

Hawai‘i Creole in the public domain

Humor, emphasis, and heteroglossic language practice in university commencement speeches

Scott Saft, Gabriel Tebow and Ronald Santos

University of Hawai‘i at Hilo

In light of a belief that Hawai‘i Creole (HC) is mostly inappropriate in public domains of society, this study examines how it was employed in two university commencement speeches by a local politician in Hawai‘i. The analysis adopts the perspective of heteroglossia (Bakhtin 1981) in order to describe how HC is used together in the speeches with English and also some Hawaiian words. By focusing on the contrastive indexical meanings attached to all three languages, the analysis describes how the speaker combined humor and serious advice in his speeches. In particular, a focus is given to a specific feature of the HC grammar, the negative imperative, that was used by the speaker to underscore his main points. Discussion of the analysis considers the potential of the perspective of heteroglossia to understand the usage of HC in the public domain in Hawai‘i to construct formal speeches of a decidedly ‘local’ style.

Keywords: Hawai‘i Creole, language and humor, heteroglossia, marginal languages, indexicality ideology, public speech

1. Introduction

Like many creole languages throughout the world, Hawai‘i Creole (HC) falls into the category of “marginal language varieties” (Siegel 2006). The marginalization of HC, also known locally throughout Hawai‘i by the name “Pidgin,” can be largely attributed to the persistence of negative attitudes. It is often looked at with disdain as nothing more than a broken or lazy form of English (Hargrove and Sakoda 1999; Sato 1985), and it is most commonly considered a variety of language to be used only within the family and on the playground (Drager 2012; Furukawa 2007). In fact, those working in the areas of education, politics, and business have been critical of the possibility that HC occupy a role in public domains of Hawaiian society.

Ben Cayetano, a former governor of Hawai'i, called HC "a tremendous handicap" (Wong 2013) and asked, "why do we keep fooling ourselves that somehow pidgin will be good for the kids in the schools?" (Dunford 1999). Likewise, a member of the local business community was quoted in the newspaper in 1995 as saying, "Growing up in an environment where pidgin is a daily routine is like being sentenced to a life of poverty. They are doomed to struggle" (Kleinjans 1995; also in Hargrove and Sakoda 1999). These negative perceptions were behind an attempt in 1987 by the Board of Education for Hawai'i's public statewide school system to enact a policy that would ban HC from classrooms (Higgins 2010; Sakoda and Siegel 2003). While the ban attempt sparked considerable controversy and was eventually not approved, it is indicative of the extent that negative attitudes toward HC have pervaded the consciousness of people in Hawai'i.

To be sure, HC has its supporters. Several advocates have suggested that HC may be an effective learning resource in schools because it promotes self-esteem and self-expression (Day 1989; Higgins 2010; Reynolds 1999; Siegel 2008). Moreover, research surveying the language attitudes of people in Hawai'i is showing an increase in acceptance of HC (Marlow and Giles 2008; Romaine 1999). Marlow and Giles (2008), for example, found that some of their respondents employ HC in their jobs when it seemed to serve the appropriate communicative goals, especially establishing rapport with customers (also see Higgins 2010).

Some supporters have pointed to a general lack of linguistic research on HC and suggested that the key to changing attitudes is an increase in work that explicates actual usages of HC in society (Drager 2012; Wong 1999). As Wong states, "the fact that the detractors of Pidgin do not feel compelled to provide linguistic evidence that might support the inherent superiority of SE over HCE, reflects the position of relative power enjoyed by English in the community. The burden of making compelling arguments falls on the shoulders of those who support the appreciation of Pidgin" (1999, 208). In light of such a statement, it should be noted that several studies have already revealed some of the intricate processes involved in putting HC to use in context. There have been analyses in the 1970s of the speech of HC-speaking children showing, among other results, that questions functions differently in HC than in English (Boggs 1972, 1985) and that narrative structures are constructed through a complex joint process (Watson 1975; Watson-Gegeo and Boggs 1977). More recently, a study by Furukawa (2007) of the usage of HC in stand-up comedy yielded the finding that HC is employed not only for comedy but also as a source of alignment with the audience in challenging prior preconceptions of HC speakers as unintelligent. Also recently, Higgins (2015, 145) examines some uses of HC in the public sphere through a linguistic landscape perspective and goes as far as to suggest that HC "is potentially undergoing a prestige shift, since it is now being used to buy and sell in the marketplace and to take a political

stance.” Finally, Wong (1999) describes a particular HC usage, referred to as “false reference,” whereby a speaker puts forth a claim “that the interlocutor shares some kind of a relationship with a third party that is not otherwise true” (1999, 209). As Wong explains, false reference is the result of a cognitive process that reveals “a complexity and depth that rivals that of SE (Standard English)” (1999, 209). Wong emphasizes the importance of analyzing actual discourse because it allows users of HC to “recognize the complexity inherent in their own language” and “celebrate the poetics of their language and honor those who use it well, in the same way that SE speakers and writers are honored for their proficiency” (1999, 220).

This study is intended to contribute to our understanding of the employment of HC in context by analyzing how it was used in the public domain in two university commencement speeches made by a politician on the Big Island of Hawai'i. The analysis focuses particularly on the mixing of HC with other languages, mostly English but also some Hawaiian, and describes how the speaker employed HC for both comedy and emphasizing points of advice to the graduates. Moreover, a focus is given to one specific feature of the HC grammar, namely, negative imperatives, in order to explain how the politician worked within the discourse to highlight specific points.

