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Defying paradise

Hawai'i¹

12

He aba ka bala i kapubia ai ka leo, i ho'okuli mai ai?

What was the wrong that silenced the voice?

Hawai'ian traditional²

But I can't talk the way he wants me to. I cannot make it sound his way, unless I'm playing pretend-talk haole. I can make my words straight, that's pretty easy if I concentrate real hard. But the sound, the sound from my mouth, if I let it rip right out the lips, my words will always come out like home.

Lois-Ann Yamanaka, *Wild Meat and the Bully Burgers* (1996: 13)

Mainland Americans tend to have a romanticized and unrealistic impression of Hawai'i, one that goes no farther than images gained from advertisements aimed at tourists: luaus, pristine beaches, and an easy-going *aloha* spirit that makes everyone welcome and equal. In fact Hawai'i has the same range of problems found everywhere in the U.S.: poverty, racial and ethnic conflict and discrimination in the workplace and educational system (Southern Poverty Law Center 2010). It also has an indigenous population of native Hawai'ians and all the issues that follow from annexation and colonization (McGowan 1995; Okamura 2008; Takagi 2004; Trask 1992, 1999).

In Hawai'i, racial, ethnic and socioeconomic conflicts are played out – in part – in terms of language ideology, at a level of complexity unmatched anywhere in the mainland. Matters that would seem uncontroversial to mainlanders are anything but in the Islands. Issues of authenticity and authority have everything to do with who may call themselves Hawai'ian and who can claim to be *Kanaka 'Oiwi* or *Kanaka Maoli*; that is, native Hawai'ian (Pennybacker 1999).³

The significance of this – and of all the ethnic distinctions that are so carefully delineated in Hawai'i – might be best understood by listening to what Hawai'ians say about themselves. What follows are anonymous excerpts from discussion boards where people who live or have lived in Hawai'i for long periods talk about how they see themselves, and about the difficulty of navigating the complex relationships between ethnicity, race, class, language and privilege. These excerpts are from exchanges that took place on discussion boards in 2004–2005. All punctuation, spelling and capitalization are reproduced exactly. Note that *Haole* is a reference both to pale skin color and origins outside of the islands:

1 While living in Hawaii, people would regularly ask me "What are you?" and when I simply told them "Filipino" that was never enough. I couldn't be "just" Filipino. Only

when I gave them my complete ethnic breakdown of Filipino, Chinese and Spanish was the average local satiated by my answer. So, from my experience, a rigorous breakdown of one's ethnicity is not a matter of trying to fashion an "improvement" but rather, that's the status quo in Hawaii.

- 2 I'm absolutely LOCAL – but I'm not *kanaka maoli*. I have lived in Hawaii most of my life and would NEVER PRESUME to call myself Hawaiian just because I live here. That would be incredibly disrespectful to my friends and others who have blood quantum (any percentage).
- 3 Anyone in California can be a Californian, but there's a difference between a Hawaiian and a Hawaii resident.
- 4 I think Hawaii (my home) has way too much Asians to be even called Hawaii now. It is a known fact that an estimated 80% of Hawaii's population are Asians. So the saying "Hawaiian land in Filipino hands" should be revised to . . . "Hawaiian land in Asian hands."
- 5 I've run into a lot of racist people during my life living here. Even though I was born here in Kealahou some people can't get past that I'm fair-skinned (thanks to being 50% Norwegian, 25% Finnish, 12.5% German and British) and can't tan at all. Thus when I was younger, and to an extent today, I run into people who treat me poorly because I'm haole.

Hawai'ians talk

The aboriginal Polynesian language of Hawai'i ('Olelo Hawai'i) was the only language spoken in the islands until they were colonized, when Hawai'i was annexed by the U.S. and her government forcibly disbanded. As is usually the case in when a country is colonized, 'Olelo Hawai'i was systematically suppressed and finally outlawed. It wasn't until 1978 the native language regained its status as one of the official languages of the state.⁴

Even before colonization, a trade language – a pidgin – took root and then evolved into Hawai'i Creole. There is still a good deal of controversy about the nature, origin and development of pidgins into creoles, but a few things have been established. First and foremost: A pidgin is nobody's native language.

Pidgins arise in a restricted social context, where people speaking two or more different languages must communicate with each other for short periods of time, in specific ways. The classic example is that of a seaport, where ships from near and far come and go, and unloading or loading cargo. For these very specific and limited situations, communication is accomplished by means of a pidgin, a language cobbled together from three or four languages in contact. The structure of a pidgin is reduced and simplified. For example, pidgins don't have subordinate clauses or copulas and they use a reduced pronoun system. These kinds of simplifications are true of pidgins no matter where they arise.

If the conditions are right, and children are born into a setting where a pidgin is actively used, the pidgin may evolve into a creole. The children take in the raw data of the pidgin and in the process of language acquisition, they expand it into a fully functioning language (Grimes 1994; Grimes 1994; Marlow and Giles 2008; Tamura 2008).

