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CHAPTER 36

Pidgin and English in Hawaiʻi

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Abstract
This chapter provides a description of two language varieties spoken in Hawaiʻi: Pidgin, an English-based creole, known exonymically as Hawaiʻi Creole, and Hawaiʻi English, the regional variety of English spoken in Hawaiʻi. While Pidgin and Hawaiʻi English are treated here as separate entities, we also acknowledge the continuum between them. Our description of linguistic variation in both varieties is based on analysis of speech from informal interviews. We present findings from work that examines variation in linguistic forms, including postvocalic /r/, and we focus especially on variation among vowels. The acoustic analysis of over 8,000 tokens of monophthongs has allowed us to examine and discuss how the vowels of Hawaiʻi English and Pidgin have changed over time.

Keywords
Pidgin, Hawaiʻi English, local culture, language ideologies, language variation and change, vowel realizations

36.1 Introduction

This chapter is concerned with the two most widely spoken language varieties in Hawaiʻi: Hawaiʻi English, a regional variety of English, and Pidgin, an English-lexified creole. While many people in Hawaiʻi have features of both Pidgin and Hawaiʻi English in their linguistic repertoires, the varieties have distinct histories and are associated with different language ideologies. In addition, while we acknowledge a great deal of overlap in the phonological, morphological, and syntactic forms of both languages, there are notable structural differences.

In this chapter, we discuss these two varieties. We begin by describing the sociohistorical context in which English and Pidgin came to be used in Hawaiʻi, commenting on how the history shaped the varieties and the ideologies associated with each (Section 36.2). We then turn to a description of select features observed in each variety, highlighting which are different and which are shared (Section 36.3). We then describe quantitative findings regarding the distribution of some of the sociolinguistic variables that have been examined to date (Section 36.4). Finally, we turn to a comparison of vowels in both varieties, focusing especially on changes in apparent time, paying special attention to the extent to which this work, when taken together, highlights the ways in which Pidgin and Hawaiʻi English have influenced

one another over time (Section 36.5).

36.2 History of English and Pidgin in Hawaiʻi

In this section, we discuss how Pidgin and Hawaiʻi English came to be and describe how the recent history of Hawaiʻi has shaped common attitudes and ideologies surrounding the varieties. We begin with a discussion of the history of English in the islands (Section 36.2.1), followed by a discussion of the sociohistorical context in which Pidgin was formed (Section 36.2.2).

36.2.1 Seizure of land, power, and language

For centuries, Hawaiʻi existed as a monolinguistic nation where everyone spoke ʻōlelo Hawaiʻi (Hawaiian language). The first contact Hawaiʻi had with the West was with Captain James Cook and his men in 1778. After this initial contact, Hawaiʻi quickly became used by Westerners as a stopping point and supply center for vessels between American and Asian coasts. Between 1786 and 1810, English-speaking fur traders frequently visited Hawaiʻi, but communication between English and Hawaiian speakers remained intermittent (Reinecke 1969: 24-25). At this stage, very few Hawaiians were exposed to English, and the people of Hawaiʻi were still largely monolingual speakers of ʻōlelo Hawaiʻi. In ports, a small number of foreigners used a Pacific pidgin called Hapa Haole English (Kawamoto 1993: 194), but this variety was linguistically distinct from the plantation pidgin that would later emerge.

After 1810, the number of English-speaking visitors increased, first with the sandalwood trade (1810–1830) and then the whaling industry (1820–1880). Such trade resulted in key changes to the Hawaiian social hierarchy, changes that would help create the conditions that would ultimately grant currency to the English language in the islands. The trade industry, in particular, played an outsized role in the intensification of class stratification between the *makaʻāinana* ʻcommoners and citizensʼ and the Hawaiian elite (*aliʻi* and *mōʻī*) (see discussion in Ralston 1984). Following the introduction of Western traditions, land ownership and monetary currency were used to incentivize the makaʻāinana to supply labor and goods that were necessary for the survival of the trading industry. In return, the Hawaiian elite provided the makaʻāinana land usage rights. However, as the trading industry progressed, it became increasingly difficult for the makaʻāinana to meet the demands of the rapidly growing industry. This, together with the 1848 Māhele which established the right for foreigners to purchase and own land, meant that by 1854, the Hawaiian makaʻāinana owned only one percent of the land in Hawaiʻi (Ralston 1984: 39). Thus, the makaʻāinana shifted from a self-sufficient class in 1778 to one that by 1854, and through no fault of their own, was landless and barely able to supply food to their families. The seizure of land by *haole* (ʻwhiteʼ) settlers (lit: ʻforeignʼ) set the stage for the English language to later gain prestige in the islands. With no land, the makaʻāinana had little power and, accordingly, the prestige of ʻōlelo Hawaiʻi suffered.

The arrival of the Christian missionaries in 1820 is considered the most influential cause in transforming Hawaiʻi to a predominately English-speaking society (Reinecke 1969: 26-27). Rooted in racism, the stated goals of the missionaries were not just to bring Christianity to the islands but also to transform Hawaiian society and government "to an elevated state of Christian civilization and

to turn them from their barbarous courses and habits" (Lahaina: Missions Press 1938). To the missionaries, part of this transformation included imposing an American-modeled education system that prioritized English above ʻōlelo Hawaiʻi (Kawamoto 1993: 194).

Because ʻōlelo Hawaiʻi was an oral language, the missionaries created a writing system to translate the Bible. To do so, they used English letters to approximate Hawaiian sounds and taught Hawaiians to use this system.[1] As the Hawaiian elite along with select makaʻāinana were the first to learn English, the language became associated with morality and prestige. Following Queen Kaʻahumanu's conversion to Christianity in the 1820s, foreign missionary members began to fill positions in government. Soon legal and governmental texts taken from the United States would be translated into ʻōlelo Hawaiʻi, establishing Western institutions and practices, such as representative government and the sale of fee simple parcels of land (Reinecke 1969: 31). In 1824, the missionaries serving in government advised the Queen to institute a mission-led education system (Kawamoto 1993: 196). These schools were initially established in ʻōlelo Hawaiʻi, but later switched to English instruction. The schools prioritized foreign teachers that were educated in the United States and there were no requirements for these teachers to learn ʻōlelo Hawaiʻi. Additionally, most of the early educational materials available in ʻōlelo Hawaiʻi concerned explicitly Christian themes, creating an inseparable link between formal instruction and Christianity (only three works were published in a period of over 50 years that dealt with Hawaiian culture or history; for a fuller discussion, see Schütz 1994: 164-171). While many of the schools for makaʻāinana continued to be taught in ʻōlelo Hawaiʻi, elite schools were established with English-only policies to educate *aliʻi* and the children of white Americans (Shi 1990: 4).