In order to underscore the importance of HC in the speeches, the analysis adopts the perspective of heteroglossia, a term with origins in the work of Bakhtin (1981) that refers to the mixing of different and even conflicting modes of expression. Although Bakhtin is known for consideration of heteroglossia, as well as the terms voicing and genre, in relation to literature, a substantial tradition has developed of applying these concepts to social interaction (Bailey 2007, 2012; Duranti 1992; Rampton 2011, 2014). As Rampton (2011) notes, heteroglossic language practice has been most frequently examined in the speech of young people who come from migrant backgrounds. As part of this research, Rampton has used “speech stylization” and “language crossing” to describe speakers’ mixing of multiples ways of speaking as they produce innovative speech that allows them to navigate cultural boundaries and negotiate identity in changing societies.

An important aspect of a heteroglossic approach is recognition of the ideological component of language. As Bakhtin (1981, 291) writes, “at any given moment of its historical existence, language is heteroglot from top to bottom: it represents the co-existence of socio-ideological contradictions between the present and the past, between different epochs of the past, between different socio-ideological groups in the present.” In this paper, we discuss the ideological aspects of HC, and especially the contradictions between HC and English as two languages that grew to prominence in Hawai'i at the same time. To do so, we employ the concept of indexicality to explore the socially derived, non-referential meanings that features of language take on through the sociohistorical development of that language (Johnstone and

Kielsing 2008; Ochs 2012; Silverstein 2003). As will be discussed, the tandem development of HC and English helped imbue HC with indexical meanings that stand in contrast with those attached to English. By invoking the indexical meanings of HC vis-a-vis English, the analysis details how the politician makes strategic use of the competing non-referential meanings to accomplish both humor and advice-giving.

Heteroglossia has been contrasted with codeswitching, a term used commonly to describe the mixing of languages in interaction (Bailey 2007, 2012). As Bailey (2012) points out, codeswitching has tended to view episodes of language mixing as “special” cases (also see Woolard 2004). Moreover, even though there have been studies of codeswitching that have embraced the sociopolitical meanings of language (Gal 1988), the focus has frequently been on identifying functions in discourse (Bailey 2007, 2012). In contrast, heteroglossia attempts to treat the usage of multiple forms of language as a typical aspect of negotiating a multilingual existence while embracing “competing and political meanings of multilingual talk” (Bailey 2012, 504). In our analysis, we do begin by building on prior work that locates language functions in the data, but we soon thereafter invoke the indexical meanings of the languages used in the speeches in order to unpack the layers of meanings embedded within the speakers’ usage of HC, English, and also Hawaiian.

2. Hawai‘i Creole: A brief description

HC emerged in the 1800s when the establishment of sugarcane plantations made communication necessary not only between English and Hawaiian speakers but also among workers who were brought in as cheap labor from far-reaching places that included China, Japan, Portugal, and the Philippines. Developing first from this contact of languages was an unstable pidgin based mostly on Hawaiian, the language that had been spoken throughout the islands prior to western contact (Bickerton and Wilson 1987; Reinecke 1969). Ultimately, the pidgin forms shifted toward English as English began to replace Hawaiian as the language of dominance in society. Then, as second and third generations were born in Hawai‘i to the immigrant laborers, a stable set of features emerged as a creole language which became commonplace in homes, playgrounds, and the community in general in the 1920s and 1930s (Roberts 1999; Sato 1985). Currently, HC is reportedly spoken by over 600,000 people (Drager 2012; Sakoda and Siegel 2003).

There has been considerable discussion in the literature concerning the categorization of HC in linguistic terms (Sato 1985; Tsuzaki 1966). Although perceived similarities with English have led to labels such as regional dialect, social dialect, and sub-standard dialect (Voegelin & Voegelin 1964), academics and advocates have begun taking the stance that HC is a separate language with its own

pronunciation, lexicon, and grammar (Da Pidgin Coup 2008; Higgins 2010; Sakoda and Siegel 2003; Siegel 2008). There is insufficient space here to describe the HC grammar (see Sakoda and Siegel 2003 and Siegel 2008), but we do make note of some distinguishing features in the analysis.

The relationship that developed between English and both HC and Hawaiian has been described in terms of “linguistic imperialism” (Sato 1985) and “hegemony” (Hargrove and Sakoda 1999), with only English deemed appropriate in public domains. Although Hawaiian flourished as “the language of the land” through the 18th century (Wilson 1998), English gradually gained power in Hawaiian society after the influx of English-speaking missionaries in 1820, eventually resulting in the overthrow of the Hawaiian monarchy in 1893 and the institution of a law establishing English as the medium of education in 1896. At the same time, HC emerged when Hawai'i was already under the control of the American government (Hawai'i official became a territory in 1898) and as more speakers of American English found their way to Hawai'i, this led to immediate comparisons between English and HC and largely negative reactions from English speakers.

Interestingly, though, as English-speaking newcomers were quick to denigrate HC, HC began serving as a marker of identity as well as pride among people born and raised in Hawai'i, especially those with a plantation background. English came to be associated with the increasing arrivals in Hawai'i of “haole,” a term that can be a derogatory reference to Caucasians, and HC became a symbol of being “local” (Roberts 2004; Reynolds 1999). As Takaki writes, “on the plantations, pidgin English began to give its users a working class as well as a Hawaiian or “local” identity, which transcended their particular ethnic identity” (1983, 119). HC developed a type of “covert prestige” as an index of being from Hawai'i due to the way it contrasted with English and its semiotic marking of someone as an “outsider” (Drager 2012; Sato 1985). Sato (1985, 266), in fact, describes how HC is preferred by many in Hawai'i because “*Tawking laik wan haole*” associated one with the economic and political exploitation practiced by such outsiders.” It is thus through this concurrent development of HC and English that both languages came to be imbued with very dissimilar indexical meanings that relate to the social positions and the ideological beliefs attached to them. HC and its linguistic features have become indexes of a “local style” of speaking that stands in contrast and even in competition to the English-speaking style of the “haole” (Roberts 2004). It has even been suggested that the usage of HC may serve as an act of resistance that signifies localness in contexts where people are expected to conform to the English norm (Nordstrom 2015).

