

Consuming the consumers

Semiotics of Hawai'i Creole in advertisements*

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Previous sociolinguistic research concerning the use of Hawai'i Creole (HC) in public discourse has posited a link between a negative public image and subsequent discouragement of its use by government and media (e.g. Romaine 1999; Sato 1989, 1991, 1994), except in some limited venues. This paper reports on the emerging trend of HC use in media discourse, presenting data from local television advertisements and discussing the role of language therein. Despite the fact that HC has traditionally been a stigmatized variety in public discourse, its employment in television advertisements is currently on the rise, riding a wave of positive sentiment for Hawai'i's local culture. The use of HC in the commercials is strategic and carefully controlled; while *heavy Pidgin* (basilectal HC) is still avoided as possibly detrimental to brand image, the *right touch* of HC is a favored tactic among these advertisement producers. HC is one of a number of criteria for implicit *membership* for the Hawai'i residents on which advertisers may draw in an attempt to fabricate a synthetic membership with the audience.

Keywords: Hawai'i Creole, advertisements, stylization, language commodification

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1. Introduction: Hawai'i Creole and *Kama'aina* identity

Hawai'i is often referred to as the melting-pot of the Pacific due to its ethnic diversity. The lack of a numerically dominant sub-population in the state lends itself to the description of Hawai'i as a culturally diverse region where everyone is apparently accepting of the idiosyncrasies and differences of other ethnic groups and cultures. The coexistence of diverse multiethnic cultures is often described with metaphors like mixed plate lunch, a local meal that traditionally includes several different dishes, with the emphasis on the variety of the ingredients. Whether this somewhat idealized description of *local identity* is representative of the actual social situation in Hawai'i is debatable, but there does exist a locally ubiquitous linguistic variety, Hawai'i Creole (HC), which functions among local speakers to build solidarity or to confirm membership among Hawai'i residents, establishing their shared knowledge of local cultural practices, styles, and manners of speech.

The idea of local culture is based on the celebration of the cultural diversities of people who share Hawaiian or plantation heritage, and indeed many cultural practices from a variety of ethnic groups have been adopted by Hawai'i residents in general as their own. In contrast to Hawai'i residents' national or ethnic identities, local identity is of particular importance given Hawai'i's cultural and physical separation from the rest of the US. Most Hawai'i residents prefer to define themselves with the catch-all term *local*, implying membership in more than one of Hawai'i's many ethnic and social communities (see Okamura 1994 for detailed discussion). The term local itself implies, given the broad range of cultures and ethnicities present in Hawai'i, that the criteria for membership in the local Hawai'i community is based on criteria other than ethnicity and heritage language.¹ The Hawai'i-born historian, John Rosa (2000: 101), states that local identity is 'a matter of positioning oneself in relationship to power and place'. I claim that such relationships to power and place are negotiated among the locals in HC, which functions to penetrate these layers of simultaneous membership.

It is estimated that 600,000 people, half the population of the state of Hawai'i, speak HC (Sakoda & Siegel, 2003, 2008a). Although Hawai'i is part of the US, its isolation from the mainland makes the distinction between local and non-local particularly important to residents. Since its beginnings, HC has been used mostly as an informal language among family members and friends, and has been considered an essential badge of local identity (Sakoda & Siegel 2008a: 216), though Standard American English (SAE) is still used in most formal situations. HC is used by all social classes and Hawai'i residents tend to switch between these two varieties

1. Meyerhoff (2004: 66) states, 'Pidgin [HC] is the medium of communication between most people born in Hawai'i who would call themselves "Locals".'

as the situation dictates. Despite HC's role in creating solidarity, it also factors into many negative stereotypes, such as those that relate HC use to educational deficiency or socioeconomic stagnation (e.g. Lippi-Green 1997; Romaine 1999, 2005; Sato 1985). A study based on matched-guise perception experiments by Ohama et al. (2009: 366) showed that the participants (n = 177) rated SAE to be 'superior' and of 'higher quality' than HC. Sakoda and Siegel (2003: 18), in a section of their HC grammar reference book *Pidgin Grammar*, entitled 'The Current Situation' state:

Attitudes toward the language [HC] have always been ambivalent. While recognized as being important to local culture, it has at the same time been denigrated as corrupted or "broken" English, and seen as an obstacle to learning standard English, the official language of the schools, government, and big business. But in recent years, there has been a great deal of advocacy for Pidgin [HC], resulting in changing attitudes and use in wider contexts. (Sakoda & Siegel 2003: 18)

Some of these contexts include academic discussion groups, local literature publications, and entertainment, including a locally produced cable television network which specializes in local topics. Participation in these wider contexts of HC use are often not limited to locals but also include the *kama'aina* (locally-born or long-time Hawai'i residents from the Hawaiian *kama* 'child' and *'aina* 'land') population. While local *kama'ainas* are most likely able to use HC fluently, transplanted *kama'aina* members usually do not speak HC at this level, although they may comprehend it quite well.

The idea that a non-standard mode of speech can function as more than a mere means of communication is not new. Park (2008) comments on Manalansan's (1995) work on *swardspeak*, a marked linguistic variety used among gay Filipino immigrants in the US. His summary of its uses note that:

swardspeak functions not so much as a "marker" of Filipino gay [immigrants'] identity, but as a way of making sense of its speakers' new experiences [in the US], as a symbolic field in which they can locate the self and other and give meaning to the relationship between them (Park 2008: 196).

Similarly, for the *kama'aina* population, HC can function as more than a linguistic marker of Self vs. Other. HC colors the speakers' experiences, rendering them uniquely local, and helping them to identify with *kama'aina* members in a way not accessible to outsiders. Bucholtz & Hall (2004: 372), in their discussion on identities of non-standard groups, note that 'marked identities are also ideologically associated with marked language: linguistic structures or practices that differ from the norm'. Implicit in the discussion so far, however, has been the idea that such membership tokens are accessible only to those with legitimate membership in the group, indeed that membership and its markers are acquired concurrently,

and that these markers are only available through close personal access to the group. But like any other means of restricted access, linguistic social membership may be exploited. This may manifest itself as the use of membership tokens, either directly or indirectly, by someone who would not have access to the group or community in question under normal circumstances (c.f. Talbot 1995). In cases involving public media and advertising, such attempts at gaining membership often have the goal of reaching as many members of the community as possible, a community which may be quite inhomogeneous despite the existence of shared membership markers. In such cases, the message must be synthesized carefully to be accepted as authentic by as many members of the community as possible. Given the potential breadth of the audience, such 'synthetic personalization' (Fairclough 1989) must employ only the most salient or the most common aspects of the target community.

In Coupland's (2001) discussion of dialect stylization on a BBC *Radio Wales* program, he suggests that a pre-determined degree of Welshness was being performed for the listeners' sake, making the personalities 'Welsh in performance' (Coupland 2001:368). Despite the fact that the 'stylized utterances are often emphatic and hyperbolic realizations of their targeted styles and genres' (Coupland 2001:350), such dialect stylization 'can potentially deliver forms of personal and cultural authenticity that transcend local playfulness, so that the identificational effect is neither mere play nor outright parody' (Coupland 2001:347). As Fairclough (2003:159) mentions, '[s]tyles are the discursual aspect of ways of being, identities, and one can project desired identities by stylizing their acts, speeches, and looks. This paper attempts to show how HC in recent TV advertisements is commodified to appeal to the *kama'aina* members in Hawai'i, and that as a result of targeting the *kama'aina* audience, these advertisements feature characters that are capable of believably performing the desired identity through linguistic and cultural stylization. In what follows, I will employ the critical discourse analysis (CDA) framework as per the analysis of Fairclough (1989) and Talbot (1995), as it relates to language stylization (e.g. Coupland 2001), to demonstrate how desired HC is being stylized in these commercials.

