

Linguistic Attitudes towards the Use of Pidgin (Hawai'i Creole) in the Media

メディアでのハワイ・クレオールの使用に対する言語態度

INOUE Aya

井上 彩

ファーガソンによるダイグロシア（二言語変種使い分け）に関する古典的研究は、ダイグロシアに関する特徴的な言語使用として、威信の高い言語変種（H変種、H）と威信の低い言語変種（L変種、L）の機能が異なるコンテキストによって特化しており、めったに重なっていないということを指摘している。ファーガソン（2009）では、メディアに関わるコンテキストとして、ニュース報道や新聞の社説、ニュース記事、写真に付するキャプションでは（H）が、ラジオのメロドラマや政治的風刺漫画のキャプションでは（L）が使われる傾向にあるという具体例を示している。

米国ハワイ州では、標準英語と英語系クレオールであるハワイ・クレオール（HC、話者にはピジン〔Pidgin〕という名称で呼ばれている）の使用が一種のダイグロシア状況のような様相を呈している。本稿ではHCのメディアでの使用について話者がどのような言語態度を持つかを、インタビューにおけるディスコースを分析することによって探った。インタビューはホノルルのあるオアフ島よりもHCがよく使われているカウアイ島で2005年に行われ、話者にHCの使用についての認識や言語態度を直接問う、メタ言語的な言説をとまなうインタビューである。

メディアにおけるHCの使用に関しては都市部の若い話者によるとても肯定的な言語態度が一貫して見られた先行研究も存在するが、本稿の話者のディスコースの分析はメディアでの使用についての言語態度は一貫したものではないことが示された。どのようなメディアなのか、またそれぞれのメディアがターゲットとする潜在的視聴者が誰なのか、メディアがHCを使う目的がどこにあるのか、また使われているHCは使用される文脈に適した真正なものなのか、といった様々な基準から肯定的なまたは否定的な言語態度が判断されているということを明らかにした。

0. Introduction

Hawai'i Creole (HC) is an English-lexifier language spoken in the state of Hawai'i. HC is locally known as "Pidgin" among native speakers. Since the present study explores the linguistic attitudes through the analysis of discourses provided by native speakers, the term Pidgin (with capital P) is used to refer to Hawai'i Creole throughout this paper. There are an estimated 600,000 speakers (almost half the population of the state of Hawai'i) of Pidgin in Hawai'i, and recently Pidgin is generally considered to be functioning as an identity marker for locally born residents in Hawai'i.

According to Kawamoto (1993), Pidgin is “forming a *single* identity among the immigrant groups which cut across ethnic lines (Kawamoto 1993)” (emphasis is from the original).

As with other creole languages, there have always been negative views about Pidgin in Hawai'i. It has been referred to as “bad English” or “just a slang” or it has been considered to implicate “poor job prospects” for the speakers. However, public views have gradually started to change since the late 1970s when university and small publishers demonstrated the inseparable link between the unique cultural and historical experience in Hawai'i and the use of Pidgin language.

“Though there is still evidence that Pidgin speakers may be disadvantaged in the employment market and in the courts, in the last twenty years public discourse about Pidgin has matured.” (Eades et al. 2006:152)

Since then, the importance of Pidgin in the construction of local identity as well as its covert prestige among Pidgin speakers have been well recognized by locally born residents in Hawai'i. That does not mean, nevertheless, that Pidgin started to be used in all aspects of everyday lives or is considered as an appropriate language to be used in both public and private domains of society. Although it is true that overall attitudes may have become better, there are various views for different domains where Pidgin can be used. The use of Pidgin is considered “appropriate” as long as it is used in certain contexts but not in others. In prevailing attitudes towards Pidgin, it is appropriate to use it among friends and family, or for entertainment, especially comedy shows, but not in school, nor in the courts. It is to be used in private domains. As pointed out by Eades et al. (2006: 152), such prevailing attitudes that Pidgin should be used in appropriate contexts could become another way of perpetuating a standard English ideology.

Thus, as to which contexts are considered appropriate to use Pidgin, generally speaking, private domains with family or friends are considered to be appropriate contexts while public domains are not. Media, however, consists of mixed contexts when it comes to the appropriateness of non-standard languages. How is Pidgin used in the media viewed in Hawai'i?

1. The Use of Non-Standard Language in the Media

Ferguson (2009) calls the linguistics situation in many speech communities where two or more varieties of the same language are used by some speakers under different conditions “diglossia.” The superposed variety in diglossia typically with higher prestige is often called the H (‘high’) variety and the regional dialects typically with lower prestige is called the L (‘low’) variety. According to Ferguson (2009), one of the most important features of diglossia is the specialization of function for H and L. In a certain situation or context, only H is appropriate and in another only L. The two sets

hardly overlap, and very slightly if ever. In Ferguson's sample listing of possible situations, there are four situations relevant to the media. 'News broadcast' and 'Newspaper editorial, news story, caption on picture' are listed as situations where H is normally used, and 'Radio 'soap opera"' and 'Caption on political cartoon' is listed as situations where L is normally used.

