indigenous people.

(3.30) Cambia i' chu-de-na-we

SP:change become-SR live-PL-be.in.POS-DSJ

They are changing,

tsa'=mitya nuka naa ju chachi-lla eyu-la awaa juu-la  
 SEM=RES where how be Chachi-COL highlander-COL Awá be-CL:be-COL  
 because each one of the people, the highlanders, the Awá,

eepera de-ti-ñu chachi-lla=bain yai=bain  
 Épera PL-say-EV.INF Chachi-COL=also 3COL=also  
 the ones called Épera, and Chachis also, they also

yala' cueepu ne ju'de-e tsa'=mitya  
 3COL-POSS SP:body just be-PL-CL:be SEM=RES  
 each have their own body (type) and because of that,

juntsa-la=bain mati wee wee chachi ju-ke-ya  
 DM.DST-COL so different different Chachi be-do-FOC  
 they are becoming different kinds of people,

tsa'=mitya chachi-lla juntsa-de-e-shu  
SEM=RES Chachi-COL DM.DST-PL-be-IRR  
for that reason it is like that with the Chachis,

wee chachi=bain chachi-lla-ba de-cambia i-'  
different Chachi=also Chachi-COL-COM PL-SP:change become-SR  
the Chachis are also changing into a different kind of person

chu-de-di-we tsa'=mitya.  
live-PL-come.into.POS-DSJ SEM=RES  
living like that, for that reason.

As a counterpoint to the previous example, in the example below the interviewee Luciano reflected on the experience of an Awá man who married a local woman – Lucrecia, mentioned earlier – and came to live in the small Chachi community where I did much of my field research. Luciano has a very positive opinion of the Lucrecia’s husband as expressed in the example below. This example is also a good illustration of many of the points I have made in this chapter regarding discourse and linguistic form: the ethnonym *chachi* occurs in the broad sense of “people”, in the more narrow sense of “Chachi people” and in the form of a modifier as *cha’* as well as in combination with collective marking; the ethnonym *awaa* also occurs in collectivized form in the first line:

(3.31) **Awaa-la chachi**-de-e-we, main Tsejpi-nu  
**Awá-COL Chachi**-PL-be-DSJ one TPN:Tsejpi-LOC2  
There are **Awá people**, (there’s) one (here) in Tsejpi,

**cha’ supu** ka'chumu main **chachi**  
**Chachi female** get-SR live-AG-NMLZ one **Chachi**  
he married a Chachi woman and lives (here), one **man**.

Tsaa yuj ura ruku main chu-we Tsejpi-nu  
SEM very good man one live-DSJ TPN:Tsejpi-LOC2  
A very good (Awá) man lives here in Tsejpi.

Ya-ba tsa-na-mu'=mitya  
3-COM SEM-be.in.POS-AG.NMLZ=RES  
Living with him,

yumaa tsai **chachi-lla**-ba chu-mi ja'=mitya  
now SEM **Chachi**-COL-COM live-PTCP come=RES  
as he has come to live with **the Chachis**,

**chachi-lla**-nu ne na'baasa firu'-pensa=bain ke-tya-a tsejtu=ren  
**Chachi**-COL-LOC2 only disorderly bad think=also do-NEG-FOC SEM-EMPH  
he does not have any bad thoughts about **the Chachis**,

ya=bain yuj ura ruku-we.  
3=also very good man-DSJ  
he also is a very good man.

While the Awá and the Tsachila speak languages from the Barbacoan language family like Cha'palaa and live in similar tropical forest terrain in the foothills of the Andes, there is not evidence that the Chachi have had any historical relationships with them except for sporadic contact since the 20<sup>th</sup> century. This social history is reflected in the ethnonyms used to refer to neighboring indigenous groups, which are all borrowed from Spanish or are autonyms from the respective languages. The ethnym *eyu* that Chachis use to refer to Quechua-speaking highlanders, on the other hand, is a native Chachi word that appears to have been in use since early contact between Chachis and highland people perhaps as far back as the Inca and Spanish invasions. As discussed in

the introduction, Chachi oral history tells of migration from the Andean highlands, and early Quechua borrowings into Cha'palaa date from this period.<sup>18</sup> While in recent decades the Chachi have increased their contact with other indigenous people like the Tsachila, developing new labor relationships as migrant workers on Tsachi farms near the city of Santo Domingo, their language does not have a ready-made ethnonym for referring to the Tsachila. In contrast, while the Chachis today have virtually no contact with highland Quechua-speakers, they have inherited a specialized ethnonym for referring to them through their history of inter-group contact. Chachis often notice the traditional clothing of the highlanders as one of their identifying characteristics:

(3.32) **Juntsa chachi-lla** ju-de-e-shu-juntsa-a mati

DM.DST **Chachi**-COL be-PL-CL:be-IRR-DM.DST-FOC so

The ones that are **those people** (highlanders)

yai-chi aabaa jaa- aabaa jali puj-taa=bain . . . [cut]

3COL-POSS long clothe- long clothes wrap.up-SR=also

their long cloth- long, wrapped-up clothing,

. . . wara tashpipii **eyu-la-a** ne-mu-de-ju

pants long.dragging **highlander**-COL-FOC go.around-AG.NMLZ-PL-be

and the highlanders go around with long dragging pants,

kata-a katawa katawa de-i-we

find-FOC find find PL-because-DSJ

encountering them (like that).

Tsa'=mitya yai=bain yaila-' bestimientu juu-shu-juntsa

SEM=RES 3COL=also 3COL-POSS SP:clothing be-IRR-DM.DST

For that reason they also have their own clothing;

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<sup>18</sup>See Floyd 2009 for a discussion of Quechuan influence on the Cha'palaa numeral system

wee wee ke-mu de-ju tsa'=mitya  
 different different be-AG.NMLZ PL-be SEM=RES  
 they make there own different (kinds of clothes) for that reason.

Even though Chachis do not often encounter highland indigenous people, they have access to knowledge about different characteristics and stereotypes associated with them through the discourse that circulates in Chachi communities. For example, here a Chachi interviewee that I asked about the *eyu* people explains that the old men talk about the stereotype that highland people are unable to swim, since they live in the mountains where the rivers are too rapid and the climate too cold for swimming:

(3.33) Tsaa=ren ma paate **eyu-la** de-ti-ña-a  
 SEM=EMPH one part **highlander-COL** PL-say-DR-FOC  
 So they say in some places about **the highlanders**,

ruku-la de-kuinda ke-tu tsa-de-ti-we  
 man-COL PL-converse do-SR SEM-PL-say-DSJ  
 the old men say when they are conversing,

**eyu-la-a** pipe-tyu-de-e de-ti-we.  
**highlander-COL-FOC** bathe-NEG-PL-become PL-say-DSJ  
 they say that the highlanders cannot swim.

Chachi households are always near a waterway and children become competent swimmers shortly after they learn to walk. By the time they are ten or so they can already handle canoes alone and can dive underwater for long periods of time to catch fish and freshwater shrimp. For this reason the idea that highland people cannot swim seems strange and funny to Chachi people, who sometimes smile or laugh when remarking on it.



Earlier in my discussion of the ethnonyms for indigenous Chachi people, Whites and Blacks, I pointed out how these words have alternate phonologically-reduced forms that occur in modifier position. The older native words contrast with the ethnonyms that have been more recently introduced into Cha'pala from Spanish because those words do not have reduced forms. The reduced form of the ethnonym *eyu* is *e'*, sometimes occurring without the glottal stop as *e*. In the first line of this example the reduced form of *eyu* modifies the collective word *ruku-la* (man-COL) and in lines three and five modifies the word *chachi*, here in its broader sense of “person” rather than “Chachi”:

(3.34) **E-ruku-la-a**            yaila-'        jali-nu-n            aseeta        ii-mu  
**highlander-man-COL-FOC** 3-POSS clothes-ACC-NMLZ understand become-AG.NMLZ  
 One can identify **the highland men** by their clothing,

yaila-' pala-a,    aseeta        yaila-' palaa-nu-n  
 3-POSS language understand 3-POSS language-ACC-NMLZ  
 and their language, one can identify their language,

**e-chachi**            Quitu-sha        chu-mu        ja-shu-juntsa-a  
**highlander-Chachi** TPN:Quito-LOC1 sit-AG.NMLZ come-DR-DM.DST-FOC  
**the highland people** who live in Quito

jayu,    nijka    jayu    de-mejtan-ten-na            pa-'        ju-u-de-ju  
 a.little tongue a.little PL-get.sticky-feel-be.in.POS speak-SR be-be-PL-be  
 speak a little bit like their tongue was sticky,

tse'=mitya-a    **e-chachi**            ti-la-a-ka,            tisee  
 SEM=RES-FOC **highland-Chachi** say-COL-FOC-DUB um  
 they call them **highland people**, um

Quitu-sha      chu-n jaku      siera-sha      chu-mu-de-e-ti-ta-a.

TPN:Quito-COL live-NMLZ ?-LOC3 SP:highland-LOC1 live-AG.NMLZ-PL-be-say-SR-FOC  
um, because they live in Quito there in the highlands, they say,

lala    tsan-ti-mu-de-e                    **e-ruku.**

1COL SEM-say-AG.NMLZ-PL-be **highlander-man**

that is what we say about **the highland men.**

This example again refers to their clothing and their language as the highlanders' distinguishing characteristics. Once when some highland workers visited the Chachi community where I was living I surprised the locals by having a conversation with the highlanders in Quechua, which according to the interviewee cited above sounds to Chachi ears like talking with a "sticky tongue." When I heard friends re-telling the story later, they used the term *e' palaa*, combining the reduced modifier form of *eyu* with the word *palaa* for "language", to refer to Quechua as "highlander language."