The analysis draws primarily on the indexical meanings associated with HC and English, but it is also relevant that the Hawaiian language has taken on non-referential meanings that diverge from HC and English. Although Hawaiian

became a language lacking in social prestige in the English-dominated society that developed, it has been the object of a strong revitalization movement that has led the language “back from the brink” of near extinction (Kimura, Kamanā, and Wilson 2003). The revitalization efforts have included a change in the ideological beliefs toward Hawaiian from the image of a “dying” language to a sense of pride that now recognizes it as the indigenous language of the land and the “jewel of our culture” (Kawai‘ae‘a, Housman, and Alencastre 2007, 186). As the analysis shows, one of the politician’s heteroglossic language practices is the employment of terms of Hawaiian origin that invoke traditional cultural values.

3. HC in the commencement addresses

The commencement speaker is Billy Kenoi, a local politician in the town of Hilo located on the island of Hawai‘i. At the time of the two commencement addresses, Kenoi was serving as the mayor of Hawai‘i county. He was first elected in 2008 for his first 4-year term and was re-elected in 2012 for a second 4-year term. He was born and raised on the island of Hawai‘i and briefly left the islands to pursue and receive his undergraduate degree before returning to obtain a law degree in Honolulu. He is known as an engaging speaker who regularly employs HC in public – he has been called “the Shakespeare of Pidgin” (Laitinen 2012) – and perhaps partly for this reason, was asked to give the commencement addresses at two local 4-year universities in Hawai‘i, the University of Hawai‘i at Hilo (UHH) in 2010 and Hawai‘i Pacific University (HPU) in 2014. Each speech was approximately ten minutes in length. The data are taken from these two speeches.¹

Even though not all of the graduates were born and raised in Hawai‘i, it is likely that they all were at least familiar with HC. At the same time, though, it is possible that some in attendance, especially friends and family of graduates from outside the state, may have not had much, if any, prior exposure to HC. Nonetheless, despite this possibility, the speaker employed HC consistently in both speeches. Even though UHH is noted to have a higher percentage of students from Hawai‘i than HPU, the ratio of HC to English was basically equivalent in both speeches.² On the overall, the commencement speaker used a higher percentage of English than

1. At the time of the writing of this paper, both speeches were available on the Internet. The UHH speech is located at <http://www.bigislandvideonews.com/2010/05/16/video-kenoi-s-uh-hilo-commencement-address/> and the HPU speech is at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p_7bqzFYj4.

2. It is reported that approximately 70% of the student population at UH-Hilo is from Hawai‘i (from the website <http://www.hawaii.edu/campuses/hilo.html>) and roughly 53% of the

HC, but such an observation does not detract from one of the main points of this analysis, namely, that HC played a prominent role in these public events.

The parts of the speeches recognizable as HC appear throughout the data and in the text in italics. As Sakoda and Siegel (2003) note, HC has been transcribed and more generally written down in various ways that attempt to capture the phonological characteristics of the language. For the purposes of representing our data, we have transcribed HC in a way that is meant to capture many of the phonological traits of HC but may not be entirely consistent with prior studies. We have done this in an effort to make the data as accessible as possible to readers of English. In terms of distinguishing HC from English, it is indeed difficult at times to tell when the speaker has switched from English to HC and vice versa, especially given that English is the primary lexifier for HC. There are times, in fact, when HC pronunciations appear together with a grammar that is mostly English.³ For the purposes of this analysis, we have italicized parts of the commencement speeches as HC when they consist of not only phonological characteristics but also grammatical features as well. HC is not translated into English in the excerpts themselves, but translations are provided in the explanations that follow each excerpt.⁴

4. Analysis

4.1 HC for humor and emphasis

In both speeches, the commencement speaker elicits a considerable amount of laughter. Excerpt (1) suggests HC plays a central role in prompting the audience to laugh.

students at HPU are from Hawai'i (https://www.petersons.com/college-search/hawaii-pacific-university-000_10000309.aspx).

3. Some scholars concerned with language usage in Hawai'i have noted the existence of a variety of English referred to as Hawai'i Standard English (Drager 2012), Hawai'i English (Sato 1993), or Hawaiian English (Tsuwaki 1966). While descriptions of this variety of English differ, it reportedly employs an English grammar with HC influences in pronunciation and vocabulary. Although the commencement speaker's use of English in his speeches might fall under this variety of English because it sometimes contains HC pronunciations, we refer to it here as English.