During the 1800s, the Native Hawaiian population rapidly declined due to foreign disease. It is estimated that the pre-contact population of Hawaiʻi ranged from 800,000 to over one million (Stannard 1989) but had declined to only 37,656 by 1900 (Nordyke 1989: 173-174). The missionaries weaponized Hawaiian death, claiming that the spread of the disease was due to Hawaiian cultural practices such as *oli* 'chant' and *hula*, claiming that "the Hula has corroded them with its leprosy" (Bishop 1891: 25). English-only education was elevated as the solution; it was argued that "this knowledge of English will go into the young American republican and Christian ideas; and as this knowledge goes in, kahunaism, fetishism and heathenism generally will largely go out" (McArthur 1895, cited in Schütz 1994: 354).

In 1893, the last reigning monarch Queen Liliʻuokalani was overthrown by United States businessmen with the support of United States Marines, despite official recognition in 1844 from President Tyler that the Kingdom of Hawaiʻi was a sovereign nation. While the businessmen who overthrew the kingdom hoped for Hawaiʻi to be annexed immediately to the United States, President Cleveland refused (see, e.g., Dudley and Agard 2006: 72). While he sent a new U.S. minister to Hawaiʻi in an attempt to restore the kingdom, he was unwilling to use force when the

[1] The missionary orthography for ʻōlelo Hawaiʻi simplified a number of oppositions that were variable across the islands (e.g., [k] and [t] were represented with <k>, [l] and [r] with <l>, and [v] and [w] with <w>) (Schütz 1994: 114-122). Two phonemic distinctions were also left orthographically unrepresented: vowel length and /ʔ/. Vowel length (represented in Pukui and Elbert (1971) with a macron over the vowel, as in <ā>) was, if not completely ignored, treated as a feature of "accent" (Schütz 1994: 134-136), while glottal stop (represented with an ʻokina in Pukui and Elbert (1971) as <ʻ>) was considered either a prosodic feature, or represented with an apostrophe to show, for example, that "two vowels were separate" (Schütz 1994: 143-144).

attempt failed. Instead, the businessmen established a provisional government, the Republic of Hawaiʻi.

Three years later in 1896, the Republic of Hawaiʻi passed Act 57, establishing English as the exclusive medium of instruction in all schools, with the exception of schools on Niʻihau (Territory of Hawaiʻi 1905: 156). With this, ʻōlelo Hawaiʻi was banned from use on school grounds (Wist 1940: 112), and non-compliant schools were barred from receiving government funding (Lucas 2000: 9, Oliveira 2014: 80). Despite intense opposition by most Hawaiians, in 1898, Hawaiʻi was annexed to the United States at the urging of President William McKinley and Assistant Secretary of the U.S. Navy, Theodore Roosevelt. By the early 1900s, despite the fact that most Hawaiʻi residents (including non-Hawaiians) still spoke ʻōlelo Hawaiʻi, it was nearly impossible to find work without English fluency (Schütz 1994: 355). This disenfranchisement is captured by Haunani Kay-Trask, a Native Hawaiian activist and educator:

> Because of the overthrow and annexation, Hawaiian control and Hawaiian citizenship were replaced with American control and American citizenship. We suffered a unilateral redefinition of our homeland and our people, a displacement and a dispossession in our own country. In familial terms, our mother (and thus our heritage and our inheritance) was taken from us. We were orphaned in our own land. Such brutal changes in a people's identity—their legal status, their government, their sense of belonging to a nation—are considered among the most serious human rights violations by the international community today. (Trask 1993: 16).

Hawaiian makaʻāinana and aliʻi exercised resistance to this occupation, especially through the use of ʻōlelo Hawaiʻi itself, with speech, text, *moʻolelo* ʻstory', *oli*, and *mele* ʻsong and poetry'(cf. Trask 1993: 118-120). For instance, in 1897 James Kaulia, a prominent leader of the Hui Aloha ʻĀina resistance movement, presented a speech in ʻōlelo Hawaiʻi full of symbolism regarding *aloha ʻāina* ʻlove for the land, love for that which nourishes'. The event, which discussed how annexation would harm the community, compelled approximately 38,000 people to sign the *Kūʻē* ʻanti-annexation' petitions. This was an incredible feat, considering the total Native Hawaiian population at the time was about 40,000 (Silva 2004: 146-151). Such language-based forms of resistance were powerful, and the infusion of *kaona* ʻhidden meaning' could be utilized to prevent haole misappropriation of such works (Hoʻomanawanui 2014: 74, Maile 2019: 68).

In addition to Western forms of political protest like speeches, Hawaiians used indigenous strategies of resistance (Osorio 2002). Queen Liliʻuokalani, for example, composed over 100 mele protesting the settler state. Many others within the community utilized this strategy. A mele entitled *Kaulana Nā Pua*, originally written in ʻōlelo Hawaiʻi by Eleanor Kekoaohiwaikalani Wright Prendergast states, "famous are the children of Hawaiʻi who cling steadfastly to the land. Comes the evil-hearted with a document greedy for plunder... Do not put the signature on the paper of the enemy. Annexation is wicked sale of the civil rights of the Hawaiian people" (Trask 1993: 119, Elbert and Mahoe 1970: 62).

These events established a tradition in the islands of using language to resist haole oppression. Since occupation, the core of Hawaiian resistance movements has been the demonstration of *ea* ʻlife, breath, sovereignty' by means of language (Goodyear-Kaʻōpua 2014). The suppression of ʻōlelo Hawaiʻi continues to play a substantial role in the American colonization and ongoing occupation of Hawaiʻi, and the hegemonic program of American assimilation has had lasting oppressive effects on the Hawaiian language and the Hawaiian people.

36.2.2 Plantation years and Pidgin formation

English established a foothold in Hawaiʻi with the seizure of land and power by English-speaking outsiders, and its presence resulted in the development of an English-lexified creole during the plantation era. In 1835, American entrepreneur William Hooper established the first plantation in the islands (Odo 1985: 15). For the first 40 years (1835–1875), Hawaiians made up the majority of the plantation workforce (Bickerton and Odo 1976: 17). However, plantation owners found that importing foreign labor both reduced costs and allowed for more control over the field workers. The enactment of the Masters and Servants Act of 1850 enabled mass immigration to Hawaiʻi, starting with Chinese laborers and followed by Portuguese, Japanese, and Filipino laborers, with smaller numbers from several other countries.