2. Commodification of linguistic resources

Based on data collected after 1997, Heller (2003) reports on the reevaluation of the French language as a marketable asset for French-speaking Canadians due to the rise of the call center industry in the francophone communities of Ontario and Acadia. The bilingual call center operators were instructed to accommodate to their clients when answering calls, including selecting the clients' languages of

choice, as well as accommodating to their varieties of linguistic style, i.e. registers and dialects. According to Heller (2003:484), these bilingual operators mastered a wide range of linguistic varieties as part of their job; moreover, they were encouraged to maintain the illusion of being at the specific branch where service was being requested, e.g. Montreal, Vancouver or even Dallas. She reports on the call center operators' comments and says that '[w]hile they say that monolingual francophones, especially from Quebec, complain about their French, we noted a tendency [among call center operators] to standardize their performance when on the lines' (Heller 2003:484). The indication is that the coarser Acadian or Franco-Ontarian French is not marketable in pan-francophone Canada, and standardized or schooled French is the desired variety. Similarly, Blommaert (2009) describes the commodification of American English directed at a variety of world English speakers (e.g. Indian English speakers) or non-native English speaking professionals. His examination of websites promoting American English accent training programs concludes that the selling of *American English accents* is an example of globalized commodification of accent, not language (Blommaert 2009:256).

Talbot's (1995) findings on the use of the marked language associated with teens and young women in a popular British teenage magazine are another pertinent example of the use of language commodification; in this case, of a stylized social, rather than regional, dialect. Her research employs CDA and concludes that the magazine editors use young girls' speech styles, termed 'girlspeak', to fabricate a 'synthetic sisterhood' as a means of making their target audience more receptive. Girlspeak echoes gender norms espoused by the magazine as well as by mainstream culture in general, such as women always need to make themselves look beautiful, a woman's body always requires work, or women need to use different cosmetic products to make themselves look beautiful. In this relationship, the magazine often plays the role of big sister, providing advice on makeup, fashion, and boys to their readers, even going as far as to respond to reader questions in a Q&A column. This simulated friendship is based on the magazine producers' and the readers' access to a shared token, namely, girlspeak. However, realistically, the producers are not in a position to build actual friendships with their readers, and instead must rely on girlspeak as a proxy. In this paper, I will show how HC is being commodified for advertisement purposes by stylization and performance of desired local identity. HC is used for the achievement of *synthetic personalization*, a concept explained by Fairclough (1989) as a process designed in order to make audience of mass communication to feel that they are 'thousands of identical *you*s, with attitudes, values, and preoccupations ascribed to them' (Talbot 1995: 148, emphasis original). Like girlspeak's synthetic personalization I argue that HC has become a commercial language used by some Hawai'i-based businesses to lure local customers, and that HC's value as a membership criterion is being exploited. The

advertisements investigated for this study stylized HC to fit the particular situation, creating tailored characters and situations which superficially highlight only the marketable attributes of local people and culture. This process was discussed in depth by Irvine & Gal (2000) through their notion of *erasure*, ‘in which ideology, in simplifying the field of linguistic practices, renders some persons or activities or sociolinguistic phenomena invisible’ (Gal & Irvine 1995:974). Gal (2004:27) also explains: ‘In general, erasures are forms of forgetting, denying, ignoring, or forcibly eliminating those distinctions or social facts that fail to fit the picture of the world presented by an ideology’. In a sense, the notion of erasure is closely related to what Fairclough (1999/2006) would refer to as *normalized, homogenized and reduced* discursive practice. The identities of Canadian call center operators and the teen magazine publishers are being erased through language commodification.

Bell’s (1999) study of Air New Zealand television ads, broadcasted in New Zealand, presents another example of how a commodified language, Māori in this case, is manipulated to reduce differences among people living in Air New Zealand destinations both domestically and abroad, such as Ireland and New Orleans. People representing diverse ethnic groups, Māori, Irish, African American, and Pakeha (Caucasian), appear in different scenes accompanied by stereotypical facets of their culture: nature and wildlife, black music, Irish dance, potpourri. However, the characters are all connected through a traditional New Zealand folk song, *Pōkarekare Ana*, which is being sung by the characters throughout the commercial. Thus, Māori, used as a common linguistic asset, helps to display different groups of people as unified, if only superficially, despite their seemingly unique cultural or ethnic identities. As Bell (1999:530) states, ‘the Māori language serves here an entirely symbolic purpose, to signify New Zealandness’. Similarly, this study shows how idealized HC and HC-speaking characters are fabricated to appeal to the *kama’aina* population as a whole, with the intention of instilling a feeling of unity between the consumer and business based on their perceived shared localness.

3. Common features of Hawai‘i advertisements

The data on which the present paper is based come from television commercials as well as interviews with some of the leading local advertisement agencies. The interviews were done via email or phone calls. The relevant available comments received from the agencies will be presented in support of my arguments in this paper. Based on personal communication with Hawai‘i-based advertising agents beginning in March of 2008, I was told that while the Hawaiian language is often used in local media discourse, including advertisements, the use of HC in the same context is a relatively new phenomenon. Some Hawaiian loanwords have

been adopted by the *kamaʻāina* population and thus their use imbues local media discourse with a sense of local color. Words such as *ʻohana* ‘family’, *aloha* ‘love, thanks, farewell, etc.’, *kōkua* ‘cooperation, help’, *mahalo* ‘thank you’, *keiki* ‘children’, *pau hana* ‘finished work’, or *holoholo* ‘stroll, take a walk’ are some common examples easily recognizable to most Hawaiʻi residents but opaque to those unfamiliar with Hawaiʻi. However, the pronunciations of these common Hawaiian words have been anglicized for the most part and the diacritics in the original Hawaiian spellings have been largely ignored, except for some specific lexical items.

As mentioned earlier, the label local is more or less restricted to those who were born and raised in Hawaiʻi whereas *kamaʻāina* includes both locals and long-time residents who emigrated to Hawaiʻi. Technically, in authentic Hawaiian orthography, this term should be spelled *kamaāina* with the *kahakō* (a macron indicating long vowels) on the third vowel. However, long vowels in Hawaiian loanwords are rarely spelled out or pronounced in HC or English.² Compared to the *kahakō*, the *ʻōkina* (the single quotation mark representing a glottal stop in Hawaiian orthography) is often included in common Hawaiian words like *kamaʻāina*, *Hawaiʻi*, or *Oʻahu*, at least in spelling (see Romaine 2002 for detailed discussion about the Hawaiian orthography including uses, misuses, and non-uses of the *ʻōkina* and *kahakō*). The articulation of the *ʻōkina* is more common than the *kahakō* in both HC and English. However, this is not to say that its articulation in Hawaiian words is always consistent; indeed it is often absent even when included in the spelling. In place names such as Lānaʻi, Kauaʻi, and Molokaʻi the glottal stop is often dropped and the vowels are pronounced as a diphthong (Romaine 2002: 198–199, 204). Similarly, *kamaāina* is commonly pronounced in two ways — with the *ʻōkina* as [kamaʻaɪna]³ or with a drop of the *ʻōkina* and a diphthong as [kamaina].⁴ One of the most noticeable uses of the *ʻōkina* in pronunciation is the word Hawaiʻi [hawaiʻi] itself, often being pronounced even when it is absent from the corresponding orthography. In keeping with Park’s above assessment of the relationship between non-standard speech varieties and local identity, I suggest that enunciation of the glottal stop in the word Hawaiʻi represents one of the more salient phonological characteristics of *kamaʻāina* speech (for more on the notion of salience, see Trudgill 1986).