Processes of phonological reduction in Cha'palaa are widespread and reduced words have at least one syllable less than the longer forms, and apply not when words are isolated but when they are part of multi-morpheme words and phrases. Sometimes these reductions create homophones and otherwise make linguistic constructions opaque, leading to a greater reliance on discourse structure and pragmatic context for disambiguation. It is likely that these processes developed through patterns of discourse frequency that led to this tension between economy (less syllables) and transparency. While phonological reduction is pervasive in different parts of the language, reduction of nominal forms in modifier position is limited to a few types of words like ethnonyms that are used frequently as modifiers. If the native ethnonyms came to have reduced forms based on a history of discourses of social categorization of human referents, this helps to understand why the borrowed terms only have their full forms, as they have only recently been part of such discourses.

Another point to be considered about human referents and discourse frequency is that given the animacy hierarchy that constrains collective marking described in the previous chapter, as referents for categories of people ethnonyms are among the most commonly collectivized words in Cha’palaa. The examples of ethnonyms in discourse in this chapter have illustrated that while overt collective marking is not obligatory, it is still very frequent, as social category terms are classic collectives. In fact, two of the ethnonyms discussed in this chapter have been collectivized so frequently in discourse that the collective suffix has fused to their roots. When the terms *uyala* and *peechulla* occur with collective marking they seem to be doubly-marked, but looking at patterns of co-occurrence with quantifiers reveals how the fused marking no longer entails multiple referents, so the roots can occur with the numeral “one”, while words marked by the currently productive collective suffix cannot. A comparison of *uyala* and *peechulla* with the ethnonym *eyu* can illustrate this pattern; (a) reduced modifier forms cannot head noun phrases alone, (b) the simple roots can be single referents or (c) multiple referents, (d) but the collectivized root cannot be a single referent, (e) only a multiple referent.

(3.35)	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)
	*ma uya	ma uyala	pai uyala	*ma uyala-la	pai uyala-la
	*ma peechui	ma peechulla	pai peechulla	*ma peechulla-la	pai peechulla-
	la				
	*ma e’	ma eyu	pai eyu	*ma eyu-la	pai eyu-la
	one X	one X	two X	one X-COL	two X-COL
	(reduced)	(single)	(multiple)	(single)	(multiple)

For the terms *uyala* and *peechulla* the collective marker has become part of the root (in its two different allomorphs *-la* and *-lla*, the difference being primarily phonological), so that the apparent double collective marking of these words is in fact only normal collective marking, since speakers no longer apply a morpheme boundary between the original root and the suffix. This process can also be confirmed by looking at the reduced forms of the ethnonyms, because the short forms delete the final syllable of

the root, which is a single morpheme, not a complex form. The term *eyu* has not fused to the collective suffix, so dropping a syllable yields *e'*, while the term *uyala* included a fused collective suffix, and so its reduced form is *uya* not *\*u'*. This table will help to keep track of the reduced, full, and collectivized form of the main set of ethnonyms in Cha'palaa:

Unmarked /singular form	Collectivized form	Reduced form	Co-referential words	Language
chachi	chachilla	cha'	cayapa (old term, sometimes insulting)	cha'palaa (“Chachi language”)
uyala	uyalala	uya	fiba (white), gringo (foreign white), Indio bravo (wild Indian)	uya palaa (English, “foreigner language”)
peechulla	peechullala	peechui	pababa (black), negee (SP: <i>negro</i> ), juyungo (howler monkey, insulting)	peechui palaa (Spanish, “Black language”)
eyu	eyula	e'	serrano (SP:highlander), Otavaleño (from Otavalo)	e' palaa (Quechua)

In this chapter I have shifted back and forth between registers of descriptive linguistics and ethnography in an attempt to present Cha'palaa ethnonyms as both linguistic forms integrated into a grammatical system and as resources for social categorization in discourse, so that the instances of discourse presented in the examples above could be jointly understood as articulations of both linguistic systems and social conditions. The developments of phonological reduction and morphemic fusion in the roots shown in the table above came to pass through histories of language usage in specific moments of discourse like those presented in this chapter. Frequent modification with ethnonyms led to more economic modifying forms by deleting a syllable while frequent collectivization pushed in the opposite direction for two of the ethnonyms by adding a syllable. The motivation for such frequency effects is tied into practices of referring to social categories in discourse and interaction, so this data provides ways for

thinking about the interfaces between grammatical systems and the social world, through specific articulations like those analyzed here, and through the larger patterns of circulation that they reflect.

## Summary

My treatment of Cha'palaa ethnonyms in this chapter describes them as part of a linguistic system that has developed out of a specific social history and at the same time as a discursive resource that shapes social categories in speech and interaction, delineating category memberships, boundaries and contrasts. In linguistic terms, ethnonyms are basically nominal words with animate human referents that in one way or another cohere as a group, but analyzing their semantics beyond this basic level can be complicated because of problems relating to how individuals and groups are referred to as typical members of social categories. At a certain point a semantic analysis of ethnonyms gives way to meaning that draws directly on the social history that speakers both reflect and reproduce when they deploy ethnonyms in discourse. In the examples in this chapter Cha'palaa speakers mentioned different stereotypes and other distinguishing characteristics that identify people as members of social groups such as temperament, language, clothing, body size, and so on. But beyond these typifying characteristics, social categories have the additional dimension of being constituted by associations among members, a point which I made in relation to collective marking in the previous chapter. Ethnonyms are so frequently collectivized in discourse that the social practice of collective reference has led to changes in some of the linguistic forms to create the terms *uyala* (Whites/foreigners) and *peechulla* (Blacks) with fused collective suffixes. Ethnonyms are also used as modifiers of other referents in discourse, either for categorizing other human referents as belonging to specific categories (*cha' supu*, Chachi woman) or for associating other referents with specific social groups (*cha' tu*, Chachi land). Through frequent use as modifiers, older ethnonyms in Cha'palaa have developed alternate reduced forms that allow for more economical modification, providing another example of how the use of ethnonyms in social interaction shapes their linguistic form.

The next chapter will analyze how ethnonyms are anchored directly into such instances of interaction through the pronoun system, which applies social categories to participants in speech events.

## Chapter 4: Collective Pronouns, social categories and discourse structure

### 4.1 Ethnonyms and pronouns in us/them alignment

In this chapter I will discuss some aspects of social categorization at the level of discourse structure in Cha'palaa speech. To do so, it is necessary to connect the topics of collectivity and ethnonyms discussed in previous chapters with a third topic: **the pronominal system**. I will describe Cha'palaa pronouns and show how they establish **co-reference** with discourse entities through **anaphor** and other means, functioning both to **characterize** and to **track reference** to collective groups of people through discourse. Anaphoric relationships (in a broad sense, conflating cataphor, exophor, etc.) are co-referential relationships that exist between a word and the discourse preceding or following it, or between a word and something in the world; they can be relationships among different sentences in the immediate discourse or relationships to things in the world like spatial configurations and people engaged in social interaction. Anaphor forms part of the mechanisms by which languages build discourse structures that track successive references to a specific person by linking proper names to pronouns to person in the room, and maintaining those linkages through long stretches of discourse so that they are available to participants. Cumulative anaphoric and co-referential linkages across discourse create discourse structures that allow speakers and hearers to understand and organize who did what to whom. In constructing such linkages discourse structure can be a way of characterizing or classifying referents through different referential strategies.

Returning for a moment to the account of Chachi oral history given by Yambu in the introduction, we can now examine his discourse with more analytical tools for understanding it. In the first line the first person collective pronoun is used together with a collective predicate. The pronoun from the first line has a relationship to the noun

phrase *chachilla* (Chachis) in the third line because, from the perspective of the speaker, these are overlapping collectivities that he belongs to. This relation can be called one of **co-reference**, meaning that both elements reference the same collective group, or that they overlap referentially in some way. In this and in several other examples below I will use arrows ( $\updownarrow \leftrightarrow$ ) to show co-referential relationships between elements in [brackets]:

(4.1)	1COL>	Timbu-nu	[lala]	chu-lla
	$\updownarrow$	time-LOC2	1COL	sit-COL
	$\updownarrow$	In the old times [we] lived,		
	$\updownarrow$			
	$\updownarrow$	Ibara-bi-e-e	chu-mu	de-e-wa-ña-a,
	$\updownarrow$	TPN:Ibarra-LOC4-FOC	sit-AG.NMLZ	PL-become-PTCP-EV.INF-FOC
	$\updownarrow$	in Ibarra (we) appear to have lived.		
	$\updownarrow$			
	CO-REF>	Ibara-bi-ee	chu-lla	[chachi-lla].
		TPN:Ibarra-LOC4-FOC	live-COL	Chachi-COL.
		<b>The [Chachis] lived</b> in Ibarra.		

It is because of examples like this one that I must stress that co-reference is sometimes a loose relationship. Here the first person collective pronoun includes the speaker along with the *chachilla* (Chachis) that lived *timbunu* (long ago), none of which would be still living today. The form in which the pronoun *lala* can be co-referential with the collective noun *chachilla* is through an association of past and present people established through their shared history, ancestry and ties of cultural transmission. In this sense, Yambu can talk about “we” in the “old times.” Personal pronouns have an “obligatory ‘referential’ relationship” (Shankara Bhat 2004, 272) with other noun phrases with which they can co-refer. But when those noun phrases refer to social categories, that relationship is not always straightforward, since social categories are themselves reproduced and delineated to some degree in discourse. By including both the historical and present-day Chachis in the same pronominal reference in the example above, Yambu



articulates the social category of Chachi as one that exists across generations through establishing this co-referential relationship.