One way of thinking about this is that a pidgin must acquire native speakers in order to become a creole (Nichols 2004; Ohama *et al.* 2000; Sakoda and Siegel 2003; Siegel 2008).

Hawai'i Creole (HC) lexical iter. However, the structure of the language is Chinese. Sakoda and Siegel's *Intr* thorough overview of the language grammatical strategies. For instance, doesn't occur in English:

Hr fo tawk enikine.

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While 'Olelo Hawai'i was in danger, not yet clear, HC is a healthy language to 200,000 do not speak any other. 1.3 million inhabitants of Hawai'i some degree, and somewhere between (Grimes 1994).⁵

Beyond HC, 'Olelo Hawai'i and find in the United States. There Ilocano, Cebuano, Hiligaynon, Pidgin, which have been flourishing for 1 recent immigrant workers.

In Figure 12.1, a pie chart displayed by the Census Bureau about languages spoken at home, one might conclude that

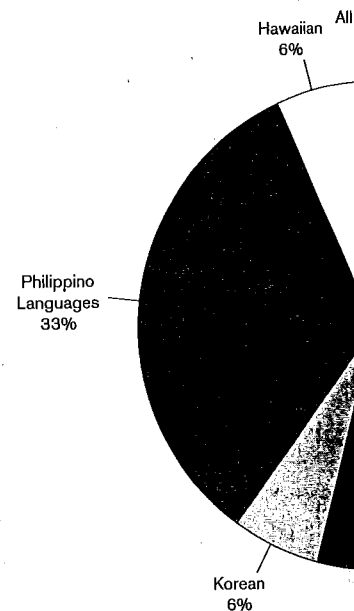


Figure 12.1 Languages spoken at home

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2009

Hawai'i Creole (HC) lexical items come primarily – but not exclusively – from English. However, the structure of the language draws heavily on Hawai'ian, Portuguese and Chinese. Sakoda and Siegel's *Introduction to Hawai'i Creole* (2003) provides a concise yet thorough overview of the language's history and structure, along with examples of most grammatical strategies. For instance, this example of an infinitive clause structure that doesn't occur in English:

Hr fo tawh enikine.
(She's the kind who'd say anything)

(ibid.: 101)

While 'Olelo Hawai'i was in danger of extinction at several points and its ultimate fate is not yet clear, HC is a healthy language spoken by some 600,000 people. Of these, 100,000 to 200,000 do not speak any other variety of English. This means that of the almost 1.3 million inhabitants of Hawai'i as of 1990, almost half of the inhabitants speak HC to some degree, and somewhere between 10 and 30 percent speak it as a primary language (Grimes 1994).⁵

Beyond HC, 'Olelo Hawai'i and English, Hawai'i is as multilingual a place as one could find in the United States. There are Hakka, Cantonese, Japanese, Korean, Tagalog, Ilocano, Cebuano, Hiligaynon, Portuguese, Spanish, and Samoan language communities which have been flourishing for many generations. There are also populations of more recent immigrant workers.

In Figure 12.1, a pie chart displays the 2009 statistics published by the United States Census Bureau about languages other than English spoken at home. On the basis of these numbers, one might conclude that HC is a dying or dead language, when exactly the

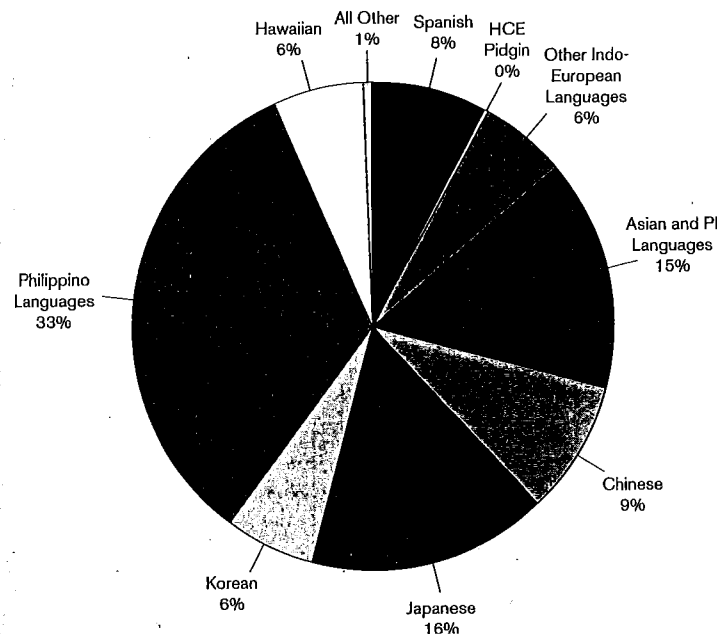


Figure 12.1 Languages spoken in Hawai'i

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2009

opposite is true. Figure 12.2 shows the U.S. Census Bureau (2009) figures for foreign-born residents of Hawai'i by place of origin.