2. E.g. even the Honolulu City and County website residents spells the term ‘*kamaʻāina*’ (Honolulu.gov 2009).

3. Sakoda & Siegel (2008a: 227) note many HC speakers pronounce ‘the glottal stop [ʔ] in words derived from Hawaiian’, e.g. [kamaʻaɪna] ‘person born in Hawaiʻi or long term resident’.

4. But it is hardly ever pronounced with both the glottal stop and long vowel as [kamaʻaaina].

Eckert's ethnographic research on teenagers at a suburban Detroit high school (e.g. 1996) shows that the innovative raised pronunciation of [aɪ] in words like *all-nighter* and *fighths* served as a membership marker for one group of teenagers, separating them from other groups.⁵ Similarly, Bucholtz (2006) discusses how the non-rhotic pronunciation of certain words (e.g. *partner*) has certain in-group overtones among African American students in the northern California high school where her data was gathered (see Romaine 2005: 128). Whether innovative or traditional, the overt pronunciation of an *ʻōkina* in Hawaiian vocabulary can demarcate similar identity boundaries between, among other groups, *kamaʻainas* and non-*kamaʻainas*.

In addition to the vocabulary and pronunciation mentioned above, the ads discussed in this paper employ a wide array of non-linguistic semiotic symbols to represent *kamaʻaina* identity. Such features include Hawaiian music, aloha shirts, beaches, surfers, and hula dance and these are effectively used and always portrayed positively in advertisements. Not surprisingly, locally produced television advertisement casts generally consist of *local-looking* people — Asians, Pacific Islanders, or people who are mixed-ethnicity in appearance. Obvious non-locals such as Caucasians or African Americans are rarely featured exclusively, even in non-HC speaking ads.

4. HC linguistic features

HC remains primarily a spoken language, ranging from *heavy* Pidgin (the basilect, or variety that differs most from SAE) to a more standard form (the acrolect). The majority of speakers use an in-between variety (the mesolects) (Sakoda and Siegel 2008a: 217). According to Brad Shin,⁶ language used by the cast in local advertisements is carefully monitored so as to avoid the basilectal variety or 'heavy Pidgin'. He claimed that this is because heavy Pidgin is generally perceived as unsophisticated, a brand image many clients try to avoid, though there are exceptions, such as surfboard companies where heavier Pidgin may work to their advantage. The majority of local ads are deliberately scripted to convey only a touch of localness (Brad Shin, personal communication, March 2008), and indeed, none of the advertisement featured HC that was unintelligible to general Hawai'i audiences. In

5. Eckert (1996/2006), among other results in this paper, also demonstrated the innovative pronunciation of a boy's name Dan being used as a local identity construction marker among a specific group of preteen students at a northern California elementary school.

6. Brad Shin is the creative director of Hendrix Miyasaki Shin Advertising, one of the leading local ad agencies in Hawai'i.

this study, the features observed are mentioned by other scholars as projecting local or in-group identity. Lexical items in addition to those mentioned above include *bra* ‘brother/buddy’ and *e* ‘interjection, from *hey*’, *wan* ‘nonspecific/indefinite article’, and *da* ‘definite article’ (Grimes 1999). Aside from these lexical items, there are a number of phonological, prosodic and morphosyntactic variations endemic to HC.

Sato (1991: 135), for example, conducted phonetic analysis of local meteorologists from the National Weather Service (NWS), comparing their pronunciations of four particular features to those of the ‘many mainland varieties of English’. These four features are: (1) full vowel as opposed to reduced vowels, e.g. [u] ~ [ə] in *today*; (2) [d] as opposed to [ð], e.g. [wid] ~ [wið] *with*; (3) monophthongization of [ou] ~ [o] as in *low*; (4) non-rhotic pronunciation (post-vocalic /r/ absence), e.g. [aftanun] *afternoon*. Sato (1991: 135) notes that while features (1) and (2) were frequently used by both speakers, (3) and (4) were almost categorically replaced by their SAE variants. Romaine (2005: 109) adds the following to the list of HC-specific features: stopping of interdental fricatives (both [t/d] ~ [θ/ð]), /l/ vocalization as in *people* [pipo], and simplification of word-final consonant clusters, e.g. *respect* [rispek] or *and* [an].

In addition to these segmental phonological features, there is a distinctive prosodic pattern in HC, described by Hargrove et al. (2007) as ‘[the] “melody” you can hear when people speak’, in reference to the intonation of yes-no interrogatives.⁷ Unlike SAE, the intonation pattern for interrogatives in HC has a sentence-final rising-and-falling pitch contour (e.g. *Did yu get da* ↑ *fish* ↓?). This pitch contour is also used in non-yes-no interrogatives or in non-interrogative sentences indicating emphasis (e.g. *Wea yu get da* ↑ *fish* ↓? ‘Where did you get the fish?’ *Ai wen si em las* ↑ *nait* ↓ ‘I saw him/her/them last night’).

Finally, as per Grimes’s (1999) discussion⁸ of the HC spoken by local entertainer Bu La’ia,⁹ examples of common HC morphosyntactic features include:

7. Sakoda & Siegel (2008a:215) note that ‘[t]he phonology of Hawai’i Creole also has some similarities to that of Hawaiian, Cantonese and Portuguese, especially in the vowel system and intonation in questions, but these connections have not been studied in any detail’.

8. Grimes (1999) claims that despite Bu’s public image as a local ethnic Hawaiian surfer comedian, his speech is ‘more like the decreolized Pidgin of Honolulu than like more conservative Pidgin of the Leeward Coast or the Outer Islands’ (Grimes 1999:283). Except for strong HC phonology, Bu’s speech closely resembled SAE. According to Grimes (1999), it may be concluded that Bu’s (self)-portrayal as a ‘Hawaiian superman’ was accompanied by rather superficial HC.

9. Bu La’ia is a stage name taken from an expression, *bulaia* ‘liar’ (from *bulai* ‘tell lies’) with a Hawaiian-esque glottal stop insertion (Grimes 1999:280).

TMA marking with preverbal auxiliaries such as Past tense *wen*; or *get*¹⁰ ‘existential have’; copula absence; and *stay*¹¹ used as a copula. Although there are a wealth of other HC linguistic features in the available literature (e.g. Sakoda & Siegel 2003, 2008a, 2008b), I focused on those listed above as they represent both salient and non-salient features, and yet are all markers of local identity.