This chapter will consider examples of discourse in which pronouns are used in co-reference with the social categories referenced by ethnonyms. Many of these examples are from interviews in which Chachi people were asked to reflect on their relationship with other social groups, a kind of interaction in which social categorization should be salient by virtue of the topics under discussion. This conversational context is not entirely informal, and some of the pronoun alignment patterns observed in the discourse would not have been established had I personally not been a participant, as I will clarify below. But in any context person reference is a good place to examine members' own analysis of their own and others' membership in social groups (as a "membership categorization device"; Sacks 1992, Schegloff 2007). The interviews were designed specifically to elicit explicit social categorization in discourse and for the most part successfully did so. My own category status was also subject to definition in the discourse when my participant role as a second-person addressee became co-referent with my social category of *uyala* (foreigner) and *fiba* (white). My Chachi interlocutors, on the other hand, often aligned the first person speaker role with the category Chachi, sometimes entirely juxtaposed as "we Chachis":

- 1COL↔ ↔ ↔ CO-REF  
 (4.2) [Lala]            [chachi-lla] kule kalare' atia-mu-we            negee-la-nu.  
 1COL                Chachi-COL canoe get.out sell-AGNMLZ-DSJ SP:negro-COL-ACC  
 We Chachis make canoes to sell to the *negros*.

The relationship of co-reference between collective pronouns and collective noun phrases can go in either direction, either from right to left (anaphor in a narrow sense, versus cataphor), as seen above ("we Chachis") where the pronoun is the antecedent, or left to right, when the pronoun references back to a nominal antecedent, as seen here:

(4.3) I=bain mi-jtu naa ju-ta-a,  
I=also know-NEG how be-SR-FOC  
I also do not know how

CO-REF ↔ ↔ 1COL

[Chachi-lla] [lala] peechulla-la-ba ch-u=bain,  
**Chachi-COL 1COL** Black-COL-COM sit-SR=also  
we Chachis lived with the Blacks,

ura' mi-jtu, en-ku  
good know-NEG DM.PRX-LOC3  
I don't know well,

uma ajke' pebulu ke-nu ura-nu=ren.  
now before town do-INF good-ACC=AFF  
back before they built the town.

In the two examples above the co-referential relation is not long-distance across clauses but simply stretches between adjacent words in the same sentence. Because the third person noun phrase *chachilla* and the first person pronoun *lala* are co-referential in the same sentence, and since there is no other person agreement information on the predicate, the distinction between first and third person is almost meaningless here. A consequential aspect of Cha'palaa grammar for understanding the pronominal system is that Cha'palaa predicates do not have person marking. Their only agreement marking is for number, and this is optional. In the example above, the predicate is a stative construction based on the verb “to sell” that alone would be ambiguous for person. In Cha'palaa, person is not marked morphologically but rather can be marked with explicit subjects, either noun phrases or pronouns. However explicit subjects are also not obligatory, since predicates can be completely unmarked for person when they can derive information on referents from discourse structure. In the example below the predicate has

no explicit person marking but a first person collective subject can be inferred from the **conjunct marking** on the verb. What has been called “mirativity” (see Delancey 1997, 2001) or “conjunct/disjunct marking” in several languages including those of the Barbacoan language family (Dickinson 2000, Curnow 2002) is a kind of alignment system that marks epistemic authority of the speaker in declaratives and of the addressee in interrogatives. In simpler terms, it marks whether a statement makes sense from a specific perspective. Because in most cases the conjunct epistemic stance is related to the perspective of the speaker and because in declarative sentences speakers usually cannot claim any epistemic authority over any other person, conjunct marking tends to associate with the first person. A predicate with no explicit subject and with both plural and conjunct marking like that shown below will usually be interpreted as first person (and my consultants would translate into the Spanish first person plural):

(4.4) Peechulla-la-ba ura' chu-mu de-e-yu,  
 Black-COL-COM good sit-AGNMLZ PL-become-CNJ  
 (INFERENCE: We) live well with the Blacks,

ura' chu-tyu de-e-ñu=bain.  
 good live-NEG PL-become-EV.INF=also  
 but also don't seem to live well (sometimes).

It is impossible to give a full account of conjunct/disjunct distinctions in Cha'palaa here; it is simply one of a number of grammatical properties of the language that can be used in ways that give inferences about person when there is no explicit marking otherwise. However, because these other subsystems of grammar are not real person marking systems, they can be disentangled from specific persons in the right contexts. In the following example the conjunct marker occurs in a sentence not with the first person pronoun but with a third person collective subject (*chachilla*):

- (4.5) CO-REF> [Chachi-lla] politica de-ta-na-yu.  
 ↓ Chachi-COL SP:politics PL-have-be.in.POS-CNJ  
 ↓ The Chachis have (organized) politics.  
 ↓  
 1COL> [Lala]-ya tsaa=ren peechulla-la-ya de-ta-na-tyu.  
 1COL-FOC SEM=EMPH Black-COL-FOC PL-have-be.in.POS-NEG  
 We (do), but the Blacks do not have (the same).

When the speaker's perspective aligns with a third person referent like a collective ethnonym, an easy link is made between that category and the speaker's social category membership. In the example above the sentence with a third person subject is immediately followed by another sentence with a co-referential first person collective pronoun, showing this co-referential relationship. Because both of the predicates above have third person subjects, this example nicely illustrates the conjunct/disjunct distinction; in the second line, the predicate does not take conjunct marking, and so the social category membership of the speaker and the third person ethnonym *peechulla* do not align in the same way.

Even when ethnonyms are not explicitly co-referential with pronouns, Cha'palaa often relies on discourse structure to imply such alignments. In the example below, the first sentence includes a first person subject and a conjunct marker but no social category term. When the first person is juxtaposed with a third person collective referent that *is* co-referent with an ethnonym (*peechulla*) the person distinction can also be read as a social category distinction:

- (4.6) 1COL> Laa=bain lu-' pasee-ne-'  
 1COL=also go.up-SR SP:go.around-go.around  
 We also go up to take a trip

kera-ke tsaa ne ju-de-e-yu.  
 see-do SEM go.around be-PL-CL:be-CNJ  
 and look around, that's how (we) are.

3COL> [Yai]=bain wi-ja-ta-a en-ku pasee-ne-'  
 ↓ 3COL=also enter-come-SR-FOC DM.PRX-LOC3 SP:go.around-go.around-SR  
 ↓ They also come in around here, taking trips,  
 ↓  
 CO-REF> ma-lu-mu de-e-ba [peechulla-la]=bain.  
 again-go.up-AG.NMLZ PL-become-COM Black-COL=also  
 and then they go back down, **the Blacks** also.

Similar frames of person alignment with social categories can be extended for long stretches of Cha'palaa discourse. In this example the speaker never uses the autononym *chachilla* (Chachis) in co-reference to the repeated usages of the first person collective pronoun (also in alignment with conjunct and plural marking on predicates). The third person, on the other hand, does occur in co-reference with two exonyms used for Afro-descendant people (*peechulla*, *negeela*). In this sense, the personal pronouns can take on aspects of social categorization even without being explicitly associated with social categories in discourse. In this transcript, two different collective referents are managed across clauses, and the two parallel lines of arrows (↓) track these two

(4.7) COL1> [Lala] ajke' chu-mi-ya  
 ↓ 1COL before live-PFTV-FOC  
 ↓ When **we** first lived (here),  
 ↓  
 COL1> [lala]-ya [lala]-' pebu-lu-nu  
 ↓ 1COL-FOC 1COL-POSS town-LOC2  
 ↓ we, in our town,  
 ↓

↕	CO-REF>	[ <b>peechulla-la</b> ]-ba chu-' awa-tyu de-e-yu
↕	↕	<b>Black-COL-COM</b> live-SR grow-NEG PL-be-CNJ
↕	↕	did not grow up living with <b>the Blacks</b> .
↕	↕	
↕	CO-REF>	Ma timbu kaspele juntsa [ <b>peechulla-la</b> ]
↕	↕	one time earlier DM.DST <b>Black-COL</b>
↕	↕	Once long ago those <b>Blacks</b>
↕	↕	
↕	↕	leyan kataa-tyu de-e
↕	↕	much(?) encounter-NEG PL-CL:become
↕	↕	were not encountered often.
↕	↕	
↕	3COL>	Tsaa=ren [ <b>yai</b> ]-ba jayu
↕	↕	SEM=EMPH <b>3COL-COM</b> a.little
↕	↕	But now <b>they</b> are also a little,
↕	↕	
↕	CO-REF>	jayu sera-n-tu [ <b>negee-la</b> ]=bain mati
↕	↕	a.little increase-NMLZ-SR <b>SP:negro-COL</b> =also so
↕	↕	they are increasing a little, <b>the negros</b> also,
↕	↕	
↕	↕	pure' sera-i-n-de-tsu-we.
↕	↕	many increase-become-NMLZ-PL-PROG-DSJ
↕	↕	they are increasing (in population) a lot.
↕	↕	
COL1>	↕	Timbu-nu [ <b>lala</b> ] e-nu chu-na-nu,
↕	↕	time-LOC2 <b>1COL</b> DM.PRX-LOC2 live-be.in.POS-INF
↕	↕	Long ago when <b>we</b> lived here
↕	↕	

COL1> ↓	chu-na-nu	ura-talan	[lala]' ju-bi-lla-a
↓ ↓	live-be.in.POS-INF	good-RECIP-NMLZ	1COL-POSS ?-COL-FOC
↓ ↓	living well in	our	area,
↓ ↓			
COL1> CO-REF>	[peechulla-la]	[lala]	ma timbu, malii-ba
↓	<b>Black-COL</b>	<b>1COL</b>	one time alone-COM
↓	the Blacks,	once we (were)	alone,
↓			
CO-REF>	[negee-la]-ba	chu-tyu de-e-yu.	
	<b>SP:negro-COL-COM</b>	live-NEG PL-be-CNJ	
	(we) did not live with	the	<i>negros</i> .