As is the case with all creoles, HC exists in various forms along a continuum of most to least similar to the base language – in this case, English. On that end of the continuum where HC has more in common with English, it is used in a wide variety of public settings; Grimes (1994) reports that it is commonly heard in the judicial system and is used there by officers, jurors, plaintiffs, and defendants, that it is used by some on radio and TV in public service announcements, and that there is a “growing body of serious literature, including poetry” (ibid.). In its basilectal form (where there is the least mutual intelligibility with English), HC is spoken widely by persons of all ages and races, but it is more common among the poor and working class, which accounts in part for its stigmatization. This is an area where U.S. Census Bureau methodology cannot cope with the complexities of language use. This is a larger issue that needs to be addressed, as government funding for all kinds of services is dependent on these statistics.

Marlow and Giles (2008) look closely at the complex interplay of social forces behind choices Hawai'ians make between HC and *SAE. They found that all of their subjects believed in the primacy of *SAE and its use in business and formal situations. Wording used to get this idea across was very similar to that heard from native speakers of AAVE when interviewed about parallel language issues (Eades *et al.* 2006; Ohama *et al.* 2000; Tamura 2002). As is usually the case, the HC speakers are willing to give back the

ideological constructions the the home language:

M: So, you said that “to do you mean by that

Ch: Well, like when you you.

At the same time, the subject and that the language was im

I think it's important for because it's reminiscent of cultures, different ethnic it because that's our own remember where we can

Finally, Marlow and Giles find to-day experience in the world called for in order to establish

C: [Pidgin] definitely h can turn it off and on a second and just sta

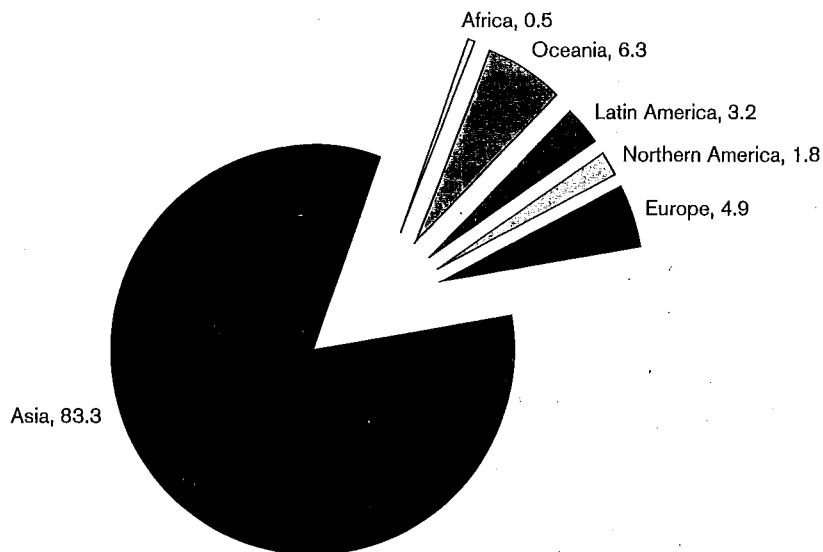
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Hawai'i is also subject to the to discriminate. In this case, character. It is impossible to r Fragante) outside of this cult

If you recall, Manuel Fraga focused discrimination in his cited his accent as part of the of the Fragante case is the fact conducted by Hawai'ians of systematic degradation of Filipinos which time Filipino men were aggressive and violent. This focused discrimination in Fra

At one time the largest and in Hawai'i had marked advancement came to an abrupt end with extreme discrimination. Soon by the 1960s, Japanese political institutional racism had functioned, other Asians and some This solidification of Japanese of George Ariyoshi as governor



Europe	10,479	4.9
Asia	176,707	83.3
Africa	1,040	0.5
Oceania	13,452	6.3
Latin America	6,788	3.2
Northern America	3,763	1.8
Total (excluding born at sea)	212,229	100.0

Figure 12.2 Foreign-born residents of Hawai'i by place of origin

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (2004)

ideological constructions they have learned which allow them to rationalize rejection of the home language:

M: So, you said that "to get through life" you have to learn Standard English. What do you mean by that?

Cb: Well, like when you go for a job, you cannot talk Pidgin, because they won't hire you.

(Marlow and Giles 2008: 61)

At the same time, the subjects declared that they were more comfortable speaking HC, and that the language was important to them despite stigmatization:

I think it's important for the kids, growing up here in the Islands to learn Pidgin, because it's reminiscent of how it was back in the days of the plantation . . . different cultures, different ethnic groups. It's really important to know that and to embrace it because that's our own culture. That's the culture of the Islands . . . it allows us to remember where we came from and how it got us to where we are today.