5. Data and methodology

Van Gijssel et al. (2008) analyze the shift between *tussentaal* (literally, ‘in between language’ used in Flanders) and Belgian Dutch in a corpus of Flemish advertisements. Like HC, *tussentaal* is incorporated into the ads to cultivate a positive response from the local audience. The advertisers employ this language in Flemish advertisements as a ‘stylistic resource’ to ‘construct an identity that is appealing to the public’ (Van Gijssel et al. 2008: 209). In other words, *tussentaal* functions as a marker of localness for the target viewers, much as HC does for *kama’aina* audience. Van Gijssel et al.’s (2008) study identifies two advertisement formats. The classifications suggested were by and large applicable to data used in this study as these categorizations follow the universally standard format employed in today’s advertisement industry. First is the *rational-argumentative* format where the product itself is the focus. These ads introduce products’ ingredients or usage. Second is the *emotional-suggestive* format which makes an effort to persuade its audience by evoking positive feelings not necessarily related to the product itself. These ads may take the form of celebrity endorsements, or the testimonial of an expert or a satisfied customer. They may also take the form of a minidrama where the cast play specific scenes tangentially related to the product. According to Hagerman (1990: 137), ‘the well-constructed minidrama should take place in one location, at one time, and be concerned with a series of events comprising one action’. In this format, the details of the product are often secondary to the plot of the advertisement, which may be only marginally related. Minidramas may be of the *slice-of-life* format, focusing on a specific group of characters in their normal routine, which typically involves the product in some remote fashion, or of the *problem-solving* format, wherein the product or service of the ad is central for the main character to overcome some difficulty.

10. Sakoda & Siegel (2008a: 213–214) argue that HC *get* ‘existential have’ has a model in Cantonese *yáuh*, which can be used in both functions as well.

11. Sakoda & Siegel (2008a: 213–214) argue that HC *stay* ‘COPULA’ has a model in Portuguese copula/auxiliary *estar*.

I have attempted to analyze the use of HC in local advertisements, and have studied 26 locally produced and aired commercials for local companies or Hawai'i subsidiaries of nationwide corporations. Each commercial has a running time of thirty seconds, was produced between 2000 and 2008, and features a wide range of products including vehicles, bank services, surfing products, restaurants, self-storage, and several others, all of which targeted residents, not tourists. None of the ads incorporated such strong HC as would require subtitles or translation. The local themes used in the commercials are as follows (in order of number of occurrences): surfing, fishing, and hula dancing (13); aloha attire (10); Hawaiian music (10); beaches, mountains, and tropical rain forests (8); and tropical plants (4). Of the 210 clearly visible people in all 26 commercials, which excludes voiceovers and crowds, 162 (77.6%) appeared to be Asian, Pacific Islander, or a mix of two or more races.

Despite the dearth of HC accents and Hawai'i-specific phrases used by the voiceovers, an overwhelming 19 out of a total 22 occurrences of the word *Hawai'i* in the voiceovers' utterances were pronounced with a glottal stop. Ten of the businesses' names include the word Hawai'i yet only one was written with the *ókina*, quite at odds with the pronunciation.

Of the 26 commercials, five were of the rational-argumentative format; within the emotional-suggestive format, ten were testimonials, eight were slice-of-life style minidramas and three were problem-solving minidramas. Seven commercials featured personalities who spoke HC and four had voiceovers with HC characteristics. The bulk of the following analysis concerns the minidrama formats, because they allow the most leeway in the performance of stylized HC and they also provided the most material for discussion. The focus on fictitious characters in minidramas allows for the most subtle manipulation of local identity of all the commercial formats. As with the *girlspeak* in Talbot's study, local actors can fabricate synthetic *kama'aina* bonds with the target audience when the medium allows for an otherwise unrealistic collage of local identity features.

6. Analysis

The HC dialogue has been transcribed using the Odo orthography designed by Carol Odo (Odo 1975; Bickerton & Odo 1976).¹² Although there is no standard orthography for HC, the Odo orthography is widely used by linguists (Romaine 2005: 106; Sakoda & Siegel 2008a: 227).

12. The transcripts in Conventional HC spelling will be provided in the appendix.

The first example is a commercial for automobile insurance from the Hawai'i subsidiary of AIG, AIG Hawaii.¹³ The target audience was Hawai'i residents aged 25 to 54, and the voiceover was done by an actor from the mainland; the characters also mirror model customers favored by the advertiser, AIG Hawaii (Brad Shin, personal communication, April 2008). The dialogue in this example is quite acrolectal, and the HC performance is subtle; however, the discourse between the on-screen actors clearly contrasts with the SAE voiceover (V) at the end of the commercial. In the transcript below, diphthongs are noted with 'D' and monophthongizations, 'M'. These and other HC features will be examined after the transcription.

(1) *AIG Hawaii: Car Insurance*

Street sign: 'Kolo hala St'. Brakes squeal followed by the sound of a collision. Car doors open. Close up on stop sign. A silver sedan and a red truck have collided at a corner of a nice suburban neighborhood. A man in aloha shirt and slacks (M1) and a more casual-looking man, perhaps a student, in t-shirt, jeans, and tennis shoes (M2) exit their vehicles.

1. M1: E, yu oke?

M M M

2. M2: Ya, Aim¹⁴ alrait.

3. M1: E, yu shua? Yu oke?

M M M

AIG Hawaii tow trucks arrive and take the vehicles away while the two talk.

4. M2: Yæ, Aim, Aim alrait, Aim alrait.

5. M1: Dud! Yu hæd a stap sain.

6. M2: Yæ, Ai stap.

7. M1: Yæ, yu kaina da sloud daun bat yu didnt stap.

8. M2: No, Ai stap!

M

9. M1: No, yu did nat!

M

10. M2: Aim mai own ai witnis.

11. M1: Yu kænt be yoa own ai witn_is.

[1]

AIG tow trucks bring back the fixed vehicles to their original locations.

12. M2: **Shuah** Ai kæn!

13. Notice that the company name is spelled without an 'okina here. Throughout the paper I will present company names as they appear in the commercials.

14. Consistent with SAE, the first person singular pronoun is capitalized (Sakoda & Siegel 2008b: 539).

13. M1: Wel, Aim gona bi mai own ai witn_is æn Ai sei yu didnt stap!
[ɪ]

AIG driver wipes the hood of the truck with a smile, then drives away.

14. M2: Did tu!

15. M1: No, yu did nat!
M

16. M2: Did tu!

Up tempo music starts playing and the Voiceover begins speaking.

17. V: At AIG Hawaii, claims are done fast, done right, guaranteed.
D [hawaiʔi]

On screen the same phrases appear.

18. V: Call today, for a money-saving quote.
D D

The company logo and slogan appear on screen.

AIG HAWAII: Protecting Your Tomorrow.

Oahu: 533-AIGH, Neighbor Island Toll-Free: 1-877-533-AIGH

The AIG Hawaii Family of Companies. www.aighawaii.com

The ad ends with the two still arguing; M1 screaming and M2 holding his ears with his hands.

19. M2: Lalalalalala.

20. M1: No! Yu did nat! No!
M M

Small capital ‘m’s (lines 1, 3, 8, 9, 15, 20) indicate monophthongization:¹⁵ (ou) to (o:)/(eɪ) to (e); the small capital [ɪ] (lines 11, 13) indicates use of a full vowel as opposed to a reduced vowel. Instances of non-rhotic pronunciations are indicated in italics on lines 3, 11, and 12. Other than the exclamation *e ‘hey’* on lines 1 and 3, localness is most strongly conveyed through the actors’ phonological features in this particular advertisement. HC phonology is used only by Man 1 and Man 2, and not by the voiceover. Although there are copulas-less sentences on lines 1 and 3, provided that the utterances are colloquial, expressions such as *yu oke?* ‘you OK?’ or *yu shua?* ‘you sure?’ would not be out of place in either HC or casual SAE. The same can be said for the simplification of /d/ on line 13, *an* for ‘and’.