The relations of co-reference shown in the example above illustrate how collective social groups of Chachis and Blacks are tracked and contrasted in discourse. From the point of view of discourse structure, this is the pattern that tends to arise in discourse in which social categories are salient, as in racializing discourse. When speakers reflect negatively on race relations between Chachis and other social groups, these are the terms that both their grammar and social experience leads them to use. For example, during my fieldwork there was an ongoing land dispute between the Chachi community where I was living and the neighboring Afro-descendant community to the west, and in Cha'palaa discourse about the dispute the first person pronoun collective pronoun predictably becomes co-referent with *chachilla*. This alignment is then contrasted with the ethnonym *peechulla*, which is in turn co-referent with the third person collective pronoun. This configuration can be called an “**us/them**” alignment. The following examples demonstrate three different manifestations of this alignment pattern. The first shows the first person collective pronoun in contrast with the ethnonym *peechulla*:

(4.8) **Peechulla-la-a** kaspelee ura' chu-tu=ren  
**Black-COL-FOC** earlier good sit-SR=EMPH  
**The Blacks**, in the old days (we) lived well,

challa-a tu peletu ke-ke'=mityaa **lala-nu**.  
 now-FOC land problem do-CL:do=RES **1COL-ACC**  
 but now that (they) are causing a land dispute for **us**.

The next example shows a contrast between the collectivized exonym *peechulla* and the collectivized autonym *chachilla*, which is co-referential with a first person collective pronoun:

(4.9) **Chachi-lla peechulla-la-ba** peletu,  
 Chachi-COL Black-COL-COM problem  
 Problems **the Chachis** have with **the Blacks**,

peletu pure' ta-de-ju,  
 problem many have-PL-CL:be  
 there are many problems.

Tsa'=mitya **lala** ura' chu-ke-e-nu ke-ke-e-tyu  
 SEM=RES **1COL** good live-do-CL:do do-do-CL:do-NEG  
 For that reason **we** cannot live well here,

**peechulla-la-ba chachi-lla**  
**Black-COL-COM Chachi-COL**  
 with **the Blacks, the Chachis**,



Tsa'=mitya ajke-sha      naa i-' ji-nuu                      ju-'=bain  
 SEM=RES   before-LOC1 how   become-SR go-INF be-INF=also  
 For that reason later how it will turn out,

naa ura'    chu-ju-tyu-u=bain  
 how good sit-be-NEG-be=also  
 in what ways we will not live well,

pasa            i-nu ke-n-de-tsu                      challa **lala**.  
 SP: happen become-INF do-NMZL-PL-PROG now    **1COL**  
 that is what is happening now with **us**.

The third example of us/them alignment features repeated uses of the first person collective pronoun in co-reference to the autonym *chachi* in the phrase *chachiitene*, “only Chachis.” In this case, the speaker expresses a strong opinion that it would be better for the Chachis to live without any other social groups in the area, recalling the earlier discussion of the fantasy of regaining the magic weapons from Chachi oral history to cleanse the area of everyone but the Chachis. In this example the Chachis are contrasted to a third person collective referent that is not explicitly co-referent to any ethnonym or other social category term. However, Cha’palaa speakers draw on their general social knowledge to interpret the third person collective pronoun as a reference to Blacks:

(4.10) **Lala**, kapele pa'-ba-n-ti-ee-shu  
**1COL** earlier    speak-COM-NMLZ-say-(?)-IRR  
**We**, as (I) said before,

**lala chachi-i=tene**      ju-u-ya ura.  
**1COL Chachi-COL=LIM** be-CL:be-FOC good  
 it would be good if **we were only among Chachis**.

3COL> **Yaila** wee pensa-de-e-ba,  
3COL different SP:think-PL-become-COM  
**They** think differently (and)

i-ya **cha'** pensa wee pensa'=mitya  
1-FOC chachi SP:think different SP:think=RES  
(for) me, Chachi thinking is another kind of thinking;

3COL> **yai**-ba wee wee mescla de-i-n=mala  
3COL-com different different SP:mix PL-become-NMZL=when  
with **them**, when different kinds (of thinking) are mixed,

wee wee pensa tse'-ki-tyu tyui-di-tyu,  
different different think SEM-do-NEG combine-come.into.POS-NEG  
different kinds of thinking cannot be combined,

3COL> **ya**=bain wee pensa.  
3=also different think  
they also think differently.

The speaker in the example above engages in a classic essentializing pattern common to racializing discourse of irreconcilable cultural differences between social groups. To set up this contrast the speaker uses the concept of *pensa* or “thought,” a word borrowed from Spanish but with semantic change, so that in Cha’palaa its meaning has expanded to cover the concepts of “concern” and “worry.” Aligning the autonym *chachilla* with the first person collective pronoun, the speaker explains how “our thinking” or “our concerns” are different from “their thinking” or “their concerns,” using the third person collective pronoun to refer to the Blacks.

## 4.2 Racial language and the interview context

In my research I worried about the representation of negative statements of interviewees about other social groups – the kinds of statements that often show the kinds of discourse alignments described above. While interviewing, I attempted to avoid provoking racist comments while at the same time trying to ask people to talk honestly about inter-group relations. At times I attempted to open the conversation to more positive comments. This section shows two examples of such cases; I include them both because they help to make my research methods more transparent and because they are good examples of us/them alignment that is maintained among multiple successive clauses (pronouns and ethnonyms are flagged).

The first example was a response to my question about whether some Chachis and Blacks had good relationships. It articulates a commonly-heard discourse that local Blacks are good people and that it is only when they leave the local area and live in the cities for a while that they take on bad behaviors:

(4.11) Mantsa wee-la=bain            tsa-de-e-we        tsaa-ren  
some    different-COL=also SEM-PL-be-DSJ SEM-EMPH  
Some are (good) like that, like that,

mantsa wee-la-ya            ura    de-e-we    **peechulla-la**  
some    different-COL-FOC good PL-be-DSJ **Black-COL**  
some of them are are good, **the Blacks**,

**negee-la**            ju-de-e-shu-juntsa            mantsa ura de-e-we  
**SP: negro-COL** be-PL-CL:be-IRR-DM.DST some    good PL-be-DSJ  
of **the negros**, some of them are good.

Tsaa=ren mantsa-la-a wee-muj-tu  
SEM=EMPH some-COL-FOC other-want(?)-SR  
But then some others are different,

lu'- ji-' ma-ja-' chu chu di-mu-la-a  
go.up-SR go-SR again-come-SR sit sit come.into.POS-AG.NMLZ-COL-FOC  
they go out (to the city) and come back, returning to live,

firu' pensa=bain ke-ke-de-ke-we  
bad thought=also do-do-PL:CLdo-DSJ  
thinking bad thoughts.

Tsaa=ren **yai**-ba pebulu-nu chu-mun ju-u-la-ya  
SEM=EMPH **3**COL-COM town-LOC2 sit-AG.NMLZ be-CL:be-COL-FOC  
However, they that live in the town

**chachi-lla**-ba ura' pensa de-chu-we  
**Chachi**-COL-COM good though PL-live-DSJ  
have good thoughts (intentions) towards the Chachis.

Tsaa=ren wee-la ma-a-mu-la-a,  
SEM=EMPH different-COL again-come-AG.NMLZ-COL-FOC  
However, others that come (from the city),

mansta wee-muj-tu lu'  
some different-want-SR go.up-SR  
some of them are different,

ne' ma-ja ma-ja-i-mu ma-wi-ja-'  
just again-come again-come-become-AG.NMLZ again-enter-come-SR  
coming back and entering again

chu-di-mu-la juntsa-la-a  
live-come.into.POS-AG.NMLZ-COL DM.DST-COL-FOC  
to live (around here), those ones

**chachi-lla-nu** peletu kata-nu ke-ke-de-ki-we.  
**Chachi**-COL-ACC trouble encounter-INF do-do-PL-CL:do-DSJ  
cause trouble for **the Chachis**.

Tsaa=ren **chachi-lla lala-ya negee-la-nu**  
SEM=EMPH **Chachi**-COL 1COL-FOC SP:negro-COL-ACC  
However **we Chachis**, to **the negros**,

juntsa aa=peletu kata-n-de-tyu-yu tsaa=ren  
DM.DST AUG=trouble encounter-NMLZ-PL-NEG-CNJ SEM=EMPH  
(we) have not been causing (them) any big trouble like that,

tu paatee-sha-a na'baasa peletu pure' ta-de-na-yu,  
land SP:part-LOC1-FOC disorder trouble many have-PL-be.in.POS-CNJ  
but about the land, (we) have big messy problems

**lala negee-la-ba**.  
1COL SP:negro-COL-COM.  
**us** with **the negros**.

The example above shows us/them alignment throughout, especially in the final part in which the speaker contrasts Chachis and Blacks. The second example

demonstrates another case in which I attempted to inquire about positive relationships between the two groups. In the first section the speaker gives a lengthy account of problems that have arisen due to competition for local natural resources. An us/them alignment with the ethnonyms *chachilla* and *peechulla* is pervasive throughout the whole example.