Finally, Marlow and Giles find evidence of what anyone would guess on the basis of day-to-day experience in the world: even in formal situations, sometimes the vernacular is called for in order to establish solidarity.

C: [Pidgin] definitely helps now, well now with my job. The oddest thing is that I can turn it off and on. I can be with a client that is very local and I can flip it in a second and just start talking broken English.

M: So that's what you do then?

C: Yes. It really helps me to connect with my clients.

Hawai'i is also subject to the same social forces that make an L2 accent a handy excuse to discriminate. In this case, the discrimination is not so much racial as it is ethnic in character. It is impossible to understand the situations considered in Chapter 9 (Kahakua, Fragante) outside of this cultural context.

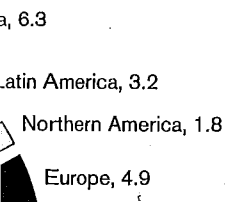
If you recall, Manuel Fragante sued the Department of Motor Vehicles for language-focused discrimination in hiring; Fragante is a native of the Philippines, and the DMV cited his accent as part of their decision to deny him employment. An important element of the Fragante case is the fact that when he applied for the position, his interview was conducted by Hawai'ians of Japanese descent. Okamura (2008: 155–186) outlines the systematic degradation of Filipinos in Hawai'i throughout the twentieth century, during which time Filipino men were seen (and treated) as emotionally volatile, primitive, sexually aggressive and violent. This historical animosity is directly relevant to the language-focused discrimination in Fragante's case.

At one time the largest and certainly most established immigrant group, the Japanese in Hawai'i had marked advantages in terms of political and cultural clout, all of which came to an abrupt end with World War II, when anyone of Japanese heritage suffered extreme discrimination. Soon after the war, the Japanese community began to rebuild and by the 1960s, Japanese political dominance had been firmly established. Under Haole rule, institutional racism had functioned to hold back people of color; under Japanese dominance, other Asians and some Anglos suffered the same disadvantage (Okamura 2008). This solidification of Japanese political dominance culminated in 1974 with the election of George Ariyoshi as governor.⁶



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Under the Ariyoshi administration extreme measures were taken to cement Nisei control.⁷ Laws were introduced which capped immigration; and access to state employment and welfare were subject to length of residence. Institutionalized exclusion of both Haoles and Filipinos was rampant in education especially, where the administration was dominated by ethnic Japanese interests.

As power shifts from one group to another, deep resentments are formed between those groups. Filipinos, Japanese, Pacific Islanders, Chinese, Haole, each group has a mindset about the others but there is one subject on which all groups seem to agree: HC, and the people who speak it (Figure 12.3).

Hawai'ians at school

In 1987, the Board of Education of the State of Hawai'i made a policy decision they called "Standard English and Oral Communication":

Standard English [shall] be the mode of oral communication for students and staff in the classroom setting and all other school related settings except when the objectives cover native Hawai'ian or foreign language instruction and practice.

(Sato 1991: 653)

The issue was not whether English should be the language of instruction, or the target of language instruction; the Hawai'ian school board takes that as given. The issue is, instead,



Figure 12.3 Sound American! Accent reduction in Hawai'i

Source: Photo by Patrick Cates. Reproduced by permission

which language is proper in a is evoked, but not defined. language that has brought ab accounts of the controversy v

Panel wants pidgin kept

Panel urges pidgin ban in

Board votes 7-4 to keep

Thus this proposal would have also have barred the language practice and cafeterias during

The 1987 proposal by the language spoken natively by r system. Why was this languag for exclusion? While in Arizon of Apache and Spanish, in Ha on one end of the continuum.

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Hawai'i's Waianae Coast is not coincidentally, of HC spe proportion of homeless (Mag speaker of HC further clarifie and race:

What we're finding is th meaning it appears they c front of the TV set eve surrounded by it. These ki it up because it means son English - we are people o

By legislating language in the years - the School Board hope solidarity.

Once again it becomes clea ordination is not so much conc

which language is proper in an educational setting. Not surprisingly, "Standard English" is evoked, but not defined. Neither is there any explicit definition of the vernacular language that has brought about this policy statement to begin with. Multiple newspaper accounts of the controversy which ensued from this proposal did not hesitate to name it:

Panel wants pidgin kept out of schools

Panel urges pidgin ban in schools

Board votes 7-4 to keep pidgin out of classroom⁸

Thus this proposal would have had the effect of outlawing HC in the schoolroom. It would also have barred the language from playgrounds at recess, gymnasiums during basketball practice and cafeterias during lunch.

The 1987 proposal by the School Board, then, would have taken this well-established language spoken natively by more than half a million people and banned it from the school system. Why was this language, of all the many languages spoken in Hawai'i, singled out for exclusion? While in Arizona legislatures debate bilingual education for native speakers of Apache and Spanish, in Hawai'i it occurs to the School Board to ban a language which, on one end of the continuum, is mutually intelligible with English. Why?