The diversity that characterizes Hawaiʻi today was originally weaponized as a tool for control. Workers were strategically segregated across ethnic and linguistic lines, to reduce the chance of fieldworker revolt against an oppressive U.S. haole minority establishment (Kawamoto 1993: 198), and ethnic groups were commonly pitted against each other. For example, plantation owners first propped up Chinese workers as exemplary, and the Chinese workers were encouraged to provoke and ridicule Hawaiians (Takaki 1989: 25). Later, to offset the benefits that came with elevating Chinese workers, plantation owners characterized Chinese workers as secretive, criminal, morally corrupt, and unfit for permanent settlement and citizenship (Glick 1938: 19). Adding to tensions, Portuguese workers occupied ‘middle-man’ positions, due in large part to their physical proximity to the whiteness of the plantation owners and immediate subordinates, though the Portuguese themselves were not regarded as white (Daws 1968: 315). Likewise, when Japanese workers went on strike for better working conditions and pay, plantation owners claimed they were “backed by the Japanese government” (Takaki 1989: 172), and hired Hawaiian, Portuguese, Chinese, and Korean strikebreakers to disrupt the demonstrations (Kotani 1985: 32).[2] Filipinos faced resentment from other laborer groups from the start due to their presence as strike-breakers as well as their willingness to work for lower wages (Saft 2019: 50), and they were characterized as “hot-headed”, “knife-wielding”, and “sex-hungry” (Reinecke 1969: 3).

A major initial challenge for workers was that they did not speak a common language. However, the emergence of a contact language would eventually create unity among laborers across ethnic groups. Early plantation workers used Pidgin Hawaiian to communicate (Roberts 1995). Pidgin Hawaiian was a Hawaiian-lexified language, sometimes referred to as Pākē ‘Chinese’ Hawaiian (Judd, Pukuʻi, and Stokes 1943: 7). Pidgin Hawaiian was used both between various ethnic groups, and between Chinese laborers who spoke different regional languages that were not mutually intelligible (Nordyke and Lee 1989). Over time, however, the rise of English in Hawaiʻi precipitated a shift from Hawaiian to English as the main lexifier of the contact variety used between plantation workers (for more, see Roberts 2004).

The replacement of the Hawaiian-lexified pidgin was gradual, as contact with more English-speaking Americans led to more mixture between ʻōlelo Hawaiʻi and English. In addition, the variety was influenced considerably by Japanese, Cantonese

[2] News articles framed Japanese people in Hawaiʻi as “antagonistic to the American way of life, [and therefore] posing a threat to national security” (Okihiro 1991: 108), tactics that would be employed again following World War II to justify internment of Hawaiʻi-born Japanese (Saft 2019: 47).

and Portuguese substrates (Siegel 2000). The result was an English-lexified pidgin called Hawaiʻi Pidgin English (HPE). Initially, HPE was predominately used between adults; however, the second generation (i.e., the locally-born children of immigrants) began using HPE to speak to classmates at school. Families began to intermarry across ethnic groups and to raise their children to speak HPE. According to Roberts (2004: 272-273), the third generation on the plantations marked the first generation that acquired HPE as an L1, leading to the creolization of HPE into Pidgin, known exonymically as Hawaiʻi Creole or Hawaiʻi Creole English. Between 1920 and 1930, Pidgin became established as the language of the majority of the population of Hawaiʻi (Roberts 2000; Sakoda and Siegel 2003: 10).

Pidgin was instrumental in forming a united identity and culture among the immigrant laborers and Hawaiians. The identity, referred to in Hawaiʻi as Local,[3] developed as a result of the shared struggles of descendants of non-English speaking, working class families.[4] Pidgin—the language variety used by those descendants—came to represent a shared experience in resistance against plantation owners who had discouraged laborers from speaking languages other than English. Thus, speaking Pidgin became a way to align oneself with Local values in shared resistance against *haole*. Soon after the use of Pidgin became widespread in Hawaiʻi, plantation workers formed a successful worker's union. According to Kotani (1985: 13), Pidgin played an important role in laborers' ability to organize across ethnic lines.

The white, English-speaking population viewed Pidgin as an inferior form of English. The number of white U.S. citizens entering the islands grew steadily, and they began expressing concerns that their children were becoming corrupted by non-white Pidgin-speaking children and non-white teachers in public schools (Shi 1990: 7), since, by this time, most public school teachers were locally-born and of Hawaiian and Asian descent. In 1916, a formal letter written by a group of white women called for more white teachers, pointing out that it was "unwise" on behalf of the public school system to "select teachers from social groups that are the least American in blood" (Stueber 1964: 228). In response to the letter, the United States Federal Bureau of Education recommended that children in Hawaiʻi be segregated based on English proficiency (Kawamoto 1993: 202). The English Standard schools were established in 1924 and they almost exclusively educated white children. In this way, racial segregation became institutionalized without overt mentions of race; the policy ultimately targeted language identity to sustain racialized economic hegemony in Hawaiʻi. Further, the overt practice of using language to segregate students within the context of a racist society served to position Pidgin as ideologically inferior to English.

Today, Hawaiʻi continues to face challenges due to United States occupation. Colonial attitudes, including those surrounding Pidgin, have persisted well after the abolishment of the English Standard school system in 1948. Negative evaluations of Pidgin as "broken English" and a "liability in the job market" are plentiful (Sato 1985: 266), and Pidgin continues to be framed—particularly in the context of education—as a barrier to economic advancement (Yokota 2008: 28). In a survey

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[3] Note the use of a capital "L" in the word "Local", which will be adhered to in this chapter.

[4] Trask (2000) criticizes the term 'Local' as applied to Asian (particularly Japanese) settlers, whose socioeconomic and political success, she argues, both reinforces the American "nation of immigrants" myth and reproduces a new foreign hegemony at the expense of Native Hawaiians. Through using the term 'Local' here, we do not imply that anyone but Native Hawaiians have a legitimate claim to Hawaiʻi. Instead, we use the term in line with its widespread use in the islands and the use reported by Native Hawaiian and non-Hawaiian interviewees in our studies.

conducted by Marlow and Giles (2010), most Local participants reported having experienced some degree of criticism of their use of Pidgin, even within the home, with family members telling them that they "won't get ahead speaking like that" (244). While some Local groups and individuals have gained positions of power, this was often possible through overt valuation of English and the participation in colonial establishments and practices, at the expense of Pidgin, as well as Hawaiian and plantation-based practices, establishments, languages, and people.