(4.12a)

C: Peletu de-ta-na                    **chachi-lla** **peechulla-la**-ba diferentes  
trouble PL-have-be.in.POS **Chachi-COL** **black-COL-COM** SP:diferent  
**The Chachis** have problems with **the Blacks**, different (types).

**yaila-a** **laa-nu** problema mi'ke mi'ke de-ke-e.  
**3COL-FOC 1COL-ACC** SP:problem look.for look.for PL-do-DSJ  
**They** look for problems with **us**,

**peechulla-la lala-nu** **chachi-lla-nu**,  
**black-COL 1COL-ACC Chachi-COL-ACC**  
**the Blacks** to (cause problems for) us, **the Chachis**,

tu paate, oro ka-laa-n paate,  
land part SP:gold get-come.out-NMLZ part  
about land, about mining gold,

**peechulla-la chachi-lla-chi** kusas de-taa-n-ke-ñu  
**Black-COL Chachi-COL-POSS** SP:things PL-steal-NMLZ-do-DR  
**Blacks** stealing **the Chachis'** things,

eh **lala-**' pi-juu-sha de-wi-ja-ñu  
eh **1COL-POSS** water-pool-LOC1 PL-enter-come.in-DR  
coming into **our** rivers,

pulla de-kalaa-ñu, **lala-**' jun-ka  
more PL-take.out-DR **1COL-POSS DM.DST-LOC3**  
taking out more wood, in **our** area.

Juntsa-a paate'=mityaa **chachi-lla**  
DM.DST-FOC part=RES **Chachi-COL**  
For that reason, **the Chachis**,

peechulla-la chachi-lla-nu  
Black-COL Chachi-COL-ACC  
**the Blacks**, for **the Chachis**,

problema mi'ki mishti mishti de-ke-e **laa-nu**  
SP:problem look.for together together PL-do-DSJ 1COL-ACC  
look for many problems, with **us**.

Eh tsaan=tene ke' ji-n-tsu-ñu  
eh SEM=LIM do-SR go-NMLZ-PROG-DR  
So since they go doing that,

**lala chachi-lla-ya yaila-nu**  
1COL Chachi-COL-FOC **3COL-ACC**  
**we Chachis**, with **them**

problema mi'ke-tyu de-e-wa-ña  
SP:problem look.for-NEG PL-become-DR  
we don't look for any problems,

**yaila-a lala-nu** problema katawa-nu  
3COL-FOC 1COL-ACC SP:problem encounter-INF  
but **they** find problems with **us**.

Tsaa=ren **lala-ya** estamos **yaila-ba**  
SEM=EMPH 1COL-FOC SP:we.are 3COL-COM  
Like that, **we** are trying, with **them**,

kuinda ke-' eh arregla-ke-nu ke-n-chi=tene ke-ke-mu-de-ju  
SP:talk do-DR eh SP:fix-do-INF do-NMLZ-INGR=SEM do-CL:do-NMLZ-PL-be  
to talk in order to come to an arrangement.

On the upper part of the Upi River where my primary research site was located, there are three Chachi towns with no Black settlements except for a single household on the opposite bank of the last Chachi town heading downriver. From that point onwards, Chachi and Black settlements are interspersed until the mouth of the river where the Upi joins the Cayapas River at the town of Zapallo Grande. In my experiences traveling up and down the river, I found that Chachi people and their Black neighbors greeted each other by name and often stopped to converse and to occasionally engage in different kinds of economic exchanges. This is why much of my conversations with Chachis in which people gave very negative characterizations of interracial interactions seemed out of place compared to these interactions. These moments of friendly behavior based on shared experiences of rural forest life are only one aspect of a complex relationship that is often also tense and adversarial. In the interview I decided to ask whether Chachis had equally negative relationships with Blacks who lived nearby. The following interview was conducted early in my research, and I had to resort to Spanish to ask my question:

(4.12b)

S: Ya, pero de los que viven como aquí, del río  
OK, but those that live, like, here, on the river,



que son vecinos, algunos, porque si hay amistad, no?  
that are neighbors, some of them, because there is friendship, right?

A veces viven bien y a veces peletu, no cierto?  
Sometimes (you) live well and sometimes there are problems, right?

C: Si bueno en-ku lala ma-pi-i chu-muu=tala-ya,  
SP:yes SP:well DM.DST-LOC3 1COL one-river-FOC live-AG.NMLZ=RECIP-FOC  
Yes, well, those that live on the same river,

en-ku ju-u-sha-ya  
DM.DST-LOC3 be-CL:be-LOC1-FOC  
being around here,

problema de-ta-na-tyu **peechulla-la chachi-lla-ba**  
SP:problem PL-have-be.in.POS-NEG **Black-COL Chachi-COL-COM**  
(they) don't have any problems, **the Blacks** with **the Chachis**,

de repente de una o otra manera  
SP:all of a sudden etc.  
(a problem might appear) all of a sudden or one way or the other

kaa=problema faa-ki-mu,  
DIM=SP:problem come.out-do-AG.NMLZ  
they might cause small problems,

no asi aa=problema ju-tyu.  
SP:no SP:like.that AUG=problem be-NEG  
not like that, there are no big problems,

y        ura' lleva        i-kee-mu        mantsa **pee**chulla-la-ba  
SP:and good SP:get.along become-do-CL:do-AG.NMLZ some **Black-COL-COM**  
and (we ) get along well with some **Blacks**,

**yai**=bain    **laa**-nu ura' de-aseeta-n-ke-shu-juntsa-ya  
**3COL**=also **1COL-ACC** good COMPL-SP:understand-NMLZ-do-IRR-DM.DST-FOC  
and **they** also understand us well,

**lala**-'        naatala.  
**1COL-POSS** sibling  
(like) **our** brothers.

The establishment and maintenance of us/them alignment with social categories over stretches of discourse is one of the primary ways in which social categorization becomes salient in interaction. This kind of social categorization is an important part of negative racial discourse, but it is also part of other conflicting discourses that are part of the contradictions of social life. Similar discourse structures may appear whether a Cha'palaa speaker is calling Blacks their “brothers” or the same speaker is stereotyping them as violent. What all discourses in which ethnonyms align with pronouns have in common is that they are a structural articulation of social categories in interaction, and as such they provide a good place for the study of social categorization. Because the indexical properties of the pronoun system allow this alignment to be further mapped onto the participants in the speech event, the discourse is referentially anchored onto physical bodies in the speech context. This chapter will conclude with a discussion of such participation structures, but first I will briefly discuss how person deixis (how people are linked to pronouns) combines with spatial deixis (how places are linked to demonstratives) and then ask some questions about pronoun system semantics, before directly addressing participation structures.

### 4.3 From person to place

Combinations of the pronouns with other indexical systems in the language such as the deictic system can then further embed discourse into space and the social occupation of territory. In this example a possessive form of the first person collective pronoun occurs as part of the noun phrase “our parts”, which is in turn co-referential with the proximal deictic “here”:

(4.13) Juntsa timbu=tala **peechulla-la** kuwan-ka-a chu-mu de-ju  
 DM.DST time=among **Black-COL** downriver-LOC3-FOC sit-AG.NMLZ PL-be  
 Around those times **the Blacks** lived downriver,

CO-REF ↔ ↔ ↔ ↔ ↔ 1COL-LOCATION

no vivían [e-n-ku] [lala-' paate]-sha chu-tyu  
 SP:no SP:live DM.PRX-NMLZ-LOC3 1COL-POSS SP:part-1COL live-NEG  
 they did not live, they did not live **here in our parts**,

**laa=tene** juntsa timbu=tala-ya.  
**1COL=LIM** DM.DST time=among-FOC.  
 it was **just us** in those times.

Through these kinds of complex discourse structures Cha’palaa speakers map social categories onto people and onto the physical spaces they inhabit. When disputes over land rights arise in the rural areas of Esmeraldas, these discourse alignments are part of how those kinds of disputes articulate their social form along racial lines. They are ways of making systematic connections between physical places and bodies and socially-circulating abstractions like social category membership and the stereotypes and generalizations associated with those categories.

The example below illustrates some of those connections in discourse in reference to the people known by the ethnonym *manawa*. While us/them alignment in Cha'palaa discourse often corresponds to the distinction between Chachis and Blacks as the two largest demographic groups in the area, the same discursive resources are available for contrasting other social categories. The *manawala* (Manabas) are colonists from the province of Manabí to the South, Spanish-speakers with some degree of indigenous ancestry who have been pressuring Chachi territory in recent years by settling near Chachis communities on the upper part of the watershed.:

(4.14a)

MM: Manawa-la=bain juntsa-a firu de-e-we.

Manaba-COL=also DM.DST-FOC bad PL-be-DSJ

The Manabas are also violent.

Manawa-la=bain juntsa winke-ta-a tu'-mu de-e-ba

Manaba-COL=also DM.DST fight-SR-FOC kill-AG.NMLZ PL-be-COM

The Manabas also fight with and kill

chachi-lla wiña-tu baile-ke-tu.