4. The data excerpts include the following symbols:

- () pause, with the length of the pause indicated by the number inside.
- (.) micropause
- (()) information inserted by the authors to describe the context

Excerpt (1) HPU

46 I am here to tell you the people I look up to (.) the people (.) I admire (.) the
 47 people I revere (.) are humble (.) are kind (.) are compassionate (.) are sincere (.)
 48 take your education take your dreams and take your life and go out there but most
 49 importantly (.) share the aloha (.) share the kindness the aloha spirit you learned
 50 while at HPU think about it (.) aloha (.) it doesn't cost any money (.) it's not like
 51 when *ya guyz go out wit your friends and da bill come and ya guyz*
 52 *start doin the Hawaiian haka ya know da kine (.) eh ah (.) you get that no I*
 53 *thought you had dat no (.) think about it (.) love (.) aloha it doesn't cost any*
 54 *money and it doesn't take any effort*

From line 46 until the end of line 50, the speaker employs English as he makes a basic point that centers on the idea of “aloha,” namely, that the graduates should share the aloha spirit that they learned in school. Then, after he tells them in English in line 50 that “it doesn’t cost any money,” he employs HC in line 51, beginning with his HC pronunciation of “*ya guyz*” to draw a comparison between the lack of money required to show aloha and the necessity of money when they go out with their friends. In these lines, his HC pronunciations become even more noticeable in words such as “*wit*,” “*doin*,” and “*dat*,” but HC is especially apparent in the usage of vocabulary such as “*Hawaiian haka*” and “*da kine*” as well as HC grammatical forms, particularly the usage of the uninflected verb *come* after the singular noun with the HC definite article “*da*” in “*da bill*” in line 51. His switch into HC draws considerable laughter from the audience through line 53, a point where he returns to English by pronouncing the “th” in “think” and by repeating his main point that “aloha, it doesn’t cost any money.”

The usage of humor in Excerpt (1) is consistent with prior research that has demonstrated a connection between humor and codeswitching. In particular, in situations of diglossia where one language is accorded a higher social position than the other (Garcia Vizcaino 2011; Siegel 1995; Woolard 1987), it is often the so-called “low variety” that is “considered appropriate for humor” (Apte 1985, 190, also quoted in Siegel 1995, 100; Rubin 1968). Such an observation seemingly fits with what has been noted about HC in Hawaiian society, namely, that HC is frequently employed to express humor (Hiramoto 2011; Furukawa 2007; Labrador 2004). Labrador, in fact, notes that HC has become “the primary medium of communication for Local comedians” (2004, 296). This connection between HC and humor would seemingly explain the switching in Excerpt (1). The switch to HC brings with it a kind of a “joke break” in which the speaker breaks from the serious advice being delivered in English through line 50 to insert some humor into his speech via HC. Then, after the speaker elicits laughter and finishes the joke in line 53, he signals another change from humor to a serious topic by moving back to English. In fact, his repetition in lines 53–54 of the exact same phrase “it doesn’t cost any money” used in line 50 prior to switching to HC seems to serve as a signal that the joke break is over and that it is time to return to the main point.

However, even though we observe a close relationship between HC and humor in this study, it is necessary to go beyond an analysis that looks to assign specific functions to the different languages employed. One aspect of Excerpt (1) that suggests this need is the speaker's usage of the word "aloha," a term with origins in Hawaiian but which is used commonly by speakers of HC and English. While most commonly translated as "love," Teves (2012, 49) explains that traditionally "aloha meant kindness and sharing, especially in the family or 'ohana setting, people are welcomed and all is shared, with the understanding that people gather to provide mutual helpfulness for collective benefit" (also see Puku'i, Haertig, and Lee 1983). Although critics have noted that the notion of "aloha" has been adopted by English speakers to take advantage of the benevolence of native Hawaiians (Ohnuma 2008; Teves 2012), it is apparent that the speaker in Excerpt (1) is using the term "aloha" to impart the cultural values of kindness and sharing that are associated with the traditional interpretation of the term. He employs the term four times in Excerpt (1), all as a part of an English grammar. He tells the audience in lines 49–50 to "share the aloha (.) share the kindness the aloha spirit you learned while at HPU think about it (.) aloha (.) it doesn't cost any money," and he then returns to the same theme in lines 53–54 after the HC "joke break" with "think about it (.) love (.) aloha it doesn't cost any money." Thus, even though he is in these lines speaking in what might be recognized as English, there is heteroglossia at work with the speaker referencing a traditional Hawaiian voice with "aloha."

With the invocation of cultural values through terms of Hawaiian origin, it is tempting to suggest a three-way division of labor in this first excerpt with HC used for comedy, English for serious advice, and then Hawaiian for traditional values. Excerpt (2), however, indicates the dangers of assuming such a neat division as it shows that the usage of HC in the speeches extends beyond comedy. It is from the same commencement address and in fact occurs just shortly after the conclusion of Excerpt (1) as the speaker is still focusing on the virtues of aloha, which he refers to in line 57 as "dat simple simple value."

Excerpt (2) HPU

56 so as we go out there and pursue our dreams and strive for (.) excellence let
 57 us remember dat simple simple value (.) and I am here to tell you to stand
 58 before all of you and tell you truthfully *no such ting no can (.)* ((a few shouts of
 59 agreement)) *when I tol people I was goin be da mayor of Hawaii Island they tol*
 60 *me hmm how do you plan on doin dat (1)* ((laughter)) *when I told people I was*
 61 *goin be wan lawyer they said brudah you need wan lawyer you nat goin be wan*
 62 *lawyer (.5)* ((laughter)) but you know what I just kept doing what I learned in
 63 college

The speaker states in English in lines 57–58, "I am here to tell you to stand before all of you and tell you truthfully," which suggests that a major point is forthcoming in the next utterance. Indeed the speaker provides this point in line 58 but notice

that he switches to an HC grammar as he makes the delivery through the phrase “*no such ting no can*” (“there is no such thing as not being able to do something”). This utterance is marked grammatically as HC by the usage of the negative marker *no*. Rather than being met with laughter from the audience, this insertion of HC is received by audible shouts of agreement.