Despite these hurdles, speaking Pidgin comes with a sense of pride for many Local people, as exemplified by the fierce opposition to a policy proposed in 1987 that would have banned the use of Pidgin in schools (see Sato 1985). With this pride comes social capital that stems from this heritage. For instance, Pidgin can be used to align oneself against haole culture (Sato 1985: 266), and it is employed in local politics to advocate for Local perspectives and direct attention to causes relevant to Local people (Higgins 2015). An important aspect of Local culture remains a collective resistance to threats of Americanization. A number of activists are involved in efforts to reduce discrimination and negative attitudes toward Pidgin by demanding space for the use of Pidgin, particularly in contexts where Pidgin was historically deemed inappropriate. "Da Pidgin Guerrilla" Lee Tonouchi, for example, advocates for the use of Pidgin in creative and academic writing, television and theater. Tonouchi argues that using Pidgin in these domains promotes language legitimacy by re-instilling cultural pride surrounding the language, in the same vein as what the Hawaiian Renaissance did for ʻōlelo Hawaiʻi in the 1970s (Tonouchi 2021). Likewise, outlining the rise of Pidgin in Hawaiʻi theater, playwright and scholar, Dr. Tammy Hailiʻōpua Baker, argues that the use of Pidgin in theater can be used, not only for language advocacy, but also to project cultural and linguistic identity in Hawaiʻi (Baker 2020). Another prominent activist is Kent Sakoda, who promotes the recognition of Pidgin as a legitimate language through both teaching university courses on Pidgin linguistics and remaining steadfast in his use of Pidgin in academic contexts. Sakoda is also a central member of Da Pidgin Coup, a group of community members and university faculty and students who meet biweekly with an aim of addressing language discrimination through outreach efforts, and to discuss Pidgin research (Higgins 2021).

36.3 Select features of Pidgin and Hawaiʻi English

While there is a great deal of overlap between linguistic forms found in Pidgin and Hawaiʻi English, we focus this section on select differences in word use and sentence structure to illustrate what we mean when we refer to one or the other language variety. For instance, consider the Pidgin and Hawaiʻi English sentences in (1a) and (1b), respectively.

(1)

a. Bumbye, da odda girls wen come. (Da Jesus Book, Matthew 25:11)
'After a while, the other girls came.' (Sakoda and Siegel 2003: 44)

b. It takes them a while to remember what they came to see me for. (Lily: Chinese woman from Kāneʻohe, born in the 1950s)[5]

c. * They wen came already.

[5] Hawaiʻi English examples marked with speaker information come from interviews conducted for the Language in Hawaiʻi Project led by the third author; all names are pseudonyms.

In Pidgin, the past tense can be expressed using a past (anterior) marker preceding the verb. When the past tense is overtly marked, the form varies to some degree based on island and year of birth. The form in (1a), *wen*, is the more recent form, attested in Pidgin from the late 1920s (Roberts 2005: 183) and widespread today.[6] Irregular verbs with English-like past tense marking (e.g., *came* as in 1b) can also be observed in Pidgin but not when the past is otherwise marked overtly, as in the ungrammatical (1c). There are also differences in the marking of the remote future. In (1b), a periphrastic construction "takes them a while" indicates this sentiment, whereas Pidgin employs the adverb *bumbye* meaning 'later; eventually; after a while' (from English *by and by*). This form in Pidgin is found both utterance initially (1a) and finally.

Pidgin and Hawaiʻi English also differ in marking completion with the adverb *already*. While *already* is observed in both Pidgin and Hawaiʻi English, in Pidgin it occurs after the phrasal head (2a) and can occur with negatives (2b). In contrast, *already* variably precedes the phrasal head in Hawaiʻi English (2c) and *anymore* is common with negatives (2d).

(2)

a. You wen fail already. (Kearns 2000: 11)
'You already failed.' (Sakoda and Siegel 2003: 44)

b. Da tako no come in already Olowalu-side. (Masuda 1998:232)
'The octopus doesn't come to the Olowalu area anymore' (Sakoda and Siegel 2003: 44)

c. And they're already separated by groups. (Lei: Hawaiian woman from Kāneʻohe, born in the 1990s)

d. It's not there anymore. (Larry: Hawaiian/Filipino man from Kāneʻohe, born in the 1940s)

While *stay* and *go* are found as main verbs in both Pidgin and Hawaiʻi English, the wordforms also serve other functions in Pidgin. In Pidgin, when *stay* precedes the main verb, as in (3a) and (3b), it marks nonpunctual aspect (see cited examples in Siegel 2000: 218). While the form was likely derived from English *stay*, the functions of *stay* closely parallel those of Portuguese *estar*, suggesting substrate reinforcement (Siegel 2000: 229-230). The word *go* can function as a future tense marker, as in the Pidgin sentence in (3b). In both varieties, future tense marker *go* can be observed as *gonna*, and it can be realized as *gon* and *going* (without complementizer *to*) in Pidgin. For forms such as *gonna* that are found in both varieties, we rely on the sentence structure and surrounding words to determine language variety.

(3)

a. She stay go buy one bag rice.
'She's going to buy a bag of rice' (Sakoda and Siegel 2003: 65)

b. You go stay come or go stay stay?
'Are you gonna come with us or stay here?'

c. I didn't wanna face that reality that we were gonna break up. (Michael: Japanese/Chinese/Hawaiian/European man from Kaimukī, born in the 1980s)

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[6] Velupillai (2003: 70-81) argues that *wen* serves as a past adterminal marker rather than a plainly anterior marker.

In terms of morphosyntax, Hawai‘i English more closely approximates standardized varieties of English spoken in North America. However, non-standardized forms that are not considered to be Pidgin forms can be observed in Hawai‘i English, such as *ain't* as in (4).

(4) Trying to tell myself, "it ain't even your money" (Corey: Japanese/Chinese/Caucasian/Hawaiian man from Hawai‘i Kai, born in the 1980s)

Likewise, there are lexical items, such as *pau* 'done', *shishi* 'urine', and *mauka* 'toward the mountain; mountain side' found in Hawai‘i English that are not found in North American varieties. Many of these words likely entered Hawai‘i English via Pidgin rather than through contact with the languages from which they originate. This is exemplified by how the words' meanings differ from their meanings in the source languages but are similar across Pidgin and Hawai‘i English. For instance, *pau* is used in both Pidgin and Hawai‘i English to mean 'done', so the Pidgin sentence in (5a) and the Hawai‘i English sentence in (5b) would, under most circumstances, be interpreted as someone being finished with something, such as work, a project, or a meal. In the original Hawaiian (5c), however, it would mean the person had died, unless what was finished (e.g., *hana* 'work) is specified (5d).

(5)
a. He pau already. 'He's already done.'
b. He's already pau. 'He's already done.'
c. Pau ‘oia. 'They (3sg) are dead.'
d. Pau ka hana. 'The work is finished.'