More obvious influences of the SAE script¹⁶ may be seen in the pronunciation of *alright* without vocalizing /l/ (lines 2 and 4) and in the use of SAE (rather

15. As with the Welsh dialect discussed in Coupland’s (2001) study on style shifting in BBC radio broadcasts, monophthongization is also a phonological HC characteristic. Coupland’s notation is used here.

16. Details of the scripts and actors in this example, as well as certain insights into the intentions of the producers and companies, were generously provided by Brad Shin in a number of personal communications.

than HC) TMA markers: the HC syntactic structure corresponding to *Yæ*, *Ai stapt* ‘yeah, I stopped’ (line 6) could utilize the past tense marker *wen* ‘yeah, I wen stop’; *Aim gona bi mai own ai witnis* ‘I’m gonna be my own eye witness,’ would similarly be expected to use the future marker *gon* ‘I gon be my own eyewitness’ (Sakoda and Siegel 2008b: 515). However, although the speakers in this example are reading scripts written in SAE, the pronunciation of the exclamation ‘hey’ as *e*, the monophthongizations, non-rhotic pronunciation and full vowel articulations contribute to constructing a dialogue in HC.

As indicated by the arrows in the following excerpt, neither monophthongization of (eɪ) ~ (e:) nor non-rhotic pronunciation occurred in the voiceover’s speech. The word Hawai‘i, however, is pronounced with a glottal stop by the voiceover despite its absence in the orthographic representation on the screen.

17. V: At AIG **Hawaii**, claims are done fast, done right, guaranteed.
 ↑ [hawaiʔi]
18. V: Call **today**, **for** a money-saving quote.
 ↑ ↑ ↑

According to the producer responsible for this commercial, the intention was to induce nothing more than ‘a touch of local inflection’ as ‘[the clients] tend not to like heavy HC’ (Brad Shin, personal communication, March 2008). In this ad, the two men are both Hawai‘i locals and did not receive any instructions for speech performance; they were given only a script written in SAE and were told to act as regular local men. In short, the characters were designed to project a brand image that is aligned to a desired local normativity; the characters also mirror suggestive images of model customers that will be favored by the advertiser, AIG Hawaii (Brad Shin, personal communication, April 2008). In this particular ad, the setting (Kahala, indicated by the street sign, is a well known affluent area on O‘ahu), the vehicles involved in the collision (a new sedan and a new truck), the cast’s attire (M1 is dressed in an aloha shirt, long slacks, and leather shoes; M2 is in a t-shirt, long jeans, and tennis shoes) all suggest a synthesis of local culture and national upper-middle-class standing, and the light use of HC injected by the actors into the SAE script does not dispel this image. Buck Laird, co-founder of Hawai‘i’s largest advertising company,¹⁷ commented that the conversation represented the natural articulation of the performers which delivered ‘a perfect local lilt that may remind viewers of the goodness of HC’ (Buck Laird, personal communication, April 2008). The discourse produced in this ad succeeds in creating images that local businesses would like to associate themselves with — not unsophisticated and not low class, yet decidedly local and amicable.

17. Laird Christianson Advertising.

(2) *Oceanic Cable's Hawaii Road Runner: Internet Access Provider*

The following commercial is for Hawai'i cable internet provider, Road Runner, a subsidiary of Oceanic Time Warner Cable. According to Jon Brekke, Oceanic's director of creative services, the target audience for this ad was middle-aged local mothers and fathers. This is the last in a trilogy of HC-themed commercials for the Road Runner service in Hawai'i. The sequels were made in response to positive feedback from the initial HC commercial, and they too received optimistic responses from the community (personal communication, July 2009). The ad opens with a short question and answer exchange between an invisible SAE-speaking male voice (V) and a local-looking character (M) followed by a short monologue by the voiceover giving information pertinent to the internet service.

In a thickly-carpeted room with a piano, a local-looking man in a velvety housecoat, ascot, and leather loafers is sitting in a reclining chair. There is a fireplace and candles. Classical music plays and the man sips from his delicate teacup with his pinky finger extended.

1. V: Is it true that Road Runner is too fast?

The man poses and speaks with his eyes closed.

2. M: Velócity is no atrócity.

D

3. V: Why is firewall security a must?

Again, the man assumes a dignified air and closes his eyes before speaking.

4. M: Insúrance ensúres endúrance.

The man pushes a key of his laptop on the ottoman; a bell sound rings from the computer.

5. V: But then, why is speed so important?

The man takes off his glasses, looks away and states.

6. M: In rápidness, one can find háppiness.

[ε]

[ε]

The classical music abruptly winds down. The man looks into the camera:

7. M: No kæn help. Ai ste ejumakeited!

M

M

Information appears on the screen and the male voice begins the voiceover.

'ROAD RUNNER: HIGH SPEED ONLINE, FREE 30 Day Trial,
Call 643-BEEP'

8. V: Be smart, act fast, and get a free 30 day trial of Road Runner,

D

9. **Hawai'i's fastest internet service. Call 643-beep!**

[hawaiʔiz]

In lines 2, 4, and 6, the character is not only speaking in SAE but also using an exaggerated speech style, over-enunciating in a way that evokes many stereotypically stuffy, Victorian images of classical poetry being read aloud. The stressed syllables are marked to indicate the rhythmic pattern. The character does not employ HC features such as monophthongization (line 2) or vowel-fronting (line 6) when responding to the voiceover. Until line 6, the man uses sophisticated English in his performance in order to imply his intelligence, fulfilling one of Road Runner's slogans, *be smart*. Moreover, the man's manner of holding the cup, taking off his glasses, and touching the laptop appear to be parodic acts satirizing the manner-conscious people in higher economic classes.

There is an undeniable element of the Bakhtinian notions of parody and double-voiced discourse here. In this sense, parody involves the speakers' appropriation of someone else's speech to serve their own purposes. Bakhtin (1986/2006: 106) states that '[o]ther's utterances can be repeated with varying degrees of reinterpretation. They can be referred to as though the interlocutor were already aware of them; they can be silently presupposed; or one's responsive reaction to them can be reflected only in the expression of one's own speech.' The speakers' voice in parodic discourse is directly opposed to the other's voice; the two voices may be interpreted in two opposing ways.¹⁸

The local-looking man pretends to belong to an idealized class — the upper echelon of refined English-speaking society. However, his mannerisms, including the hyper-enunciated SAE, are strategically comedic, because the odd and humorous verse undermines the accompanying sophisticated imagery, despite the impressive vocabulary, rhyming and poetic meter. Through pseudo-upper-class English and elements of the setting, including those which are somewhat unrealistic in Hawai'i (fluffy carpets, fireplace, ascot, a housecoat, moccasin slippers, etc.), this commercial succeeds in purposefully mocking upper-class Standard English-speaking society. The gap between the unexpected setting and the character is expanded further when he shifts from mockery of sophisticated English to HC. The camera angle and the character's posture signal that he is no longer speaking to the voiceover but to the audience. It is obvious that the man does not belong in this setting; when he switches from parodic English to normal, if somewhat exaggerated HC, it provides the viewers with assurance that he is aligned with the audience, and in fact always was. He is not the *Other* but *us*.

On line 7, the monophthongization of *no* and *stay* appear along with the other HC characteristics 'edumacated' (see Grimes 1999: 282; Simonson 1985; Tonouchi 2005), *no can + V*, and the *stay copula*. Romaine's (2005: 130) explanation of words such as 'edumacated' or 'congradgamalations', discussed in Grimes (1999: 282), is

18. See Wong (2005) for discussion of Bakhtin's notion of parody.

that expressions with the *-ama-* infix are pragmatically colored with social meaning that is absent in standard English.¹⁹ By incorporating such terms, 'Pidgin speakers can extend the lexical resources of Pidgin at the same time as they make fun of English speakers who use such words' (Romaine 2005: 130).