During extensive public debate of this issue, a Honolulu newspaper conducted a survey of 986 graduating high school seniors on this topic, and that report reveals how socially complex HC is, and how closely tied it is to issues of economics and class. Whereas only 26 percent of the private school students surveyed felt that HC use should be allowed in school, 54 percent of the public school students supported its use. Comments ranged from "Pidgin English fosters illiteracy," "Pidgin is a lazy way to talk; it promotes backward thinking," and "Correct English will get you anywhere" to the polar opposites of "Banning pidgin would violate our freedom of speech," "Pidgin is a natural language," and "It's our way to make Hawai'i different from anywhere else in the United States" (Verploegen, June 1, 1988, cited by Sato 1991: 654).

Hawai'i's Waianae Coast is the home of the greatest concentration of *Kanaka Maoli* and not coincidentally, of HC speakers; it is also one of the poorest areas, with the largest proportion of homeless (Magin 2006). An elementary school teacher who is a native speaker of HC further clarifies the connection between language, identity, authenticity and race:

What we're finding is that children who appear to be pidgin speakers to the max, meaning it appears they can't speak anything else, those same children are sitting in front of the TV set every night or reading standard English, right? They are surrounded by it. These kids are bilingual. We'll never give pidgin up. We won't give it up because it means something to us. It means we're not holy, we're not standard English - we are people of color. We won't give up pidgin because we love it.

(12 September 1990, Drummond 1990, broadcast).

By legislating language in the schoolroom - a subject that comes up regularly over the years - the School Board hopes also to legislate world view, and a choice for status over solidarity.

Once again it becomes clear that the process of standardization and language subordination is not so much concerned with an overall homogeneity of language, but with

excluding only those languages linked to the social differences and it is this which make us uncomfortable. By the simple expedient of substituting one language for another, we hope to neutralize social conflicts grounded in race, ethnicity, and economics. If this could be achieved, "Nothing then would [be] left but the antipathy of race, and that, too, is always softened in the beams of a higher civilization," hypothesized the Commissioner of Indian Affairs. While his methods would be seen as unacceptable today, the underlying sentiment remains.⁹

It is worthwhile to consider the mindset that allowed the question to be raised at all. We want the children of the United States to have a thorough command of English, but it is more than that. We are not satisfied with English as it lives and breathes, English with a Cuban accent, the English spoken off the coast of South Carolina, or Hawai'i Creole English. We want the right English, the one correct English. In the face of huge amounts of factual evidence that a homogenous and monolithic variety of perfect English does not and cannot exist, we still pursue this mythical beast as if it were the solution to all of our societal ills. One Good English, we feel, is the right of our school children, and the responsibility of their teachers.

Talk story: "Without Pidgin, I would cease to be whole"

Wala'au or "talk story" is a phrase which means something like "let's sit down and talk a while" or "to start a conversation" as in the Hawai'i Creole (HC) sentence *We go make one time fo wala'au den* (Why don't we set a time to talk?).¹⁰ The 'Olelo Hawai'i (native Hawai'ian) word *wala'au* is often used interchangeably with HC "talk story" in ways that conflate the morphology of both languages, as in "Wala'au-ing with the baby" or "She's talkin story with daddy."¹¹ As a cultural activity, talk story is not restricted to one language or language variety and while it is primarily a spoken language act, it is also used in print, as in the online 'Olelo Hawai'i newspaper column "Hala'au Sessions with Makela" at Big Island Weekly (bigislandweekly.com).

HC is primarily a spoken language and as such, anyone and everyone local can and does "talk story." Moreover, in language communities such as these where spoken language is primary, good storytelling is especially highly valued.

Broadcast news outlets also know the value of good storytelling, and for many years television news programs have used the last few minutes of airtime to present what they refer to as human interest stories. These reports often deal with topics which are meant to be amusing or inspiring, or have an obvious and unapologetic lesson in citizenship and morals. Commentaries on language often come in this packaging. One such report aired on July 3, 1983 on ABC under the title "Pidgin language fad is used as defense against tourists in Hawaii."¹² This is not a neutral or simply informative news piece; in fact, the ABC report employs many of the steps in the language subordination process outlined earlier. The title is enough to establish trivialization as the primary subordination tool: Hawai'i Creole is a fad, something insubstantial that cannot last for any length of time. There is an element of marginalization as well, which portrays Hawai'ians as willfully different from, and hostile to, tourists.

The report is factually wrong even in the essentials, using misinformation to establish a tone: "Pidgin is a decades old blend of oriental languages and teen slang." Not only is this statement factually incorrect, it is also phrased to combine mystification ("the orient") and marginalization of the non-compliant ("teen slang"). Every element of the story is

designed to reinforce the theme that Pidgin should not be taken seriously. The only use of Pidgin is as an obstructionist.