36.4 Linguistic variation and change in Pidgin and Hawai‘i English

Within both Pidgin and Hawai‘i English, there is a large amount of linguistic variation. As in other locales where a creole language is in regular, continued contact with one of its source languages, much of the linguistic research that exists on variation in Pidgin and Hawai‘i English examines that variation through the lens of decreolization (that is, the replacement of creole features with features from the main lexifier language; Siegel 2008: 236). For example, Odo (1971) examines decreolization as evidenced through change in apparent time in the proportion of the realization of post-vocalic /r/ in Pidgin, while also examining genre (i.e., conversational data vs. reading task vs. minimal pair task). In Pidgin, post-vocalic /r/ is variably realized, with the /r/-less variant being associated with more basilectal Pidgin (Sakoda and Siegel 2008: 226). Summarizing the main results from Odo (1971), Figure 36.1 demonstrates a link between speaker age and the vocalization of post-vocalic /r/. Across all three genres, older speakers show a lower percentage of realized /r/ compared to the two other age groups, and all three groups produce the highest rate of vocalized /r/ in the most formal context. Odo argues that this pattern suggests a vigorous change in Pidgin toward "more standard American pronunciations" (Odo 1971: 23).

Whether a trend towards increased /r/ realization has persisted over real time in the broader community is an open empirical question, but insight can be gained from Sato (1991) and Bianchini (in prep). Sato (1991) tracks post-vocalic /r/ in a

longitudinal panel sample of four speakers, recorded first in 1973 and again roughly 15 years later. All four speakers in 1973 show very low rates of /r/ realization, in line with the behavior of the older speakers in Odo (1971), despite being somewhat younger.[7] Comparing the two time points, Sato identifies only small increases in overall rate of /r/ realization. These findings provide evidence that, if change towards realizing post-vocalic /r/ is indeed operative in the community at large as Odo suggests, not all speakers participate in the change to the same extent over their lifespans.

In an ongoing study of /r/ variation in Hawaiʻi English and Pidgin, Olivia Bianchini used auditory analysis to code tokens from Hawaiʻi English interviews (conducted 2010-2015) and Pidgin interviews (conducted 2004-2007). Preliminary analysis suggests age-based differences between the two languages. For Hawaiʻi English, the presence of /r/ is functionally categorical for most speakers; two of the six speakers analyzed thus far, one born in 1924 and the other born in 1934, together realize only 10% of their tokens as /r/-less. Analysis of the Pidgin data suggests that /r/-less realizations are somewhat more common in Pidgin than in Hawaiʻi English, but that the youngest speakers (born after 1978) produce the highest rates of /r/-ful realizations (as high as 90%), despite producing a large number of morphosyntactic Pidgin features. When compared with those of Odo (1971), these preliminary findings suggest that: (1) it is wise to consider phonetic variation in Pidgin separately from that in Hawaiʻi English, even when comparing the speech of individuals who grew up at a time when the majority of the population used Pidgin as their primary mode of conversation; and (2) the trend identified by Odo has indeed continued to the present day, providing evidence that—at least in terms of its phonology—Pidgin has undergone decreolization.

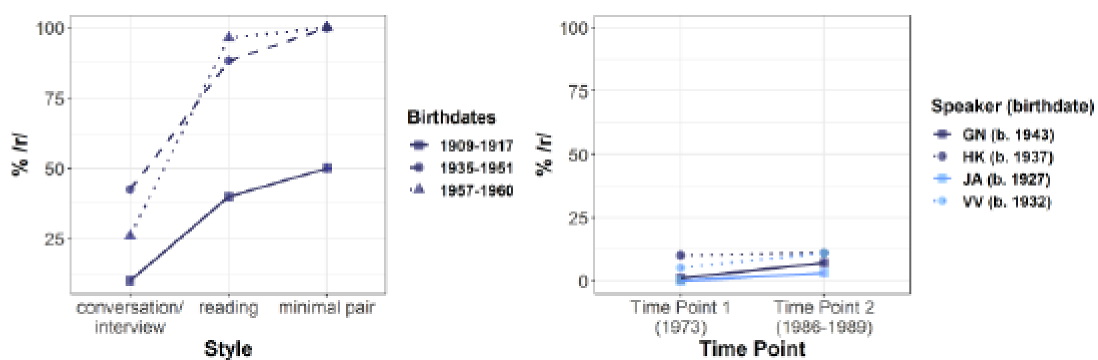

Figure 36.1: Comparison of findings from Odo's (1971) analysis of apparent time data (left) and Sato's (1991) analysis of real time data (right). Years of birth are estimates based on the ages and reported years of data collection in the papers.

While Bickerton (1980: 112) states that the widespread focus on studying decreolization is not meant to imply that other types of variation are not present in language contact situations, other scholars (e.g., Aceto 1999: 99) have argued that the focus has, nonetheless, resulted in an overemphasis on decreolization in the creole literature at the expense of other types of variation. It therefore makes sense to step back from the focus on decreolization, and instead consider the wide range of factors that could potentially influence any observed variation and change. For

[7] Sato's speakers would have been between 30 and 46 years old in 1973, placing them roughly between Odo's old speakers and the upper-end of the middle age group.

example, in his work on the phonetic reduction of Pidgin past tense marker *wen*, Labov (1971[1990]: 36-40) demonstrates a considerable amount of variation, some of which is, at least in part, conditioned by phonological context. Specifically, he finds that while *wen* can be realized with its full form (e.g., *wen* [wɛn] *take*), elision of the initial glide (e.g., *just wen* [dʒʌsɛn]), the medial vowel (e.g., *she wen* [ʃiwn]), or both the vowel and initial glide (e.g., *he wen go* [iŋgo]) are also common. Additional evidence points to *wen* being reduced to the feature labial, particularly in the context of other labials (e.g., *they wen walk* [dewːɔk]).

In the next section, we present results that build on our previous work on vowel variation in Pidgin and Hawaiʻi English. In this work, we consider the possibility of decreolization and also examine other factors influencing variation in the two language varieties, including an examination of whether sound changes in Hawaiʻi English may be motivated by contact with Pidgin.

36.5 Pidgin and Hawaiʻi English Vowels

36.5.1 The corpora

Data are taken from two corpora of sociolinguistic-style interviews. Data from speakers of Hawaiʻi English is taken from a collection of interviews conducted with speakers between 2011 and 2018 from two neighborhoods on Oʻahu (Kalihi and Kāneʻohe) from a variety of ethnic backgrounds. Data from Pidgin speakers comes from the Influences and Variation in Hawaiʻi Creole English collection, compiled between 2004 and 2007, with speakers from across Hawaiʻi (Siegel 2004). Relatively older and younger speakers were selected from these collections to facilitate apparent time comparisons within language group. Table 36.1 presents a breakdown of the speaker numbers across age group, language, and gender. While the two groups are largely comparable, the sample of Hawaiʻi English speakers represents a slightly wider age range (b. 1944-1993; ages 19-68) than the selected Pidgin speakers (b. 1947-1988; ages 19-60).

Table 36.1. Demographic breakdown of speakers used in vowel analysis.