The creator of this ad mentions that he and his co-producer, Evan Okino, planned the script very carefully. They were aware that the phrase *edumacated* is sometimes used to prejudice a lower class of student, but they wished to make the local clients feel that 'Oceanic Time Warner was the only "real" local company and keep them happy to retain our services' (Jon Brekke, personal communication, July 2009). This line of reasoning seems to have paid off, quite literally, as the successful promotion of Oceanic Cable's services through the HC-speaking character in the ads actually contributed to an increase in sales (Jon Brekke, personal communication, July 2009). While speaking non-HC, the man is looking away from a screen; however, when he switches to HC, he is directly looking at the audience. This strategy of visual interaction, where the man looks directly into the camera, helps to connect the viewers and the advertisement. Following Halliday (1985), Kress & Van Leeuwen (1996/2006: 366) call this kind of image 'demand' and explain that 'the participant's gaze ... demands something from the viewer, demands that the viewer enter into some kind of imaginary relation with him or her.'

The voiceover's speech does not alter after line 6 but continues speaking SAE; the closing of the word Hawai'i on line 9 is articulated with a glottal stop as with the previous example, incorporating the local pronunciation of the word seemingly preferred by ad agents and their clients. Further, while he is not the main character, it is in fact only the voiceover that delivers any actual information about the company as in the earlier example. This tactic seems to ensure that the local aspects of the commercial and the more practical aspects are present simultaneously without concerns the mixture will negatively impact either.

(3) *O'Toole's Irish Pub: Bar*

The third example, for O'Toole's Irish Pub, located in the downtown business district of Honolulu, demonstrates the use of HC in contrast with other regional varieties of English and again highlights the utility of the minidrama advertisement format which provides more freedom for linguistic and cultural alteration by focusing only partially on the business or product at hand. This example opens with a shot of a crowded bar with Irish music playing. (M1 = Thomas O'Flaherty, M2 = Mark, M3 = Kimo, W = Nora Dunn, V = voiceover)

19. One of the most noticeable uses of this infix in SAE is a quote by Homer Simpson from *The Simpsons* wherein he pronounces the word saxophone as *saxamaphone*. In either case, this infix, used in either HC or SAE is certain to have humorous overtones.

Three men and a woman are sitting at the bar while others enjoy themselves at the booths and tables in the background. The Caucasian man on the right in a light-green shirt and drinking a dark beer speaks up.

1. M1: Top o' the day **ta** you! I'm Thomas O'Flaherty from County Cork,
2. and I'm here 'cause O'Toole's has the finest happy hour!

The Caucasian man in a green striped polo shirt speaks while holding his beer glass up.

3. M2: Well, I'm **Mark** an' I'm from **Boston**, an' I'm **here** for the live music!
[ma:k] [ba:stən] [hiə]

The Caucasian woman in a green pull-over next to Mack starts speaking.

4. W1: I'm Nora Dunn from San Francisco↑ And I'm here for the fun and
5. exciting atmosphere.

The two men look at Nora with big smiles.

6. M1&M2: Yeahhhh!

The local-looking man in a bright red aloha shirt at the far left interjects.

7. M3: Aim Kimo fram **Wai'anae**. De get frii pupuz ova ↑ hia ↓
[waɪənai] m

The three non-locals give Kimo strange looks and pull back from him.

8. M3: Wat!?

On-screen: 'Open Daily, Live Music Nightly, Food Served 11am-9pm'

9. V: O'Toole's Irish Pub, a place to meet **your** friends **for** a different
10. taste on **O'ahu**.

[oahu]

The logo of the pub appears on screen: 'O'Toole's IRISH PUB' On Nuuanu-Downtown, Open Daily, Live Music Nightly, Food Served 11am-9pm'

11. V: O'Toole's Irish Pub in town on **Nu'uaniu**.

[nu'uanu]

The characters are presented in the order of their distance from Hawai'i. The first three non-local characters introduce themselves in English that is closely associated with their places of origin. The first man is from a well-known region of Ireland, has a common Irish name and greets the other characters with a stock Irish-English phrase (lines 1–2). The second man comes from the region of the US with the highest ethnic Irish population (US Census 2000) and speaks with a Boston accent²⁰ (line 3). The young woman, who also has a common Irish name, is from San Francisco and speaks with an *uptalk* prosody which is often associated with California youth speech (line 4), although usually in areas of California far south of San Francisco. Finally, the local man, Kimo, then introduces himself in HC,

20. I thank one of the reviewers for pointing out the vowel qualities of the Boston accent in earlier version of the transcript. The following website was also very useful (Mendoza-Denton et al. 2001): <http://www.ic.arizona.edu/~lsp/index.html>

throwing off the non-locals with his eccentric attire, accent and the unfamiliar HC phrase, *pupus* ‘appetizers’. Kimo is quite distinct from our other characters. The three non-locals have some Irish identity implied by their names, places of origin, and even from their green-colored outfits, whereas the only Irish quality possessed by Kimo is the fact that he is in an Irish pub.

As discussed earlier, Heller (2003: 484) reports that bilingual call center operators in francophone Canada anglicized their names when speaking English on the phone. Fabrication of a superficial identity for business purposes is not rare. Linguistic studies as well as news reports have shown similar English language commodification in the Indian call center industry (e.g. Blommaert 2009: 250–251; Sonntag 2009). ABC news, *The World Newsletter*, detailed the training process for Indian call center operators, a ‘boot camp’ to sound more American and to use anglicized versions of their names (ABC News 2009). Names, accents, or attire are important for conveying the ostensible authenticity of individuals in certain situations. For example, the popular local telephone directory, *Yellow Pages Japan in USA* [sic], half of which is printed in English and half in Japanese, contains an ad for two local Japanese doctors. In the English section they are listed as Irene S. K. Yamamoto and Melvin T. Yamada; they appear as Yamamoto Irene Sachiko and Yamada Takao in the Japanese section (APCON International, Inc. 2007: 180–181 and 132–133). The doctors’ Japaneseness is proffered to Japanese readers by their Japanese middle names. The representation of the names here indexes the dual nature of their personae — one *Japanese* and one *local* — each targeting different clientele.

In our ad, each character introduces selling points for O’Toole’s, including the happy hour, live music, the fun and exciting atmosphere, and free *pupus*. Terms like *pupus*²¹ ‘appetizer’ are commonly used vocabularies in Hawai’i, and are easily picked up by a newcomer. Employment of a local expression like this is not only catchy but also safe as some *kama’aina* viewers may be still getting accustomed to the local variety of English. The elements of Kimo’s *local inflection* also include other non-lexical features in line 7. Phonological features such as the stopping of voiced interdental fricatives (*de* for ‘they’), the monophthongization of ‘they’, post-vocalic r-absence (*ova hia* for ‘over here’), a final pitch contour (*ova* ↑ *hia* ↓), and the existential use of *get*, as in *de get* ‘they have’.