There is more here than blatant prejudice. The report talks about speakers of this language in terms of their conversations. We see three different types of people: two men are interviewed while another pair of young men look on, and a young couple arguing in a car.

Here HC is the language of the fun-seeking, the beach boy, the person with no serious purpose in life. As there is no future for youth and will pass with maturity, this is a language which typifies "good time." Having established all of this, the report then argues that HC is well, and which have engendered a mainstream. There is no way to escape HC by a large proportion of the dinner tables and in classrooms. Perhaps he is ignorant of the undercount and under-representation of HC in the media strategy. The only authority the report has is in a light as frivolous and trivial.

Such public disavowals and criticisms, after this report aired, negative criticism along with the simmering debate has changed, however, is the way in which the authority in matters of language and identity is an element of Hawai'ian identity.

Lee Tonouchi – a forceful critic of the report – rejects both speaking and writing Pidgin as *Oriental*. Reappropriation is the way in which the GLBT community has reclaimed the word *nigger*.

Didn't used to boddah us, like the previous generation, dey all during our time, dea's a shit movement on da continent, (Honolulu)

In an essay about her document *Marlene Booth* provides a striking example of language and assimilation. The University of Hawaii English exam before graduating students were designed to de-Pidginize them (ibid.). At least one native HC speaker

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designed to reinforce the theme that pidgin is laughable, and pidgin speakers are not to be taken seriously. The only uses for HC are trivial, humorous, or, in the case of tourists, obstructionist.

There is more here than blatant mockery. There is a subtle tone in the way the reporter talks about speakers of this language, further underscored by inclusion of clearly staged conversations. We see three dialogues in HC, each of them between two persons. First two men are interviewed while they lie in the sun; we next see two staged dialogues: another pair of young men looking into the surf, evaluating the conditions for surfing, and a young couple arguing in a parking lot.

Here HC is the language of the young, the unemployed, the over-wrought and emotive, the fun-seeking, the beach boy and the teenager: people who are believed to have no serious purpose in life. As there are no adults speaking HC, we must assume it is a language of youth and will pass with maturity, like pimples or an obsession with loud music. As a language which typifies "good grammar gone to grief," it can have no serious purpose. Having established all of this, the report now turns to the popular books which are selling well, and which have engendered positive reaction or attention to pidgin from the mainstream. There is no way to know if the reporter is unaware of the range and use of HC by a large proportion of the Hawai'ian population, from judges to beach boys, around dinner tables and in classrooms, or of the fact that it has been carefully studied by linguists. Perhaps he is ignorant of these basic facts; perhaps he is purposefully choosing to undercount and under-represent the community of HC speakers, not an uncommon strategy. The only authority the reporter consults is a non-native HC speaker who is cast in a light as frivolous and trivial as the native speakers themselves.

Such public disavowals and criticisms of HC are not unusual; more than twenty years after this report aired, negative commentary still shows up regularly in letters to the editor, along with the simmering debate on the role of HC in the schools and classrooms. What has changed, however, is the way HC speakers have begun to assert themselves, reclaim authority in matters of language use, and publically promote HC as a valid and crucial element of Hawai'ian identity.

Lee Tonouchi – a forceful advocate for HC and its speakers – and someone who rejects both speaking and writing *SAE – has promoted the reappropriation of the term *Oriental*. Reappropriation is the process in which a stigmatized language community reinterprets a negative label by claiming its use for their own. Examples include the way the GLBT community has reclaimed *queer* and parts of the African American community *nigger*:

Didn't used to boddah us, didn't used to boddah my faddah guys. Lotta people, da previous generation, dey all say "Oriental," dey no say "Asian American," eh? Just dat during our time, dea's a shift now, try be more PC. So I guess I like rebel against da movement on da continent, do our own thing.

(Honolulu Weekly, November 13, 2002; <http://goo.gl/fKNJm>)

In an essay about her documentary "Pidgin: The Voice of Hawai'i"¹³ producer/director Marlene Booth provides a striking example of resistance to the forces of subordination and assimilation. The University of Hawai'i requires that all undergraduates pass an oral English exam before graduating: "Speech 101, 102, and 103, three semester-long classes, were designed to de-Pidginize (my word) the speech of Hawai'i's university students" (ibid.). At least one native HC speaking faculty member teaching these courses ran into

problems that the students were willing to talk about, perhaps because she was an HC speaker: "they did not want to sound like haoles. Succeeding by taking on the speech and mannerisms of Caucasians became too high a price to pay for many students. Talking like a haole implied turning your back on family, friends, ethnic group, and neighborhood, moving away from group identity and becoming instead a self-defined individual" (ibid.).

The links that follow provide a wide range of examples in which people talk or write in support of HC in direct or indirect ways. Some are in Hawai'ian accented English, some in HC.

Professor Kent Sakoda, a native speaker of HC, provides a short introduction in that language.