Following the expression of this main point in HC, he continues using HC through the beginning of line 62 to convey a personal recollection that does indeed elicit laughter from the audience. There is laughter in line 60 after he states in HC “*when I tol people I was goin be da mayor of Hawaii Island they tol me hmm how do you plan on doin dat*” (“When I told people I was going to be the mayor of Hawaii Island, they told me, hmm, how do you plan on doing that?”) in lines 59–60, and then there is even more laughter in line 62 after he remarks “*when I told people I was goin be wan lawyer they said brudah you need wan lawyer you nat goin be wan lawyer*” (“When I told people I was going to be a lawyer, they said that you need a lawyer, you are not going to be one”). Following this laughter, the speaker continues with his personal narrative, but he has moved in lines 62–63 into English.

This excerpt still suggests a correlation between HC and humor, but it is not as direct of a connection as seen in Excerpt (1). The speaker’s usage in line 58 of the HC “*no such ting no can*” seems to set off a personal narrative that begins in HC. Yet, he continues that narrative in lines 62–63 after he moves back into English. The change of language does not seemingly alter the speaker’s basic ability to tell his story and it does not perform only the function of creating humor.

In terms, then, of function, this switch to HC in line 58, since it follows the lead-in phrase “I am here to tell you (.) to stand before all of you and tell you truthfully” appears to serve as a way of not just expressing but also emphasizing a main point. Indeed, some research on codeswitching has maintained that changing languages may serve as emphasis (Gumperz 1982; Reyes 2004). In particular, it has been suggested that the switching of languages to repeat or restate the gist of a point just made in another language can highlight that point. In this excerpt, the speaker does not restate a current point but instead sets up his speech so that the point of emphasis is stated as the first words of the language switch. In a sense then, the very act of changing languages at that particular point of the speech serves as a display of emphasis on the first words expressed in language just switched into, which in this case is HC.

The effect of emphasis, though, is not created merely from the change in languages but is enhanced by the contrasting indexical meanings attached to the two languages. With English indexing a “non-local” perspective and HC signifying “local,” this contrast in indexical meanings helps make HC a resource for emphasis. Due to this contrast, switches from English into HC in a public speech become noticeable, hence marking the parts of the speech in HC with more saliency than

if they had been delivered in English. Excerpt (3) further speaks to the connection between emphasis and HC as well as to the heteroglossic character of the speeches. It is from the commencement speech given at UHH and, like the first two excerpts, invokes the notion of “aloha” as an important value.

Excerpt (3) UHH

50 the people I look up to are people who exhibit kindness (.) compassion
 51 (.) and aloha (.) you know who exercise true strength by lifting people
 52 up and not pushing people down (.) ya know when you tink about
 53 it aloha kindness (.) is (.) free (.) *no cos any money (.) buggah cheapa*
 54 *den dis education ya guyz wen get dats fo shua nah nah nah (.)*
 55 UH Hilo very affordable high quality education (.)
 56 *uh ya guyz I no mean fo say dat (.)* but when you tink about
 57 yeah (.) just tink about it aloha (.) kindness (.) a kind word (.) *no cos any*
 58 *money (.) no take any effort (.)* and if there is one investment you
 59 make in yourself that will carry you through the world of business

In lines 50–52, the speaker employs English to describe the people that he admires and lists “aloha” as one of the features of such people. He employs the HC pronunciation *tink* in line 53 but still stays in an English grammar to state that aloha is free. He then makes use of the HC negative form in line 53 to note that aloha “*no cos any money*” (“does not cost any money”). This statement is a basic reiteration of his point that aloha is free; the only difference is that it is stated in HC, which, especially with the contrasting social meanings attributed to HC and English, helps highlight the point that aloha is free.

His usage of HC does not end there. After a small pause in line 53, he continues using HC to insert humor into his speech. Using the HC term “*buggah*” in line 53 as well as the HC past tense marker *wen*, he states through line 54 “*buggah cheapa den dis education ya guyz wen get dats fo shua nah nah nah*” (“it is cheaper than the education you got, that is for sure, no, no, no”). With the ending “*nah nah nah*,” the speaker indicates that this is intended as a joke, as if he is using the negative *nah* to negate the implication that he is somehow criticizing their education. The humor, however, does not stop when he finishes speaking in HC in line 54. After his third “*nah*,” the speaker moves back to English and, employing a hypercorrect English accent, states through the beginning of line 55 “UH Hilo very affordable high quality education” which once again elicits considerable laughter from the audience. His exaggerated English pronunciation serves as a “contextual cue” (Gumperz 1982) that marks this spate of English as a joke. The exaggerated pronunciation especially works as humor at this point of the speech because of the sharp contrast it provides with the HC that was just used. He has suggested in HC that the education received by the graduates was expensive while his hyper-corrected English, as though it was indexing the actual voice of authority, has countered his HC to emphasize that the education at UHH is worth the price.

Furthermore, after he concludes his exaggerated English in line 55, he once again switches to HC to state “*uh ya guyz I no mean fo say dat*” (“oh you guys, I do not mean to say that”), which appears to be a further attempt to negate any suggestion that there was a problem with the expense of the graduates’ education and with the education itself. After a short pause in line 56, he does employ the HC pronunciation for “*tink*” but he uses an English grammar as he prepares to reiterate the point that aloha is free. Yet, when it comes time to actually state that it is free, he switches back again at the end of line 57 to a HC grammar “*no cos any money (.) no take any effort*” (“it doesn’t cost any money (.) it doesn’t take any effort”), which is a repetition of the point he had originally switched into HC in line 54 to express. This serves as a serious point, which partly because of the fact that it is a repetition but also largely due to the switch from English to HC, becomes marked as a point of emphasis. Then, after emphasizing these two utterances through the switch into HC, the speaker changes once more to English in lines 58–61 to expand on the idea of how “aloha” can serve them in their future endeavors.