Superficially, the scenario used for this ad may appear to be something one might routinely expect to find in a bar. As someone whose complete lack of Irish characteristics is striking compared to the others, Kimo stands as an example of just how un-Irish one can be and still fit. Being the only one without a drink, he speaks for the business and invites the audience for free food and to meet ‘friends

21. Originally from Hawaiian *pūpū* ‘relish, appetizers’ + English plural marker ‘-s’.

with a different taste'. However, despite the friendly intentions of the producers, there are a number of qualities of Kimo and the situation that are highly unlikely. Kimo, a popular boy's name adapted from the Anglo James, states that he is from Waifānae, located in Leeward coast of rural O'ahu. While Kimo is constructed to be a local guy-next-door for the benefit of the viewers, certain facets of a man with these characteristics have been surreptitiously ignored, or erased. For example, people from Waifānae have a reputation for being insular to the point of being anti-*haole* or 'anti-Caucasian'; and they are unlikely to be sporting touristy aloha shirts in a downtown foreign-themed bar to mingle with non-locals, especially alone. The commercial shows how the barrier between the *local* and *foreign* is removed by Kimo's coarse but amicable 'typical' local qualities. He is offered to the audience as an ambassador for local membership.

(4) *Kona Nissan Titan*

The final commercial is for Kona Nissan on the Big Island, promoting Nissan's Titan model pickup. The ad consists of a conversation between two local-looking men (M1 & M2) regarding a large fish that M2 apparently caught. This commercial contains the most numerous local tokens of all 26 ads observed for this study.

At a picnic, groups of family are getting together over some food. Everyone is laughing and smiling. One man brings a big fish on a plate.

1. M1: Ho, **bra**, wea yu get **da** ↑ fish ↓?
2. M2: **Bra**, Ai disaided tu go fishing.

M

3. Hawpt in mai nyu Nissan Taiten.

[ε]

4. Pik ap mai anti's kazin's brada's ankl, ænd hæded tu **de oshin**.

[ε]

M2 drinking with an old man giving the shaka sign; a hula dancer is dancing.

5. M2: Drink kawfi wit a **kahuna**.

M2 and another man racing ATVs on a rocky shore.

6. M2: Tuk mai fæmili ATV.

Two cowboys chasing and trying to catch a cow a rope on hoses.

7. M2: Pikt ap a hitch-haikin' **paniolo**, drawp em æt da rodio.

8. Hi sæd 'fishin's greit daun sau↑'. Bæk awn **da** rod.

9. Met a gai hu hæd sam beit, started fishing.

Two men fishing on a beach.

10. M2: Natin' baiting **bra**. Hæded hom, pul aut wan fishin' bout.

M2 helping a stranded fishing boat at a dock; a group of men thanking him, presenting him with a large fish.

11. M2: So, **da** kaptin gev as hiz fish!

M

M2 hands out a plate full of *opihi* to M1.

12. M2: E, laik sam mo ↑*opihi* ↓?

M

On-screen: ‘Tell Better Stories’

A close-up of a Nissan Titan appears on a screen. ‘Nissan Titan 305 HP 5.6-Liter V8’

13. V: Drive **this** rugged Nissan **Titan** and more Nissan cars and trucks.

[ə]

Nissan logo appears on the screen. ‘Nissan Titan, 329–4408, SHIFT-Fish, Kona Nissan’

14. V: At new **Kona** Nissan!

[kouna]

Both M1 and M2 appear to be typical *mokes*. A slang term referring to local men of Asian, Pacific Islander, or mixed descent; *mokes* are local macho men — HC-speaking, casual, outdoor types (see Meyerhoff 2004: 69). According to local comedian and self-identified *moke*, Augie Tulba, a *moke* is the Hawai‘i equivalent of a ‘redneck’ in Midwest United States (Tulba 2004). Due to the nature of the product being advertised, a full sized pickup truck, the employment of a *moke* cast is quite fitting here. The scenario focuses on the truck’s ability to aid in a full day of adventure and exploration of the island by the main character.

The plot starts when M2 brings a large fresh fish to a picnic. M1 and M2 greet each other with the friendly vocative term *bra* (lines 1 and 2, and again in line 10); along with its synonym, *braddah*, it is frequently exchanged among the locals males in Hawai‘i. The high and low contour prosody (lines 1 and 12), the monothongizations (line 2, 11 and 12), the full vowel articulation of (ə) as (ɛ) (lines 3 and 4), the stopping of the interdental fricatives (lines 1, 4, 5, 7, 8, 10 and 11) and the terminal r-absences (line 1) demonstrate use of HC phonology. In line 10, *wan* ‘an indefinite article’ (as in *wan fishin’ bout* ‘a fishin’ boat’) is another common lexical feature of HC. Terms such as *kahuna* ‘priest, sorcerer, expert in any profession’, *paniolo*²² ‘cowboy’, and *opihi* ‘limpet’ are commonly used Hawaiian loanwords. The events and details of the narrative in the ad portray an idealized day in rural Hawai‘i for the main character and people who associate themselves with him. The expression *talk story* is ‘the local term for a rambling personal experience narrative mixed with folk materials’ (Watson 1973: 55) and helps to highlight one of the local values shared by the *kama‘ainas*. The catchphrase ‘Tell better stories’ implies the value of talk story material while putting forth a wealth of positive imagery associated with the vehicle.

22. From Hawaiian adaptation of the word ‘Spaniard’.

However, as with the other commercials, the characters seem to largely fit the values of middle-class Americans, but presented here with a smattering of Hawaiian-themed imagery — fishing, family and friends, coffee, ATV racing, cowboys and rodeo, and good food are certainly not absent from the rest of the country, but repackaged as *opihī*, *braddahs*, *kahunas*, *paniolos* and barbeques on the beach, the entire commercial now seems decidedly more local.

The same can be said for the speech of the main character; taking a closer look at M2's narrative, it becomes clear that his HC is not quite as heavy as one might expect a real *moke* to be speaking. Except for the phonological and lexical features mentioned above, his syntax is quite standard. Past tense verbs are conjugated as they are in SAE (for both strong vs. weak past, e.g. 'caught' vs. 'wanted' in Sato 1994: 128) instead of using the *wen* 'past tense marker' (strong: lines 6 *tuk* 'took', 8 *sæd* 'said', 9 *met*, 11 *gev* 'gave', and weak: lines 2 *disaided* 'decided', 4 and 10 *hæded* 'headed', 7 *pikt* 'picked', 9 *started*). Additionally, we see a mix of phonological features from HC (the monothongizations, full vowel articulation, and stopping of the interdental fricatives) and SAE phonology (word-ending consonant clusters with /t/ and /d/ are not simplified: lines 3 *hawpt* 'hopped', 4 *ænd* 'and', and 7 *pikt* 'picked'; /l/ vocalization does not occur: lines 4 *ankl* 'uncle' and 10 *pul* 'pull'; post-vocalic /r/ is enunciated: line 9 *started*). The common lexical feature, *wan* 'indefinite article' is used inconsistently, only occurring in line 10 while the SAE counterpart 'a' is used elsewhere (lines 5, 7, and 9).

7. Discussion

The data observed in this paper suggest that advertisement creators make use of a wide variety of resources from their target audience's value systems, including language and culture. Yet unlike the personal interactional uses of culture, its representation in media discourse is more static; in the case of TV advertisements, producer and interpreter of such discourse remain distant from one another and the material cannot be optimized for individual viewers (Fairclough 1989; Talbot 1995). In order to successfully deliver a message to a mass anonymous audience, advertisers need to tailor their productions around an *average* audience. Yet this lack of face-to-face contact with the audience does not hamper producers' (or 'professional practitioners' to use Talbot's (1995: 146) words) ability to interact with the audience to the extent one might expect. Market research and the ability to carefully construct a detailed message over a long period of time gives those on the production side of the media an edge with regards to the personalizing effect it has.