<http://goo.gl/e6krm>

"Low-class Hawaii Pidgin English" is a professionally produced dramatization of novelist Lois-Ann Yamanaka's portrayal of the way HC speakers have been demeaned and marginalized in the classroom.

<http://goo.gl/ekP2B>

Podcasts by Rochelle delaCruz for KBCS 91.3 FM *Hawai'i Ways*, "English" and "Language Gap."

<http://goo.gl/tHT5p>

Hawaii Pidgin: The Voice of Hawaii. Short video broadcast. An American Public Television and Hau Pana Films production.

<http://goo.gl/vNeLa>

Hour-length documentary on Hawai'i Pidgin, Marlene Booth, producer excerpts "Hawai'i's Reel Stories" gathered into a collection at YouTube.

<http://goo.gl/KQ107>

<http://goo.gl/JtliY>

Recording of Lee Tonouchi giving a formal presentation.

<http://goo.gl/1LPqh>

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

- Is Hawai'ian Creole a language? Be prepared to argue both sides.
- First, consider the short excerpt from Lois-Ann Yamanaka's novel, *Wild Meat and the Bully Burgers* (1996: 13) at the beginning of the chapter. Then read Pennybacker's article (March 1, 1999) on Lois-Ann Kamanaka's satirical novels set in the Hawai'ian Islands, and written in Pidgin:
Pennybacker, Mindy. "What Boddah You?: The Authenticity Debate (Lois-Ann Yamanaka)." *The Nation*. <http://goo.gl/OhVjx>.
- Who objected to Yamanaka's books, and on what basis? Was censorship called for?
- Reconsider Lois-Ann Kamanaka's satirical novels set in the Hawai'ian Islands as well as Pennybacker's article on Kamanaka's work (March 1, 1999), Talmy (2010) and The Southern Poverty Law Center's report called "Prejudice in Paradise" which can be found at: <http://goo.gl/IJU7T>. With more context and historical background, do your opinions about Kamanaka's work change? In what way?

Notes

- 1 In the original language of your voice stop or "pop" in like a consonant. In writing symbol for the glottal stop. clearer, a comparison: *Ameri* on the sounds and writing com/network/hawaiian.htm
- 2 *Hawaiian Dictionary* by M. University of Hawai'i Press,
- 3 The Hawaiian Homes Com of "Native Hawai'ians" (K quantum of individuals inha a declining number of peop intensified peripheralization US Code – Section 3057K: ' petitioning the government which would give them a de
- 4 HC is the only aboriginal l federal government recogni indigenous language. The n and seems to be successful. (speakers out of 200,000 to 2 including 8,000 Hawai'ians
- 5 More current demographic c Bureau gathers information. Census Bureau does not rec was not offered to speakers home?" Any HC speaker w to fill in the blank marked "
- 6 Ariyoshi and his contempor Japanese language term for Issei (Japanese born).
- 7 This is not unique to the J political power will be conce ascent is set apart, however, l of "race prejudice, war hyste Denied: Report of the Co. Civilians, 1982.)
- 8 Headlines of a series of a September, 1987, by D. Rey
- 9 In another state, this one ir number of Native American a State Board of Education of the Hawai'ian school bo proposed which, had it been "speak expressively through intonation" before they w professional educators and a

Notes

- 1 In the original language of the islands, the glottal stop (say "uh-oh" and you'll hear your voice stop or "pop" in your larynx) is a meaning-bearing sound which functions like a consonant. In writing, the 'okina – much like a backwards single quote – is the symbol for the glottal stop. Thus *Hawaii* is technically a misspelling. To make this clearer, a comparison: *Ameria* is to America as *Hawaii* is to Hawai'i. More information on the sounds and writing system can be found at: <http://www.coralreefnetwork.com/network/hawaiian.htm>.
- 2 *Hawaiian Dictionary* by Mary Kawena Pukui and Samuel H. Elbert. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1986.
- 3 The Hawaiian Homes Commission Act of 1921 contained a controversial definition of "Native Hawai'ians" (*Kanaka Maoli*) as persons "with at least one-half blood quantum of individuals inhabiting the Hawai'ian Islands prior to 1778." The result is a declining number of people who can legally claim Native Hawai'ian status and the intensified peripheralization of Hawai'ians to racial minority status (42 U.S.C. § 3057k: US Code – Section 3057K: "Native Hawaiian" defined). The *Kanaka Maoli* have been petitioning the government for the same status as other indigenous Indian nations, which would give them a degree of sovereignty.
- 4 HC is the only aboriginal language to be thus recognized in the U.S. In 1990, the federal government recognized the right of Hawai'i to preserve, use, and support its indigenous language. The movement to support and nurture the language is growing and seems to be successful. Grimes (1992) reports that there are 2,000 mother tongue speakers out of 200,000 to 220,000 ethnic Hawai'ians (20 percent of the population), including 8,000 Hawai'ians and 81,000 at least half Hawai'ian.
- 5 More current demographic data should be available, given the fact that the U.S. Census Bureau gathers information on languages spoken at home in every state. However, the Census Bureau does not recognize HC as a real or full language, and so that choice was not offered to speakers answering the question "What language do you speak at home?" Any HC speaker who felt strongly enough about the importance of HC had to fill in the blank marked "other."
- 6 Ariyoshi and his contemporaries are sometimes referred to as the Nisei generation, a Japanese language term for the first generation of Japanese born outside of Japan to Issei (Japanese born).
- 7 This is not unique to the Japanese in Hawai'i, of course. Any group coming into political power will be concerned with how to keep and bolster that power. The Nisei's ascent is set apart, however, by their internment experiences during WWII, the result of "race prejudice, war hysteria, and a failure of political leadership." (Personal Justice Denied: Report of the Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians, 1982.)
- 8 Headlines of a series of articles which appeared in *The Honolulu Advertiser* in September, 1987, by D. Reyes.
- 9 In another state, this one in the Southwest where native speakers of Spanish and a number of Native American languages attend schools, a proposal was put forward at a State Board of Education meeting in 1987 which echoes in many ways the actions of the Hawai'ian school board. In this proposal, a new competency standard was proposed which, had it been implemented, would have required that seventh graders "speak expressively through appropriate articulation, pronunciation, volume, rate, and intonation" before they were promoted to the eighth grade. In this case, the professional educators and administrators approached the issue by posing a number of