This excerpt contains a rich sequence of mixing that enables the speaker to emphasize his main point about the importance of aloha and also to provide the audience with humor. However, neither emphasis nor humor can be attributed to one language. The emphasis of his main point comes from a combination of HC, English, and also the Hawaiian term “aloha.” The HC expression “*no cos any money*” is used twice by the speaker to highlight his main point, but this works as an emphasized expression not just because it is expressed in HC but because it occurs at the beginning of a switch into HC from English, an action that helps make it noticeable. Part of the humor is expressed in HC – when the speaker utters “*buggah cheapa den dis education ya guyz wen get dats fo shua nah nah nah*” (“it is cheaper than the education you got, that is for sure, no, no, no”) – but humor is also created through a meshing of the two languages with an exaggerated version of English drawing laughter from the audience. HC thus does not function exclusively as the language of humor nor does English work only to emphasize serious points of advice. Instead, the accomplishment of these two functions arises from the speaker’s ability to mix the two languages.

Moreover, the contrasting social meanings attached to HC and English not only contribute to the emphasis and humor within the speech, but they also create a speech which combines the formalness associated with English, the “localness” of HC, as well as the traditional sense attributed to Hawaiian cultural terms such as “aloha.” It is this heteroglossia that enables the speaker to construct his speeches with humor and advice. Understanding the switching of codes, then, does require awareness of functions such as humor and emphasis, but more than that, it takes examination of the in situ action of mixing languages as well as a deeper probing of

the indexical meanings attached to the usage of those languages. We build on this point below by focusing on one specific feature of HC that figured prominently in highlighting serious advice in the speeches.

4.2 Negative imperatives

While the speaker employed various HC grammatical structures in his speeches, there was one structure in particular, namely, negative imperatives, that was used more frequently than others. Excerpt (4) provides an example of the usage of several negative imperatives as part of a discourse that creates humor as well as emphasis.

Excerpt (4) UH-Hilo

67 you know somebody said one time and it made sense you know
 68 success is just getting up and dusting yourself off (.) one more time than you
 69 fell (.) ya know (.) it's that simple (.) *no get confused ya guyz people make life*
 70 *out to be chess when it's really just checkaz okay (.) so no let it be any more*
 71 *confusing than it needs to be (.)* it's not that hard (.5) ya know all of you (.)
 72 um (.) owe so much to so many um who have helped you get here (.) mom and
 73 dad (.) grandmah granpah sistah brudah (.) husband wife (.) professahs librarians
 74 people in the community (.) pastor at church (.) *no foget say thank you (.)*
 75 *no foget say mahalo (.) my faddah tol me one time and I agree neva (.) no*
 76 *such ting as saying mahalo too much*

The speaker switches from English to HC in lines 69–70 and, employing the negative imperative form, tells the graduates in lines 69–70 “*no get confused ya guyz people make life out to be chess when it's really jus checkaz okay*” (“do not be confused, people make life out to be chess when it is really just checkers, okay”). He draws laughter after making the comparison of life to chess and checkers, but this humor is still related to the point he is developing at this point of his speech, namely, that the key to success is not that difficult. After a brief pause in line 70, the speaker continues in HC with another HC negative imperative that further emphasizes this point. He states “*so no let it be any more confusing than it needs to be*” (“don't let it be any more confusing than it needs to be”). Following these two HC negative imperatives, he employs an English grammar in lines 71–74 (with some HC pronunciations such as *sistah* and *brudah*) before once again turning to two negative imperatives in HC in lines 74–76. He first states “*no foget say thank you*” (“don't forget to say thank you”) and “*no foget say mahalo*” (“don't forget to say mahalo”), which are almost identical except that one makes use of the Hawaiian word “*mahalo*” meaning thank you. The excerpt ends with him repeating “*mahalo*” and also employing the marker *no* in lines 75–76 in the phrase “*no such ting as sayin mahalo too much*” (‘there is no such thing as saying thank you too much’). In grammatical terms, this would not be classified as a negative imperative; it is a negative existential sentence which

begins with the HC marker *no*. Still, there is symmetry with the two negative imperatives used just prior, with all three *no*-initial statements functioning in a way that provides the graduates with advice about how to live.

This excerpt thus shows the speaker emphasizing certain pieces of advice to the audience while providing humor, all of which is done by mixing HC, English, and the Hawaiian term “mahalo.” “Mahalo” is typically translated as “thank you” into English, but it also contains within it a sense of respect and admiration.⁵ Like “aloha,” “mahalo” is a term that has crossed over from its roots in Hawaiian to HC and English. In this excerpt, the speaker uses it as part of the HC negative imperative, but the effect is arguably similar to his usage of “aloha:” it invokes a sense of Hawaiian traditional values, namely, the value of showing gratitude and appreciation as well as respect and admiration to others. Thus, while the speaker’s employment of the term “mahalo” in line 75 is seemingly just a repetition of the English term “thank you,” it helps the speaker cross linguistic and cultural boundaries by referencing classical Hawaiian values. This traditional sense of “mahalo” is undoubtedly enhanced in lines 75–76 when the speaker refers to the advice given by his father, a member of an older generation; “*my faddah tol me one time and I agree neva (.) no such ting as saying mahalo too much*” (“my father told me one time and I agree (.) there is no such thing as saying thank you too much”).