	Sex	Older (YOB: 1944-1967)	Younger (YOB: 1983-1993)	Total
English	female	5	5	10
	male	3	4	7
Pidgin	female	4	4	8
	male	4	4	8

Determining what constitutes Pidgin versus Hawaiʻi English is not always straightforward, particularly since Pidgin has undergone some degree of decreolization and the degree to which this has taken place varies across speaker communities. The interviews we identify as Pidgin are those that contain at least some lexical and morphosyntactic Pidgin features, whereas the interviews identified as Hawaiʻi English have low numbers of such features, except in excerpts of reported speech or thought.

Because of the extent of lexical and structural overlap between the varieties,

our analysis more closely follows that of a study on dialect contact than a study on language contact. However, we are not claiming that Pidgin and Hawaiʻi English are dialects of the same language. They, after all, have distinct histories in addition to different syntactic structures. Despite this, the amount of contact between the varieties and the impossibility of drawing a hard boundary between them warrants treatment that is more in line with dialect contact, including the possibility of leveling between the varieties. Given the high degree of metalinguistic awareness surrounding morphosyntactic features, leveling might be most evident in the phonological system. Thus, we turn now to an examination of how the vowel systems of the two varieties have changed over apparent time, based on a reanalysis of data reported on in Drager et al. (2013) and Kirtley et al. (2016) for Hawaiʻi English and Grama (2015) for Pidgin. The reanalysis brings these analyses more in line with one another and improves comparability of the age groups across the corpora in order to facilitate comparison of vowel realizations in the two language varieties. In our comparison, we do not assume *a priori* that any observed change is unidirectional in nature—that is, in the direction of an English standard. Instead, we consider whether the English of Hawaiʻi has undergone change in the direction of Pidgin for at least some variables.

36.5.2 Data preparation

The selected interviews were transcribed and time-aligned in Transcriber (Barras et al. 2001), and force aligned using HTK in LaBB-CAT (Fromont and Hay 2012) housed on the Sociolinguistics Server at the University of Hawaiʻi at Mānoa. A Praat script was used to extract vowel duration, previous and following phonological context, F1, and F2 at the midpoint of the vowel for 11 monophthongs in all words that carry lexical stress. The number of tokens for each vowel category are shown in Table 36.2. Vowel tokens from grammatical words and mis-transcribed words were excluded. Formant data was normalized using a modification of the method proposed by Lobanov (1971). The modification bases normalization on vowel category means to account for any unbalance in the data set (Brand et al. 2021: 7-8). These protocols yielded a total 8,168 vowel tokens for analysis. Note here that while FACE and GOAT are realized as diphthongs in many American English varieties, they are monophthongal in both Hawaiʻi English (Kirtley et al. 2016: 13-14) and Pidgin (Grama 2015: 102 and 160), so are presented along with the other monophthongs in this chapter.

Table 36.2. Number of vowel tokens by vowel category and language

Vowel[8]	English	Pidgin	Total
FLEECE	148	424	572
KIT	843	455	1,298
FACE	766	452	1,218
DRESS	636	483	1,119
TRAP	748	497	1,245
GOOSE	153	216	369
FOOT	100	190	290

[8] Vowel classes are referred to throughout the paper using Wells (1982) lexical sets. For ease of reference, this convention is adopted for Pidgin as well. For alternative Pidgin vowel representation strategies, the reader is advised to consult Sakoda and Siegel (2008) and Grama (2015).

GOAT	145	317	462
LOT	268	351	619
THOUGHT	115	209	324
STRUT	276	376	652
Total	4,198	3,970	8,168

36.5.3 Change over time in Hawaiʻi English and Pidgin vowels

Figure 36.2 shows the distribution of all monophthongs under analysis for Hawaiʻi English speakers and Pidgin speakers across the two age groups. Initial inspection of the plot reveals notable differences between the vowel spaces of the two languages. Immediately evident is that, regardless of speaker age, the middle of F1-F2 plots is empty for Pidgin but is crowded for Hawaiʻi English. Also evident is the wide spread of GOOSE tokens in Hawaiʻi English speakers from both age groups, as compared with the more compact distributions in Pidgin speakers.[9] This variation, which appears to be at least partially phonologically conditioned, is discussed below.

Strikingly, high-front vowels FLEECE and KIT and high-back vowels GOOSE and FOOT occupy very different positions in the two languages. Older Pidgin speakers exhibit overlap between FLEECE and KIT, which attenuates somewhat in the younger group. By contrast, both older and younger Hawaiʻi English speakers show nearly completely distinct distributions of these two vowels. This same relationship is evident in the differences between the high-back pairs GOOSE and FOOT. For older Pidgin speakers, these two vowels are completely overlapped in high-back space. Younger Pidgin speakers, by contrast, exhibit slightly fronter distributions of both vowels as well as more open realizations of FOOT, increasing the distinction between the two vowels in F1/F2 space. This same pattern is not observed in Hawaiʻi English speakers, who (regardless of age) exhibit more fronted GOOSE, and a clearly centralized FOOT vowel.

Notable differences also exist among the low-back vowels across the languages. Older Pidgin speakers exhibit a crowded low-back space; STRUT and LOT are largely overlapped, and THOUGHT occupies a slightly higher, backer position relative to LOT. Younger Pidgin speakers exhibit even less distinct LOT and THOUGHT distributions, and realizations of STRUT are somewhat less open than LOT. By contrast, older and younger Hawaiʻi English speakers demonstrate very little distinction between LOT and THOUGHT, with younger speakers in particular producing extremely overlapped distributions of LOT and THOUGHT (cf. Kirtley et al. 2016: 7-8). However, the most notable difference between the low-back spaces of Pidgin and Hawaiʻi English is the position of STRUT, which is much more clearly separated from either LOT or THOUGHT in the center back of the vowel space in Hawaiʻi English.

[9] FEW (i.e., GOOSE preceded by /j/) is not included in these plots.