Chachi-COL get.drunk-SR SP:dance-do-SR

Chachis, getting drunk, having a dance (party).

tse'=mityaa bene ura'-

SEM-RES after good

for that reason in the future well-

ura' chu-n-de-ju-tyu-ba **lala-' jun-ka=bain**

good sit-NMLZ-PL-be-NEG-COM **1COL-POSS DM.DST-LOC3=also**

(we) won't be able to live well also in **our place**

**laa-chi,** kabesera-sha.  
**1COL-POSS** SP:headwaters-LOC1  
**for our (place)** in the headwaters.

In the first part of the example above, the speaker stereotypes Manabas as violent and sometimes causing conflict with the Chachis. The ethnonym *chachilla* is then co-referent with the first person collective pronoun that is then used in its possessive form to combine with spatial language to talk about “our place” or “our territory”, meaning “Chachi territory”. I asked for further clarification about where the Manabas live:

(4.13b)

SF: Manawa-la e-nu chu-nu en-dala, nuka chu-nu?  
 Manaba-COL DM.PRX-LOC2 sit-INF DM.PRX-around where sit-INF  
 Do the Manabas live here, around here, where do they live?

MM: Pude-j-de-tu yai-ba nun=bala-a  
 SP:be.able-NEG-PL-NEG 3COL-COM where=when-FOC  
 They can't (live here) but sometimes

tu mi'ki-ta-a wi-ja-n-de-e-ba  
 land look.for-SR-FOC enter-come-NMLZ-PL-become-COM  
 they (could) come in looking for land,

wee muj-ta-a manawa-la de-cha-a,  
 other want(?)-SR-FOC Manaba-COL PL-live-FOC  
 wherever else the Manabas want to live,

Muisne, matyu naa nuka chu-na'-ba  
 TPN:Muisne so how where sit-be.in.POS-COM  
 in Muisne, or wherever they live,

Canandee jun-ka chu-tya-a-n-ten-ka manawa-la de-chu-ba,  
TPN:Candandé DM.DST-LOC3 sit-NEG-FOC-NMLZ-feel-DUB Manaba-COL PL-sit-COM  
there in Canandé, I think they live, the Manabas live (there).

**En-ku lala-' pi-sha=ren**  
**DM.PRX-LOC3 1COL-POSS water-LOC1=EMPH**  
**Right here on our river**

manawa-la wi-ja-n-de-tyu-u-we.  
Manaba-COL enter-come-NMLZ-PL-NEG-become-DSJ  
the Manabas have not come in (here).

The phrase “right here on our river” in the penultimate line above is a common way that Cha’palaa speakers refer to the waterways close to where they live. The possessive pronoun *lala’* (our) establishes that the speaker is part of the social group that has dominion over the rivers, whether that social group is loosely defined as the immediate Chachi community or broadly defined as Chachis in general, in contrast to the Manabas or other social groups. The co-referential linkages that arise out of discourse structure gain their significance in part through social knowledge of whom the relevant social groups are and of how those categories are articulated by participants in specific speech events and inhabitants of specific local spaces. The way in which the pronoun system anchors widely circulating social categories like ethnonyms and racial groupings onto specific bodies in a participation framework is a key aspect of the interface of grammar and social categories in interaction. This same property of pronouns also poses some difficult questions about how to best describe the semantics pronominal systems. The following section will consider Cha’palaa’s pronominal system in light of the kinds of discourse alignments discussed above.

#### 4.4 The Cha'palaa pronominal system

In the previous section I analyzed how Cha'palaa pronouns align with ethnonyms in discourse, map them onto participation structures, and by extension manage areas like the social organization of space before presenting a basic account of the Cha'palaa pronominal system from a descriptivist perspective. I did so in order to create a tension between one way of looking at pronouns as a discrete system describable in terms of a paradigmatic structure and the kinds of meanings that arise when pronouns are used in discourse like that described in the previous sections. Some languages strongly resist paradigmatic analysis by showing high levels of overlap between the general noun class and pronouns as a sub-class (such as Thai and related languages; Campbell 1969, Siewierska 2004). In such languages, the mapping of less specialized noun forms onto participants in the discourse event is perhaps even more embedded in social knowledge, and indeed the pronouns in such languages are reported to encode a great many social status distinctions. Other languages feature dedicated pronominal forms for the first and second persons but for the third person use other strategies; Cha'palaa's closest relative,<sup>19</sup> Tsafiki, has this profile to some degree, as its third person forms overlap with demonstratives (Dickinson 2009). So on one level Cha'palaa has a relatively neat paradigm, with specialized first, second, and third person forms, corresponding collective forms, and no additional distinctions such as inclusivity or duality, etc.

Comparing Cha'palaa to Tsafiki illustrates how pronoun systems are unstable and can diverge quickly even among two sister languages that separated relatively recently. Tsafiki has gender distinctions in its first person pronouns, and uses the feminine form for collective references (Ibid.); Cha'palaa innovated a separate singular form *i* and extended the masculine pronoun *la* to a collective form *lala*. Each of the Barbacoan languages seems to have gone in a different direction in the development of the pronouns

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<sup>19</sup> The divergences between the two languages are perhaps comparable to those between Spanish and French or Italian, as compared to the other languages in the Barbacoan family (Awá Pit and Guiambiano) which in comparison to Cha'palaa might be analogous to the divergence between Spanish and English or German. The Tsachila live in the tropical lowland area to the south of Chachi territory.

systems, as there are few cross-linguistic cognates except in the second person (Adelaar with Muysken 2004, 147-149). Part of the motivation for this kind of rapid linguistic change is the way pronouns interface with the social world in discourse by keeping track of participants in speech events. Each of the Barbacoan languages underwent a distinct social history of usage, and what presumably began as one unified system in the protolanguage has diversified into very distinct systems in the modern languages. In Cha'palaa those usage patterns involved frequently applying the collective suffix to the singular pronoun, resulting in semi-fused forms today.

The table below shows the basic six-term pronoun set of Cha'palaa. It has sometimes been claimed that plural pronouns do not usually resemble other plural forms morphologically (see Cysouw 2004, 72), and while some South American languages are exceptions to that generalization (such as Ecuadorian Quechua), for many languages it is true that the plural form is not produced from a pluralized singular pronoun. In terms of what I refer to as collectivity in Cha'palaa, however, the collective pronoun forms are built morphologically from the singular form and the collective suffix. The exception is the first person, where the collective form appears to have been constructed from an old masculine first person pronoun similar to that seen in Tsafiki, but like the other persons, it also includes the collective suffix *-la*:

person	singular	collective	reduced collective
first	i	lala	laa
second	ñu	ñulla	ñui
third	ya	yaila	yai

In my glosses I have treated the collective pronouns as single morphemes, however they are actually semi-productive and morphologically complex. Like the ethnonyms described in the previous chapter, Cha'palaa pronouns use the collective suffix to refer to human groups, and like some of the ethnonyms (*uyala*, *peechulla*), the suffix has become partially fused to the root over time. It is unclear to what extent the suffix should be treated as productive in the collective pronouns; the phonology at the



morpheme boundaries is not entirely regular, and in the first person there is no equivalent non-collective form (*\*la*). In addition, all of the bi-morphemic collective pronouns alternate with phonologically-reduced mono-morphemic forms used in some possessive and dative constructions. The singular forms are mono-morphemic as well, but they are light syllables in contrast to the reduced collective forms, which are heavy syllables that carry some phonological residue of the deleted second syllable. All of the pronouns can be used in possessive constructions in combination with the possessive marker *-'*, a glottal stop; the exception is the first person singular, which has a specific irregular form *in*; some of these possessive forms are shown in the data in the previous section and in earlier chapters.

While the form of the Cha'palaa pronominal system is fairly easy to lay out in a paradigm chart, an account of pronominal meaning is more challenging. Benveniste (1971) characterizes pronouns, particularly first and second person, as referentially empty until they are filled in specific instances of discourse (1996, 285). Similar problems have been posed in the classic studies by Jakobson (1957) and Silverstein (1976) that point out that “shifters”, including pronouns, have context-dependent meaning. The context that shapes pronominal meaning is also in part discourse context, as Urban (1989) shows with his discussion of how the first person has a wide range of uses and can refer to people other than the speaker in certain kinds of discourse. A related point has to do with the complexities of what Goffman calls “participation frameworks” (1981) which can be shown to be far more complex than the basic contrast between the speaker, the addressee and others, a point taken up by Levinson (1988) who identifies even more types of participant roles than proposed by Goffman. Following Hanks' account of pronoun use in Yucatec Maya (1990, 135-191), here I apply Goffman's concept of participation frames within an ethnographic study of language usage. Instead of the fine-grained distinctions that Goffman makes mainly concerning individual participants, here I am concerned with the consequences of extending the analysis of participation frameworks to group reference using non-singular pronouns. This approach quickly compounds the problems encountered with singular pronouns, because now the roles of speaker and addressee are

combined with references to collective groups. In examples like those in this chapter in which collective pronouns align in co-reference with terms for collective social groups like ethonyms, the participation framework expands to cover the level of macro-social relations among those groups. In this sense, the referential emptiness of the pronouns is filled in by social knowledge about those groups' history, who is included and excluded in them, their current relationships, etc.