In order to impart the value of “mahalo” as well as other pieces of advice to the audience in Excerpt (4), the *no*-initial negative imperatives play a critical role. Headed by the marker *no*, this construction is easily recognizable as a statement of negative quality. Although similar to English, it is decidedly an HC feature, hence invoking the indexical meanings of HC that juxtapose it with English. Accordingly, by leading with the negative marker *no*, an HC negative imperative allows the statement to stand out and makes it possible for the speaker to further emphasize certain pieces of advice. In Excerpt (4) above, the speaker twice employs these negative constructions immediately after a spate of talk in English, a practice that can make it possible for him to utilize the contrast between HC and English in order to highlight these pieces of advice. This is not, however, the only place in which the speaker uses these *no*-initial statements. Excerpt (5) below shows negative imperatives that follow a series of other elements of an HC grammar.

Excerpt (5) HPU

18 you dreamed and set a goal (.) you had a goal of acquiring higher
 19 education which is the great equalizer of our society higher education opens the
 20 doors to the potential and possibilities of your life (.) I’m here to tell you it’s true
 21 not just because I wen catch a couple of degrees but because I had wan 1.8 GPA
 22 out of high school and when I tol guyz I was goin college they tol me easy

5. This is according to the online Hawaiian dictionary at wehewehe.org

23 *Hawaiian* (.) maybe you betta trottle back some of dat ambition and dreams (.)
 24 I'm hea fo tell you guyz (.) no listen to dem ((cheers from audience)) (.) okay
 25 cuz next ting you know (.) anything is possible (l) you guyz it's the dream you
 26 had it but you realized to get there you had to do a couple tings and you did (.)
 27 one word you had to work hard (.) nobody gave you this degree

In lines 18–20, the speaker makes a statement about the positive features of higher education as he tells the students that it is the “great equalizer of our society” and that it “opens the doors to the potential and possibilities of your life.” He then states at the end of line 20 using an English grammar that he is “here to tell you it’s true,” which seems to be setting up his next utterance as a major point. To make this point he switches into HC in line 21 to tell a personal story and, employing features of an HC grammar such as the past tense marker “*wen*,” the indefinite article “*wan*,” and the infinitive “*fo*,” the speaker relates how he had a 1.8 grade point average in high school and also how people around him attempted to discourage him from pursuing his dreams. There is some laughter elicited in this series of lines, especially when he uses the phrases “*easy Hawaiian*” in lines 22–23 and “*trottle back*” in line 23, but he seems to culminate his point with a serious statement in line 24 that is expressed through the HC negative imperative “*no listen to dem*” (‘don’t listen to them’). This point elicits cheers and applause from the audience and seems to mark the temporary end of the speaker’s usage of HC as he begins using an English grammar in line 25.

The placement of the negative imperative in this excerpt is different from those observed in Excerpt (4), where this HC structure was observed at the beginning of spates of HC. Here, the speaker employs it at the end of a sequence of HC, but, as the culmination of his point and as a negative imperative, it also stands as a statement that is highlighted. That the audience recognizes it as a point of emphasis is clear from the applause it generates. The speaker further marks it as the end of a sequence by switching in line 25 to English. Similar to Excerpt (4), the *no*-initial negative imperative provides an important grammatical resource for emphasizing a piece of advice.

While Excerpt (5) shows the HC negative imperative at the end of a spate of talk in HC, it was more common for this grammatical device to occur as the initial element of a language switch. Excerpt (6) provides one final example from the conclusion of one of the speeches.

Excerpt (6) UHH

91 finally we all want the same things in life (.) a sense of peace and joy (.) security
 92 (.) health (.) and a better future for our children (.) and in a few moments
 93 all of you will hold those (.) in your hands the key that will unlock the door to
 94 a better world for all of us (.) I look forward to seeing the outstanding ac-
 95 accomplishments from every one of the graduates of the class of 2010 (.)
 96 to all of you finally (.) *no skaed em go get um* (.) *aloha*

Displaying through the term “finally” at the beginning of line 91 that his speech is coming to a close, the speaker employs an English grammar to list aspects of life that he and the graduates desire. After further utterances in English, he utters “finally” one more time in line 96 before concluding his speech with the HC negative imperative “*no skaed em go get um*” (“don’t be scared, go and get them”). Then, after a micropause, he adds the word “aloha,” which can serve as both an initial and a farewell greeting. It is undoubtedly not a coincidence that he has chosen the HC negative imperative to conclude his speech. The switch into HC contrasts with the English that was used from lines 91–95 and thus functions as a way of highlighting this remark for the audience. Additionally, his choice of the negative comparative construction with *no* in the lead position helps to emphasize this final piece of advice that the graduates not be afraid and go out and empower their lives. Moreover, by making his last piece of advice in HC, the speaker ends his speech with last one invocation of “localness,” which creates a recognizable contrast with the string of English that preceded it. Finally, he also invokes the voice of Hawaiian with his final word “aloha.” Even though this is a fairly common way in Hawai‘i of bidding farewell, it still nonetheless conjures up the traditional values associated with the term. We provide additional discussion of the speaker’s heteroglossia below.

5. Discussion

In light of a history in which speakers of HC have often been discouraged from using the language in public settings, the excerpts of data offered in the analysis show how HC served as a resource for adding humor and emphasis when used in combination with English and Hawaiian in two university commencement speeches. Throughout this study, we adopted the perspective of heteroglossia and also contrasted heteroglossia with codeswitching, but it should be noted that much of the analysis focused on the switching that occurred in the speeches between HC and English. By tracking the speaker’s moves from one language to the other, it became possible to understand that functions such as humor and emphasis could not be merely assigned to individual languages. Instead, it was often the switching itself that contributed to the construction of humor and emphasis in the speech.