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thoughtful questions for themselves, questioning first the parameters of what would constitute "appropriate" accents:

- Can we establish an acceptable standard for children in all school districts in [the state]?
- Can we be assured that Hispanic, Native American, and Asian students will not be retained because of what may be considered an "unacceptable" pronunciation?
- What happens to children who do not master this competency?
- When will they receive needed attention to academic skills and conceptual development?

Administrators consulted a range of specialists in language and linguistics as well as education, and came to the conclusion that this proposed policy was ill conceived, summarizing their position quite simply: Accent is a minimal type of competency in relation to conceptual development and language use. "Rather, let us teach children to use language to expand intellectual development, to appreciate the richness of expression, and enrich lives by knowing what words to choose and use rather than how to pronounce them."

While this case took a reasonable ending, similar legislation and policies continue to be debated in other states. Stalker (1990: 64) reports that in the 1980s, bills requiring school systems "to determine which students do not use [*SAE], and to provide remedial work for them" were submitted multiple times and rejected each time, but only because funding for testing and remedial work was not available.

- 10 One online resource for HC can be found at <http://www.e-hawaii.com/pidgin>.
- 11 YouTube provides an opportunity to experience languages as they are spoken in spontaneous exchanges. Searching the terms "wal'au" or "talking story" will bring up examples of Hawai'ians speaking to each other without violating privacy.
- 12 The first edition of this book included a transcript of this broadcast, but ABC declined to grant permission to use it in the new edition. Beyond consulting the first edition, it is possible to request a video copy of the news segment itself from the Vanderbilt Television News Archives at <http://goo.gl/7RJLf> (summary page). This is not a free service, but it is reasonably priced.
- 13 Available online in pdf format (<http://Goo.Gl/kSpK4>) or as a film clip (<http://goo.gl/JtIiY>).

Suggested further reading

- Booth, M. (n.d.) Learning Da Kine: a Filmmaker Tackles Local Culture and Pidgin. <http://Goo.Gl/kSpK4>.
- Furukawa, T. (2007) "No Flips in the Pool": Discursive Practice in Hawai'i Creole. *Pragmatics* 7(3): 371–385.
- Galinsky, A.D. et al. (2003) The Reappropriation of Stigmatizing Labels: Implications for Social Identity. In Jeffrey Polzer (ed.) *Identity Issues in Groups*. Emerald Group Publishing.
- Keller, L. (2009) Prejudice in Paradise: Hawai'i has a Racism Problem. *Intelligence Report* Issue 135, Southern Poverty Law Center, available at: <http://goo.gl/IJU7T>.
- Marlow, M.L. and Giles, H. (2008) Who You Tink You, Talkin Propah? Hawaiian Pidgin Demarginalised. *Journal of Multicultural Discourses*, 3(1), 53–68.
- Nichols, P. (2004) Creole Languages: Forging New Identities. In E. Finegan and J.R.

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Cambridge University Press
Okamura, J.Y. (2008) *Ethnicity*
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Tonouchi, L.A. (2002) *Living Pidgin: Contemplations on Pidgin Culture*. Tinfish Press.

Watson-Gegeo, K.A. and Boggs, S.T. (1977) From Verbal Play to Talk Story: The role of routine in speech events among Hawaiian children. In S. Ervin-Tripp and C. Mitchel Kernan (eds.) *Child Discourse*. New York: Academic Press.

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