As mass-media messages are delivered to a group of people rather than an individual, the texts are created for imagined communities to which the viewer supposedly belongs. Provided that Hawai'i television advertisements assume that their audience belongs to the *kama'aina* community, the popularity of Asian-Pacific-looking characters in the 26 advertisements observed is unsurprising. These *local guy-next-door* characters, the use of local place names, the pronunciation of the *okina*, the HC, are all incorporated in the productions to deliver 'the impressions of treating each of the people "handled" *en masse* as an individual' (Fairclough 1989: 62), and moreover to give the impression that they are being handled as an individual by another normal member of the local community. In a multi-cultural community like Hawai'i, local advertisers need to negotiate differences among the *kama'aina* population, which shares a wide range of diverse features and backgrounds, in order to appeal to the largest possible target community. In the Hawai'i television commercials, the negotiation of differences is accomplished by placing a great deal of importance on the identity of the *kama'aina* population. The accommodation on the part of the voiceovers to the local pronunciation of the word Hawai'i serves as an example of such negotiation. The pronunciation with the *okina* indexes localness and reaches out to an anonymous audience as a marker of local membership. In keeping with Talbot's assessment of the importance of community (real or imagined) in the construction of *synthetic personalization* (Fairclough 1989; Talbot 1995: 147), advertisers here have used assumed membership in the local community as leverage for suggesting the necessity of their commodities; indeed, viewers are offered both community and commodity simultaneously. *We're all local; we speak the same, we dress the same. Why shouldn't we have the same car insurance/internet provider? Us local guys like fishing and camping. That's a lot easier with this new truck.*

Yet it is important to remember that these ads are ads, and that the imagined community to which the viewer is being offered membership is, in fact, imagined, at least in some sense. In all 26 television ads observed for this study, all captions appeared in SAE, especially those containing catchphrases, phone numbers or other practical business-related material. As discussed in the previous section, while the advertisers' local knowledge (e.g. looks, attire, setting, behavior, jargon, attitude, etc), delivered through HC speaking characters, is integral to establishing membership in the *kama'aina* population, the actual content of the products/services being promoted were delivered in SAE, both spoken and written. In her study of multilingual advertisements, Piller (2001: 159) states that 'the voice of authority that (re)establishes itself most unequivocally at the end of an advertisement occurs either in the form of the voice-over in TV commercials, or in the form of slogans at the bottom of print advertisements'. Voiceovers and captions at the end of commercials provided viewers with business information, headlines,

and slogans in SAE, information which is crucial to the products and the company's identity or philosophy (see Piller 1997; 2001). Positive characterization of the business is central and it is sensible for the ad producers to avoid the use of written HC as it is usually labeled broken/bad English, in contrast to Hawai'i locals' attitudes about spoken HC (Romaine 1999). In the local TV advertisements, HC was only used in spoken format as a tool to bond target audience and the local-looking characters. On the other hand, the experts (voiceovers) used SAE as the language of power that not only provided key information regarding the products but also phrases that are directly associated with the companies' brand images. However this schism between the treatment of the two forms of HC is telling. First is the implication that while local characters and situations may be constructed through the use of HC, information pertinent to the actual business must be presented in a more standardized format. Secondly, and similarly, is the depiction of the business as local, fun or funny, but at the heart of things, still a stable, dependable business. While this may be reassuring to many viewers who depend on the company's services, it raises the question, *Why can't a business be both purely local and dependable?* If HC is important enough to the *kama'aina* community to employ in a commercial, why should it not be relied on to present all of the necessary information?

8. Conclusion

Previous sociolinguistic research concerning the use of HC in public discourse has posited a link between negative public sentiment and subsequent discouragement of its use by government and media (e.g. Romaine 1999; Sato 1989, 1991, 1994), except in limited venues such as comedy shows or local literature. This paper has presented data from recent local television advertisements and discussed the role of language therein. Despite the fact that HC was until recently a stigmatized variety in public discourse, its employment in public media is currently on the rise, riding a wave of positive sentiment for local culture. The use of HC in the commercials are strategic and carefully controlled; while *heavy* Pidgin (basilectal HC) is still avoided as possibly detrimental to brand image, the *right touch* of HC is a favored tactic among these advertisement producers. Those whom I interviewed claimed that they select their local characters very carefully in order to feature natural HC, choosing actors who can speak HC as their native language to avoid sounding like a mockery to the audience, who is quite capable of telling when someone is faking.

Although the negative connotations attributed to HC may be overshadowed by humorous characters or situations, lack of authenticity will still result in a barrier between the target audience and the characters in the ad, as this incorrect usage

displays that its user does not actually possess the necessary criteria for group membership. For example, in a real life situation, if a non-local looking tourist exaggeratedly pronounces Hawai'i with a glottal stop or overuses the phrase *no can*, although it may sound humorous, this kind of incongruous usage of an important membership marker may be interpreted as a violation by locals (c.f. Hill 1998). As such, the advertisement producers pay extra attention to this sensitive issues concerning HC in Hawai'i.

By choosing a specific product, consumers can gain a sense of belonging to a specific group that is associated with the merchandise. For example, the purchase of a cell phone may enable a buyer to feel like a membership of the mobile phone community; purchase of a cell phone from a locally operated business may further add a sense of local membership. Claiming membership in the *kama'aina* community via use of local-looking characters, local themes, HC, etc., can have far-reaching implications for how the identity of said business is interpreted by many members of the diverse local community.

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Appendix: HC dialogues in conventional HC spelling

(1) AIG Hawaii: Car Insurance

1. M1: Eh, you OK?
2. M2: Ya, I'm alright.
3. M1: Eh, you shuah? You OK?
4. M2: Yeh, I'm, I'm alright, I'm alright.
5. M1: Dude! You had a stop sign.
6. M2: Yeah, I stopped.
7. M1: Yeh, you kinda slowed down but you didn't stop.
8. M2: No, I stopped!
9. M1: No, you did not!
10. M2: I'm my own eye witness.
11. M1: You can't be yoa own eye witness.
12. M2: Shuah I can!
13. M1: Well, I'm gonna be my own eye witness an' I say you didn't stop!
14. M2: Did too!
15. M1: No, you did not!
16. M2: Did too!
19. M2: Lalalalalala.
20. M1: No! You did not! No!

(2) Oceanic Cable's Hawaii Road Runner: Internet Access Provider

7. M: No can help. I stay edumacated!

(3) O'Toole's Irish Pub: Bar

7. M3: I'm Kimo from Wai'anae. Dey get free pupus ovah ↑ heah ↓

8. M3: What!?

(4) Kona Nissan Titan

1. M1: Ho, bra, whea you get da ↑ fish ↓?
2. M2: Bra, I decided to go fishing.
3. Hopped in my new Nissan Titan.
4. Pick up my auntie's cousin's braddah's uncle, and headed to de ocean.
5. M2: Drink coffee wit a kahuna.
6. M2: Took my family ATV.
7. M2: Picked up a hitch-hikin' paniolo, drop'im at da rodeo.
8. He said 'fishin's great down sout'. Back on da road.
9. Met a guy who had some bait, started fishing.
10. M2: Notin' biting *bra*. Headed home, pull out *one* fishin' boat.
11. M2: So, da captain gave us his fish!
12. M2: Eh, *like* some moh ↑ *opihi* ↓?

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