At the same time, it was necessary to go beyond switching at the discourse level and examine the social history of language in Hawai‘i in order to understand how HC served as a resource. This is where the willingness of the perspective of heteroglossia to embrace the political and ideological sides of language becomes relevant. As Bailey (2012, 499–500) reminds us, “from the perspective of heteroglossia, language is not a neutral, abstract system of reference but a medium through which one participates in a historical flow of social relationships, struggles, and meanings.”

Here, it was important to know that HC and English consist of closely intertwined histories in Hawai'i and developed contrastive indexical meanings over time, with English becoming known as the formal and proper language of the "haole" and HC the supposedly improper language that acquired covert prestige among "locals." On the one hand, this knowledge of a link between HC and "localness" enabled a further connection to comedy which assisted in understanding how HC became a resource for the speaker to infuse his speeches with humor. HC developed in Hawai'i as the language used by locals in communities to relate to and joke around with one another in non-public contexts. This was partly how it contrasted with the English of the "haole" and how it developed covert prestige as a shared way of speaking. On the other hand, the contrast between the HC and English languages allowed the speaker to play them against each other, in other words, to use the switching from one to the other to highlight certain points of advice in his speech. In particular, these contrastive indexical meanings helped make the *no*-prefaced negative imperative a resource for the speaker that could be used either just after or just before a spate of English in order to emphasize his point. This was true in Excerpt (4) when he employed the negative imperative to advise the graduates to always be grateful and respectful, and it also was the case in Excerpt (5) when he used the negative imperative to tell his audience not to listen to people trying to hold them back.

Moreover, although the speaker is not observed to be "switching" into Hawaiian in any of the six excerpts provided, the concept of heteroglossia makes it possible to see that the speaker makes use of the indexical meanings of Hawaiian to accomplish the activity of advice-giving. By relying on terms like "aloha" and "mahalo," the speaker accesses not only a traditional cultural value but also the voice of a language that was endangered but now is respected and adored by much of Hawaiian society. This voice is different from the localness of HC and the formalness of English, but it works together with both of them to provide points of advice. In Excerpt (1), then, when the speaker implores the audience to "share the aloha (. . .) share the kindness the aloha spirit you learned," he draws on a traditional interpretation of "aloha" as representing a mutually beneficial, reciprocal relationship in which kindness, compassion, and love are shared. Likewise, by moving in lines 74–75 of Excerpt (4) from "*no foget say thank you*" to "*no foget say mahalo*," the commencement speaker is once again able to invoke a voice – a traditional, Hawaiian one – into his speech that contrasts with the voice represented by the English "thank you." By using these Hawaiian terms, the speaker is able to make these traditional values focal points of the advice imparted to his audience.

Finally, heteroglossia emphasizes that the speaker not only draws on the past histories of HC, English, and Hawaiian, but also that he is contributing to the construction of a linguistic present in Hawai'i that is still saturated with ideologies but is at the same time in flux. By creating a speech that employs the HC lexicon and

grammar as well as its indexical meanings, he is putting forth a statement about the appropriateness of HC for a public venue in Hawai'i such as a commencement speech. His speeches thus stand in contrast to a historical hierarchy that had mostly kept HC out of the public domain. By constructing an entertaining speech with humor and also serious advice that combines formality and a sense of localness, he is demonstrating the potential of using HC in formal public contexts and possibly contributing to a linguistic future in Hawai'i in which HC occupies more space in the public linguistic landscape (Higgins 2015).

In this sense, then, despite the different indexical meanings attributed to HC and English within Hawaiian society, viewing the commencement speeches in terms of heteroglossia leads us to recognize a kind of equality between the two languages. HC may have been burdened through its history with a negative stigma, but it is an equally valuable part of the repertoire of the speaker as he uses both English and HC to construct his speeches in the creative way that he desires. Put another way, we might say that HC together with English and Hawaiian terminology make available a kind of "feature pool" (Cheshire et. al 2011; Mufwene 2001) that gives the commencement speaker, with his knowledge of HC, English, and Hawaiian words, a range of linguistic resources from which to choose and a variety of indexical meanings from which to draw. He may use the prosodic features of English to exaggerate his English pronunciations as he did in Excerpt (3) in order to contrast them with HC pronunciations and thus elicit laughter. Likewise, he can turn to the HC negative imperative structure as a valuable resource for emphasizing some of his main points. In this sense, then, there is little, if any, disparity in terms of the contributions made by HC and English to the speeches. They both provided the speaker with linguistic features that served as resources for the overall accomplishment of the speeches. By making use of the resources available to him, including the indexical meanings of not just HC and English but also Hawaiian, the speaker was able to create innovate and heteroglossic speeches that rely on humor, provide advice, draw on traditional Hawaiian values, and convey a "local" style.

6. Conclusion

This paper focused on the speech of one particular speaker of HC. To be sure, not all speakers of HC are as experienced or have as many opportunities to speak in public as the speaker examined in this study. As a politician, he has already established himself as a public figure, and through the nickname "the Shakespeare of Pidgin" he has become known in Hawaiian as someone unafraid of employing HC. Nonetheless, there are undoubtedly numerous other speakers of HC who, like this politician, possess the ability to use the linguistic features made available by HC, English, as well as Hawaiian to construct their speech in innovative ways in both

private and public contexts. Given reports that HC “has become more visible in the public sphere” and “is potentially undergoing a prestige shift” (Higgins 2015: 145), it follows that further research focusing on heteroglossia in Hawai'i may lead to a deeper understanding of the abilities of HC speakers and the role(s) played by HC within Hawaiian society.

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