The Cha'palaa pronoun paradigm as presented above is formally a six-term system in which each first, second and third person have equivalent collective forms. In my discussion of collectivity in Chapter 2, I argued that for Cha'palaa grammar animate group referents are best described as collective rather than plural referents. Specifically in the case of pronouns, some studies have noted the difficulty of extending the notion of plurality to pronominal forms. For example, the standard semantic interpretation of the first person is that it refers to the participant role of speaker, but unless everyone being referenced by the pronoun is speaking together, a plural form does not refer to multiple speakers, but rather refers to the speakers and others who have some kind of associative connection to the speaker (Cysouw 2004)<sup>20</sup>. While the associative properties of non-singular pronouns may not be compatible with a traditional view of plurality, they in fact closely resemble the properties of the Cha'palaa collective words that I analyzed in terms of associativity in Chapter 2. This point helps to understand why in many languages plural morphology does not occur on pronouns, and also why in Cha'palaa collective

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<sup>20</sup> Full quote: "Person marking that refers to a non-singular set of persons or objects, as defines in the previous section, is normally called 'plural'. However, there is a problem with this term. The meaning of plurality within the domain of pronominal marking is rather different from the standard notion of plural. Normally, a singular morpheme, like the English word *chair*, refers to a single object that falls into the class of chairs. A plural, like *chairs*, refers to a group of objects, each of which belongs to a class of chairs. Transferred to the pronominal domain, this analysis states that the first person singular refers to a single person that belongs to a class of speakers. No problem so far. However, the consequent next step would be that a first person plural refers to a group of persons what all individually belong to the class of speakers. In other words, the first person plural is literally a group of speakers. The English pronoun *we* would, in this analysis, mean something like 'group of persons speaking in unison'. This is clearly not what *we* prototypically means; *we* normally refers to a group of people, only one of whom is currently speaking (Jespersen 1924: 192; Benveniste 1966: 233; Lyons 1968: 277; Moravcsik 1978: 354, n.12). The most common meaning of 'we' strongly resembles the meaning of a nominal case marker that is known as the ASSOCIATIVE." (Cysouw 2004, p69)

morphology *can* occur on pronouns. The groups of people referred to by non-singular pronominal forms are constituted not through multiplication of the speaker role in contrast to hearers and third parties but through association with the speaker. This association might also include a hearer or a third party under the first person collective form (except in languages with inclusive/exclusive distinctions; see Filimonova 2005), according to their membership in the relevant social group. In Cha'palaa, similar kinds of associative principles operate across different domains of the grammar, as I showed in earlier chapters discussing collective marking and ethnonyms. As with verbal and nominal collectives, pronominal collective terms also pattern according to an animacy hierarchy that constrains pronoun referent to animate beings only; inanimates use demonstrative forms instead. Tracking collective referents in Cha'palaa discourse relies on speakers' abilities to make linkages between pronouns and these other collectivized forms to decide when they are co-referent. How do speakers do this?

The kind of associations that can be articulated through collective pronouns in Cha'palaa might be associations among the people immediately present at a speech event, but just as often collective pronouns refer to larger, more populous groups of people, as in the cases shown above when collective pronouns become co-referential with collective ethnonyms to assign referents to social categories. Hanks points out that different “we” groupings in Maya discourse can move between scales such as co-residence group, kin group, or Maya as a social group (1990, 171-172). Brewer and Gardner (1996), working in the framework of social psychology, describe the different meanings of “we” spanning levels from the “individual self” to the “relational self” to the “collective self”, and point out how these different levels are connected when individuals are grouped into collectives. I am not sure if my data shows sharp distinctions between these levels, but a continuum model of different embedded and overlapping kind of collectivities is a good way to think about how “we” shifts meanings in discourse.

An interaction-based perspective helps to avoid a model of individual self-identification and instead directs attention to the intersubjective relationship between the

speaker and the addressee. As in studies of person reference in interaction have shown, speakers use different strategies to achieve shared recognition of individual person referents based on assumptions of common ground (Schegloff 1979, Enfield and Stivers 2007), and something similar must be true for group reference. For addressees to be able to resolve reference to groups of people by deciding which social groups a speaker is referencing in a particular uses of “we” and “they,” they must draw on earlier articulations of those social groups in previous lived experience. Based on this knowledge they can decide if the speaker means “we in this room” or “we who live in this town” or “we indigenous people,” and, crucially, how these levels of scale interact to connect the people in the room to larger social categories. The categories that develop through social history can then be anchored onto the different participants in the speech event through instances of pronoun usage and discourse structures that link those pronouns to ethnonyms. Studying such characterizations of self and others in interaction is a good way to approach participants’ own categories as they circulate in discourse. It is also a way to approach the problem I am posing here for understanding the semantics of pronoun systems in light of the significance of such categories for pronominal meaning.

Whether a collective pronoun refers to specific groups of individuals or to large sectors of the population, resolving reference in interaction requires drawing on information from beyond the immediate discourse context. One approach could take a minimalist view of pronoun semantics, claiming that the word is indeed semantically empty aside from an indexical arrow to [Speaker + Associates] or [Addressee + Associates] or [Other + Associates], with no linguistic information about the nature of the association among members of a collective. I have shown associativity to be a pervasive value in Cha’palaa grammar and that at its heart it is based on a semantic principle of social relations among animate beings. The habitual usage of collective pronouns in us/them alignment in racial discourse and other kinds of social categorization may not have left these words entirely empty in the experience of speakers. One psychology study suggests that exposure to us/them alignment can be correlated with different kinds of negative bias in which the pronouns lose their “evaluative neutrality” (Perdue, et al.

1990). For speakers, certain kinds of habitual pronoun usage may associate with discourses of social categorization even in the absence of specific social category terms (think of the problems in American English with the phrase “you people”). Interaction is saturated with different articulations of social categories, and one way or another an account of pronoun usage has to come to terms with the way that social knowledge is embedded into specific interactions. To simply restrict oneself to a narrow view of pronoun semantics and put everything else into the realm of pragmatics ignores some problems with the boundary between semantics and social knowledge more generally. The next section will explore some of these problems by looking specifically at the interaction of social categories within participation frameworks.

#### 4.5 Social knowledge and participation structure

This section will use a long stretch of discourse from a single interview to show how one speaker managed alignments between the pronouns system and different social categories over many clauses. Here I will be able to add the second person to the discussion that up until now has focused on the first/third distinction of us/them alignment. This is because by the later stages of my series of interviews I was more able to conduct interviews in Cha’palaa, allowing my interviewees to refer to me in the second person in our conversations. Since I asked interviewees to talk about different social categories, they often categorized me as well.

- (4.14) **Fiba-la-nu=bain**      mi-jtu,  
**white-COL-ACC=also know-NEG**  
 (I) don’t know about **the whites** -

ñu mi-i-nu                      ju=shima  
 2 know-CL:become-INF be=AFF  
 you should surely know.

The relationship between the ethnonym *fibala* (whites) in the first line of the example above and the second person pronoun in the second line can be established only by taking into account my own social category membership status. We can observe the speaker's own analysis of my racial status as a white person at a discursive level through the participation structure of my interactions with Cha'palaa speakers. Unlike the first person collective suffix which is commonly used in co-reference with the ethnonym *chachilla* by Chachis, the use of a second person form in co-reference with the social category terms used for white people is certainly uncommon, as white people rarely participate in Cha'palaa discourse. However, as a participant in the participation framework, I was fair game for social categorization.

Many of my best insights into Chachi ideas of whiteness came from moments in which my own racial status was flagged in discourse. In the following example I asked the interviewee if she knew why people used the same word *uyala* to refer to people from Chachi oral history as well as to present-day foreigners – the transcript below highlights ethnonyms and pronouns, beginning with the second person collective pronoun in the first line:

(4.15) **Uyala**      ti-la-ya, klaro,                      ñuilla-nu.  
 foreigner say-COL-FOC SP:clearly 2COL-ACC  
 Sure, they call you uyala,

uwain, wee      paii-sha                      chu-mu      de-e-ñu'=mitya-a  
 right different SP:country-LOC1 sit-AG.NMLZ PL-CL:become-EV.INF=RES-FOC  
 right, because (you) live in other countries,

**uyala** de-ti-we tsen=min,  
**foreigner** PL-say-DSJ SEM-HAB  
they call (you) **uyala** like that,

klaro **lala** tsan-ti-mu de-e-yu.  
SP:clearly **1COL** SEM-say-AG.MNLZ PL-CL:become-CNJ  
sure, **we** say that.

Asu por ejemplo, nejtun kada rasa **lala** mumu ta-de-e-yu.  
as SP:for.example so SP:each race **1COL** name have-PL-CL:become-CNJ  
As for example, all the races **we** have names,

**Lala-nu** tsan-ti-n-de-tyu-ka **chachi**,  
**1COL-ACC** SEM-say-NMLZ-PL-NEG=DUB **Chachi**  
**We** are called like that, “**Chachi**”,

**peechulla-la-a** manen **kayapa** de-ti-we, tsa'=mitya  
**Black-COL-FOC** again **cayapa** PL-say-DSJ SEM=RES  
although **Blacks** say “**Cayapa**”.