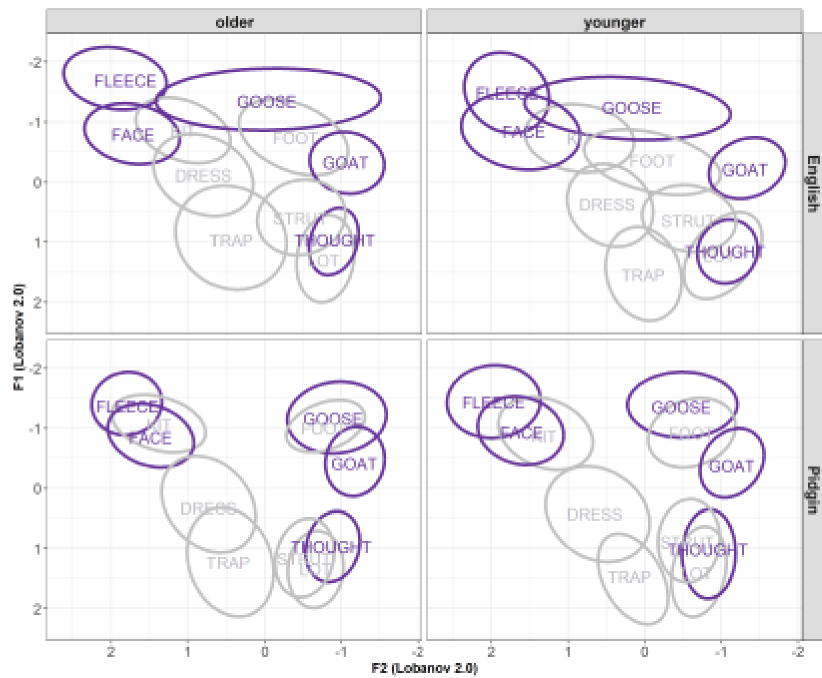

Figure 36.2. F1-F2 plots for English (top) and Pidgin (bottom) monophthongs across older (YOB: 1944-1967) and younger (YOB: 1983-1993) speakers.

Other monophthongs analyzed here are less differentiated between the two varieties. The short-front vowel DRESS occupies a slightly lower and fronter position in Pidgin than in Hawaiʻi English. TRAP has undergone lowering and retraction over apparent time in both varieties, though the changes in Hawaiʻi English appear to be of a greater magnitude than those observed for Pidgin (for more on the time-course of this change in Pidgin as well as phonological conditioning, see Grama 2023).

Finally, two vowel categories in Figure 36.2 show virtually identical positions for Pidgin and Hawaiʻi English: FACE and GOAT. As stated above, FACE and GOAT in Hawaiʻi are considerably more monophthongal compared to other U.S. English varieties, but very much in line with FACE and GOAT in many postcolonial varieties which have similarly monophthongal variants in some registers (e.g., in Trinidadian [Deuber and Leung 2013; Meer 2020; Westphal et al. 2022], Jamaican [Wassink 2001], Bequia [Walker and Meyerhoff 2015], Palauan [Britain and Matsumoto 2015], and Nigerian [Jamakovic and Fuchs 2019] varieties). Especially noteworthy is the extreme back position conserved by GOAT in both Hawaiʻi English and Pidgin, as this vowel exhibits at least some degree of centralization in many U.S. English varieties (see Labov et al. 2006: 153-155). Part of GOAT's resistance to fronting might lie in its social salience in Hawaiʻi. Simpson (2013: 191-193) suggests that back, monophthongal realizations of GOAT are more likely to motivate perceptions that a speaker is a Hawaiʻi Local compared to more diphthongal realizations. Also contributing to GOAT's resistance to fronting may be its monophthongal nature, which may block fronting, as argued in Jansen (2019: 20-21) for Carlisle English (see also arguments that diphthongization and fronting are connected in York [Haddican et al. 2013: 389-390] and Dublin English [Hickey 2005: 75]); it may be that for GOAT (and back vowels in general), diphthongization operates in lockstep with fronting.

To further examine the changes evident in Figure 36.2, we now turn to a direct comparison of the respective changes in apparent time in Pidgin and Hawaiʻi English, plotting F1 and F2 separately for each vowel. Figure 36.3 plots change over

birthdate for Pidgin and Hawai‘i English speakers, with separate panels for vowel and formant. Given their apparent stability in Figure 36.2, FACE and GOAT are not included. The values in Figure 36.3 highlight how, for some vowel categories, the realizations in Pidgin and Hawai‘i English are converging in one dimension or another, whereas for other vowel categories, they are diverging. For example, compared with older speakers of Hawai‘i English, young Hawai‘i English speakers appear to be producing realizations of FLEECE and DRESS that are more similar in terms of vowel closeness to those produced by Pidgin speakers. While there's a distinction between the F1 values of older English speakers and older Pidgin speakers for these vowels, those differences are nonexistent among the youngest speakers. In contrast, the F2 values for these vowels demonstrate much more overlap across varieties, with change in the same direction observed for both varieties. Thus, we might say that Hawai‘i English FLEECE and DRESS appear to be becoming more Pidgin-like. STRUT on the other hand is only undergoing change in apparent time for Pidgin; in terms of vowel closeness, STRUT appears to be becoming more English-like.

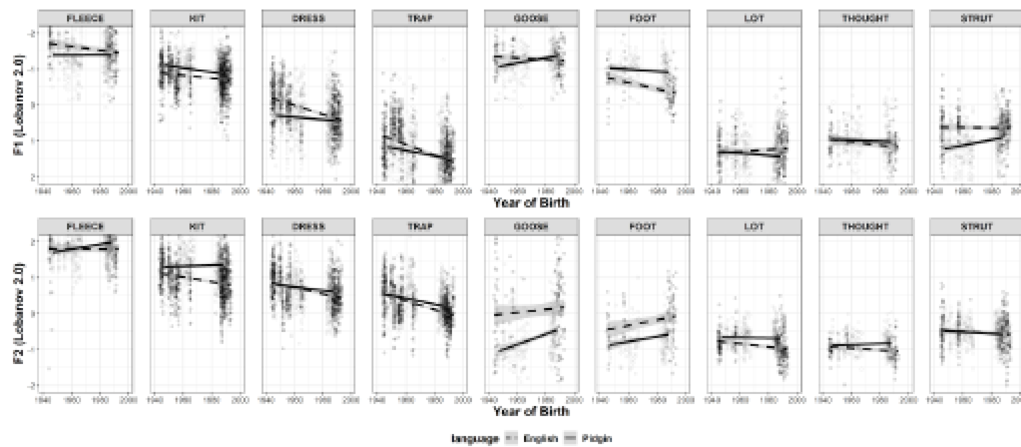

Figure 36.3. F1 (top) and F2 (bottom) of monophthongs undergoing change in Pidgin (solid) and English (dashed) plotted against year of birth.

In order to test whether the interaction between language variety and speaker year of birth was significant, separate linear mixed-effects models were fit to F1 and F2 for each monophthong in Figure 36.2. Two findings are worthy of comment from these models. First, the interaction approaches significance in the model fit to the F2 of THOUGHT (β=-2.20, t=-1.84, p=0.067). This suggests that F2 values for Pidgin THOUGHT are, if anything, diverging from those observed in Hawai‘i English; this hypothesis warrants further investigation using a larger number of tokens from a broader speaker pool. Second, the only model in which the interaction reaches significance are the models fit to F1 and F2 of GOOSE. The model output is shown in Table 36.3.

Table 36.3: Output of linear mixed-effects models fit to F1 and F2 values of GOOSE; p-values derived using Kenward-Rogers approximation; threshold of significance set at α=0.05.