Tsa'=mitya-a **ñuilla-la-nu=bain lala** mumu puu ta-kee-tuu-tyu-ka  
SEM=RES-FOC **2COL-COL=also 1COL** name be.in/on have-see-SR-DUB  
For that reason to **you** also **we** have given a name it seems,

**uyala** ti-kee-mi tsaa=ren ne  
**foreigner** say-see-PTCP SEM=EMPH just  
they say “**uyala**” like that,

chachi fi-mu-ñu      tsan-ti-n-de-tyu      mati  
Chachi eat-AG.NMLZ SEM-say-NMLZ-PL-NEG so  
not to say that they eat people,

ya-'    mumu, mumu-aa    **uyala**    ti-la,  
3-POSS name    name –FOC **foreigner** say-COL  
it is **their** name, they are called by the name “*uyala*”

asu **fiba-la**-na-a      naa de-ti-wa      **lala**,  
as **white**-COL-ACC-FOC how PL-say-PTCP **1COL**  
**the whites** are called, by **us**,

a **los blanco fiba-la** de-ti-ee-shee porke  
SP:to.**the.whites white**-COL PL-say-DSJ-AFF SP:BECAUSE  
**the whites** they are called **whites** because

blanco, yaa tsa'=mitya cada cual    **yaila**    mumu.  
SP:white,ok    SEM=RES    SP:each.one **3-COL** name  
they're white, so for that reason each one (has) **their** name.

In this speaker's account about the circulation of social category terms she mentions the three major racial groupings in the Americas by way of different ethnonymic terms for Blacks, Whites and Chachi indigenous people. These ethnonyms have co-referential relationships with pronouns that organize the participation structure by including participants in different social groups. In this example the speaker aligned the first person pronoun with indigeneity, the second person pronoun with whiteness, and the third person pronoun with blackness. The alignment is particularly explicit here because the purpose of our conversation was to discuss social categories themselves. It is in these more explicit cases, however, where we can clearly see how the grammar is



interacting with social knowledge about races and racial categories that we can observe some of the covert principles underlying other kinds of racial discourse.

One way to think about these kinds of discourse alignments is as an example of both how pronouns draw on knowledge of social categories to resolve reference and at the same time articulate those social categories by mapping them onto particular configurations of participants in speech events. It is a kind of boundary-work at a very immediate and corporeal level, as it shows how participants are always reading bodies to determine their category status in Stuart Hall's sense through a process of articulation (1996); this "reading" of race as a social category in Chachi discourse reveals what Vargas (2004) refers to as a "hyperconsciousness of race" that speakers draw on to help to organize their discourse. Linguistic competence and the ability to form interpretable statements depends on consciousness of the racial category status of discourse participants and other referents. While my focus has been on explicit uses of racializing language, this chapter has begun to explore some of the relationships between explicit language and more implicit manifestations of race in interaction. When the pronoun system is deployed in discourse, even in the absence of overt racial discourse, discourse participants are constantly reading social information on other participants' bodies that help them to sort out referents, and in this sense racial hyperconsciousness is observable in online, semi-conscious production of language and discourse structures. From the interactionist perspective, the articulation of those social categories in discourse does not exist in either the categorized or the categorizer but in the moment of recognition between them, so the categories are made and re-made across moments, but with strong historical continuity between moments.

Like any social formation, racial formation is unstable and must be constantly reproduced. Part of the means by which racial formations are reproduced is through discourse, and the data presented in this and previous chapters provides a good basis for the argument that a broad hemispheric racial formation rooted in the history of the colonial encounter is relevant for the analysis specific instances of discourse and

interaction among Cha'palaa speakers. These broad patterns must be articulated by using locally-available resources, and so they take on their own particular character based on specific local histories. Many of the contradictions confronted in the study of racial formation have to do with how the broad categories of blackness, whiteness and indigeneity overlap with other systems of categorization in specific local spaces. In the following section of discourse from the same interview cited above, the speaker discusses sub-categories of whiteness, again anchoring me into the categories of her discussion by referring to me with the second person collective pronouns.

(4.16) Tse'=mitya juntsa-ju, tse'=mitya naa-ju **fiba-la-nu=bain**  
 SEM=RES DM.DST-be SEM=RES how-be **white-COL=also**  
 That's how it is, that's how it is with any of **the whites**,

naa quiteñu de-ja-ñu=bain **fiba-la**  
 how SP:from.Quito PL-come-DR=also **white-COL**  
 whether they are **whites** who come from Quito,

porque mantsa **manawa-la=ren** **fiba** keraa de-ju,  
 SP:because some **Manaba-COL=EMPH white** see PL-be  
 because some **Manabas** look **white**,

2COL> ñulla keraa de-ju mij-de-tu  
 2COL see PL-be know-PL-NEG  
 they look like **you all**, I don't know,

tse'=mitya **lala chachi-lla** general pa-ti-mu ne ju-de-ju  
 SEM=RES 1COL **Chachi-COL** SP:generally speak-CL:say-AG.NMLZ just be-PL-CL:be  
 for that reason **we Chachis** generally speak (in those terms)

**fibaa** ruku juu de-ja-n=mala-ya **fiba-la**,  
**white** man be PL-come=when-FOC **white-COL**  
of **white** men when they come, **whites**,

**fiba-a** ruku-la-a ne-n-de-tsa-a,  
**white-FOC** man-COL-foc go.around walk-PL-PROG-FOC  
“**White** men are coming around,”

ne juntsa-n-ti-mu ne ju-de-ju  
just DM.DST-NMLZ-say-AG.NMLZ just be-PL-be  
that is what we say,

naa **uyala**, matyu **fiba** o **uyala** tsaa=ren.  
how **foreigner** so **white** SP:or **foreigner** SEM=EMPH  
whether they are **foreigners**, (Ecuadorian) **whites** or **foreigners**, like that,

**fiba-la** ti-la-ya diferencia pu-ña,  
**white-COL** say-COL-FOC difference be.in/on-EV.INF  
but there are differences among whites,

**fiba-la-ya** ingles-chi pa-tyu-la-na-a  
**white-COL-FOC** SP:English-INSTR talk-NEG-COL-ACC-FOC  
**the whites** that don't speak English

**fiba-la** ti-mu de-e-wa-ña  
**white-COL** say-AG.NMLZ PL-become-PTCP-EV.INF  
we call (them) “**whites**”,

2COL> tsaa=ren    **ñuilla** ingles-chi pa-mu-la-na-a                    **uyala**            tsaa=ren.  
SEM=EMPH 2COL SP:English-INSTR speak-AG.NMLZ **foreigner** SEM=EMPH  
but **you all** who speak English (we say) “**foreigners**” (*uyala*) like that.

Tsaa=ren    **laa=bain**    mi-jtu,  
SEM=EMPH COL1=also know-NEG  
So like that **we** also do not know,

ruku-la    tsan-ti-mu                    de-e-ñu'=mityaa  
man-COL SEM-say-AG.NMLZ PL-become-DR=RES  
the (old) men say things like that

**laa=bain**    mi-jtu=ren                    ne    **uyala**            ti-mu                    ne    ju-de-ju.  
COL1=also know-NEG=EMPH just **foreigner** say-AG.NMLZ just be-PL-CL:be  
but **we** also call them “**foreigners**” (*uyala*) without knowing why.

In the discourse transcribed above the speaker shows how the category of white person used for whites and mestizos from Ecuador also includes or overlaps with that of foreign whites in Chachi terminology. To point this out the speaker uses the resources of the Cha'palaa pronoun system to sort out these categories respective to the participants in the conversation. In this chapter I have shown how resolving the reference of collective pronouns is necessarily mediated by social knowledge about the relevant level of associativity of the group referents in any specific instance of their usage – the relevant levels mainly being racial groups in this data, but this is only one of a number ways of using collective pronouns. In addition to the social mediation of linguistic meaning, however, I am also concerned with how the discourse structures described above mediate social categories by anchoring ethnonyms to discourse participants through the pronoun system. This does not mean that Hall's “floating signifiers” are free-floating (1996); the ways that category membership status is mediated are constrained by historically situated social formations, including the racial formations that arose through the colonial

encounter in the Americas. Ways of reading bodies and discursively aligning them with social categories in interaction have been shaped by this history, which alone can make sense of why the second person collective pronoun in the example above includes me, as a white person and why the first person collective pronoun includes the speaker, as an indigenous person. The next chapter takes up further questions relating to the role of physicality in discourses of social categorization by addressing issues of multi-modality.

### **Summary**

The Cha'palaa pronoun system consists of first, second and third person and collective forms of those persons. Collectivity in the pronoun system is similar to the kinds of collectivity addressed in earlier chapters; it uses the same collective suffix *-la*, it is constrained by the animacy hierarchy in that pronouns can only apply to animate referents, and it requires some level of associativity to constitute a collective reference. In addition, collective referents in the nominal and pronominal domains often come into alignment in discourse about social categories, so that collective pronouns become co-referential with social category terms like ethnonyms. This is a common pattern found in racializing discourse in Cha'palaa. Across clauses, the first person collective form will align with Chachi self-identification while the third person collective aligns with a non-Chachi group like the *peechulla* (Blacks) in an us/them pattern. In light of such properties pronouns in discourse, it is difficult to characterize the semantics of collective pronouns because the associative principles by which the participants include participants in the participation framework in different social groups are drawn from speakers' social knowledge relative to the interaction. In addition, the alignment between social category terms and the participation framework is a way to anchor broadly-circulating social categories onto specific participants in an interaction in specific discursive articulations of category membership. This creates a model in which interactions are both constrained by shared social histories and yet are local instantiations of those same histories. While most of the examples show explicit references to social categories, the maintenance of

discourse structures in alignment with social groups *without* explicit references to those groups is one way that social categorization becomes implicit in language. In addition, spoken language is only one part of the discursive articulation of social categories. The resources provided by the physical bodies inhabited by people in interaction provide rich communicative resources in general, but can become particularly significant in cases where racial dimensions of the body are salient in discourse. The next chapter expands the discussion of social categorization into multi-modality by considering the joint roles of speech and gesture in racializing discourses.