	F1				F2			
	Estimate	*SE*	*t*	*p*	*Estimate*	*SE*	*t*	*p*

(Intercept)	-4.73	4.26	-1.11	0.278	-2.21	6.68	-0.33	0.744
pre-nasal	0.23	0.08	2.88	0.005	0.23	0.17	1.39	0.168
word-final	0.15	0.06	2.38	0.020	-0.13	0.14	-0.91	0.363
year of birth	<0.01	<0.01	0.79	0.435	<0.01	<0.01	0.34	0.736
Pidgin	15.09	6.69	2.25	0.033	-25.55	10.49	-2.44	0.022
year of birth * Pidgin	-0.01	<0.01	-2.26	0.033	0.01	0.01	2.37	0.026

These models indicate that GOOSE is not undergoing change in apparent time at the same rate in the two varieties. In Hawaiʻi English, GOOSE is relatively stable in F1-F2 space over apparent time, having already reached a position that is quite front in F1/F2 space, even among older speakers. In Pidgin, however, GOOSE is both closing and fronting in apparent time. A consequence of these changes in Pidgin is that GOOSE is increasingly differentiated from FOOT, such that younger speakers of Pidgin exhibit a greater difference in F1-F2 space between these two vowels than older speakers.

Taken together, the results from the analyses presented here suggest three take-aways. First, two vowels—FACE and GOAT—show very little difference across the two varieties, which suggests that these vowels may be macro-regional indicators in Hawaiʻi. Second, the results highlight differences between the phonological systems in Pidgin and Hawaiʻi English.

Hawaiʻi English exhibits a distinctly English vowel system compared with that of Pidgin; regardless of speaker age, there are clear distinctions in Hawaiʻi English between peripheral and non-peripheral vowels (i.e., FLEECE and KIT, GOOSE and FOOT), pairs which exhibit far more overlap in Pidgin. And despite the changes that have taken place in Pidgin, there is little evidence to suggest that Pidgin speakers have shifted wholesale in favor of an English system. Young speakers of Pidgin conserve much backer and more overlapped GOOSE and FOOT categories, driven largely by the position of GOOSE; FLEECE and KIT also show more similar distributions in Pidgin compared with a comparable Hawaiʻi English cohort. The low-back system also exhibits substantial differences between the two varieties. Most obvious are the different positions occupied by STRUT, which is clearly distinct from LOT and THOUGHT in Hawaiʻi English, but overlapped with LOT in Pidgin. While STRUT is raising over apparent time in Pidgin, the vowel has neither risen so far as to be completely distinct from LOT in F1-F2 space, nor to a position where it is overlapping with STRUT in Hawaiʻi English. The low-back systems also differ in the relative positions of LOT and THOUGHT. Evidence of a merger between LOT and THOUGHT in Hawaiʻi English has existed for some time, which has seemingly only grown stronger over time. Pidgin, by contrast, shows clearer evidence for a (small) distinction, which is maintained by at least some younger speakers. Thus, even in the face of pressure from sustained contact with English, some Pidgin speakers have retained a distinction between two vowels which appear nearly categorically merged in Hawaiʻi English.

Finally, there is evidence that, for some vowels, shifts in apparent time have occurred toward an English model whereas for other vowels the direction appears to be toward Pidgin. The most robust of these is found in the F1 and F2 values of GOOSE in Pidgin; while GOOSE is variably realized with fronted realizations by older speakers of Hawaiʻi English, GOOSE is invariably realized as a back vowel by the older Pidgin speakers and appears to be raising and fronting in Pidgin over apparent time. That GOOSE in particular undergoes robust changes in Pidgin is likely due to a

combination of articulatory, phonological, and social pressures. First, GOOSE exhibits a fronted nucleus in Hawaiʻi English (especially in spontaneous speech; see Kirtley et al. 2016: 85-88); not only would the Pidgin speakers analyzed here likely speak Hawaiʻi English, they would undoubtedly have large amounts of daily exposure to this variety. Moreover, fronted GOOSE is common in the U.S. (Labov 2001: 475-496), and it is likely that Pidgin speakers would have some access to mainland exemplars via transplants to Hawaiʻi. Second, GOOSE fronting is exceedingly common across the English speaking world and in a wide range of languages other than English, such as Swedish, East Norwegian, Albanian, and Akha, a Lolo-Burmese language (Labov 1994: 129-133). Work on German suggests that the articulation of especially peripheral high back vowels may have a particularly high articulatory cost, which may predispose them to diachronic fronting in languages that lack corresponding high front round vowels (Harrington et al. 2011). In addition, flanking coronal consonants tend to motivate higher F2 in back vowels, and this, along with the absence of a high central vowel in English, affords GOOSE ample opportunity to front from a canonical back position. It is therefore likely that GOOSE-fronting is reinforced through more than just Pidgin's contact with Hawaiʻi English.

While a significant interaction was not observed for the other vowels, inspection of the plots in Figure 36.2 suggests that some vowels (e.g., F1 of DRESS) in Hawaiʻi English are, if anything, becoming more Pidgin-like, and some Pidgin vowels (e.g., F2 of THOUGHT) may actually be diverging from Hawaiʻi English. These trends point to some degree of leveling but, perhaps, not for all sounds. Additional collection and analysis of data is needed to explore this further.

It is impossible to consider the foregoing observations without also considering the question of decreolization in Hawaiʻi. The bulk of the research done between 1960s and the 1990s suggested that, at least in part, Pidgin was undergoing some degree of decreolization at the level of the community, depending on the feature under investigation. This question is all the more relevant given both the sustained contact between the two varieties, and the history of language hegemony in Hawaiʻi. However, there remain clear structural differences between the varieties in terms of the back vowel space, the realization of /r/, the tense-aspect-mood system, and the use of temporal adverbials. Were the effect of English the principal driver of changes in Pidgin, we might expect a clearer shift towards English-like categories over time. However, Pidgin remains distinct from English, suggesting that whatever the impact of English on Pidgin, there is little reason to accept decreolization as the sole, or even the principal factor governing changes in Pidgin over time. Instead, we believe that while Pidgin and Hawaiʻi English undoubtedly influence each other and exhibit a spectrum of variation, both varieties are changing in their own rights. We wish to invoke Sato's claim (1991: 142) that decreolization is only one of several available avenues in a larger spectrum of possible directions of language change in Hawaiʻi moving into the twenty-first century. This position will no doubt be subject to scrutiny as more research is undertaken on Pidgin and Hawaiʻi English, and it is clear that there is an abundance of research yet to be done on these varieties, including how they co-vary and how social, linguistic, and historical factors shape who uses which features associated (statistically or ideologically) with each language variety.

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