As for the use of Pidgin in Hawai'i it is mostly used among locals who are born and raised in Hawai'i. It is considered as a language used in private domains such as conversation with family, friends and relatives. Recently it has been considered to be appropriate to use Pidgin in literary context. But as Romaine (1994) pointed out, many writers have used Pidgin only for characters' voices and not for narration. It is as if they are told not to use Pidgin for serious or formal contexts. As Wong (1999) says, "The Pidgin voice has been effectively silenced in certain domains where its use is viewed as inappropriate."

Media is generally considered to be "public" domain if we think about traditional mass media such as TV, newspaper, and radio. In Hawai'i, there is no news or weather broadcast in Pidgin on either radio or TV (Eades et al. p149). Sato (1991) shows a famous 1987 language discrimination case where reading the weather on TV with a Pidgin accent can be judged as unacceptable. However, Pidgin has a traditionally strong connection with comedy shows. Many comedians had their shows entirely speaking Pidgin and some of them have been on TV or radio.

The recent study on the attitudes of young speakers in Honolulu (Inoue 2016) unexpectedly found very positive views on the use of Pidgin in the media. The survey questionnaire conducted in Hawai'i in 2007 ($N=30$) explored the young speakers' linguistic attitudes towards Pidgin. In the questionnaire, young people then living in Honolulu were asked about how they feel about the use of Pidgin in different domains and settings as well as what they think about the use of Pidgin. When they were asked the questions on their opinions about Pidgin, they were asked the following six questions (these cases roughly represent the use of Pidgin among friends (1), at home (2), by speakers' potential descendants (3), in the media (4), and in educational settings (5), and by local politicians (6); words in parenthesis stand for the labels for each setting to be used in the table 1 and figure 1 below):

- 1) Do you like it when Pidgin is used among friends? (Friends)
- 2) Do you like it when Pidgin is used at home? (Home)
- 3) Do you want your children / grandchildren to be able to speak Pidgin? (Children)
- 4) Do you like it when Pidgin is used on TV or radio? (Media)
- 5) Do you like it when teachers use Pidgin in the classroom? (Classroom)
- 6) Do you like it when local politicians use Pidgin? (Politicians)

Participants were asked to check the answer in the format shown as below for each of the six questions.

Sample format for the answer

- _____ yes
- _____ it's okay
- _____ no
- _____ other: _____

The answers were converted to a five-point scale in the following manner so as to be analyzed quantitatively; “yes” is converted to 5 points, “it’s okay” to 3 points, and “no” to 1 point. If “other” was checked and some comments were written in, then the answer is not converted numerically (thus ignored in the quantitative analysis). Table 1 and Figure 1 below show the overall results in Inoue (2016).

Table 1. Average of ratings and standard deviations for 30 participants (From Table 1 in Inoue 2016)

	Friends	Home	Children	Media	Classroom	Politicians
Average	3.79	3.23	3.43	3.89	3.04	1.48
ST	0.99	1.68	1.35	0.99	1.99	1.76

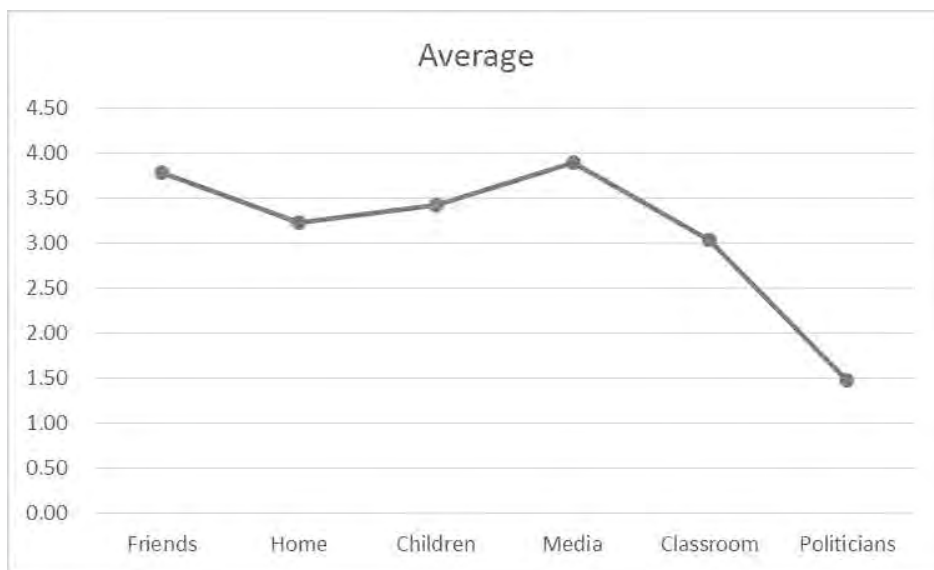


Figure 1. Mean ratings for 30 participants (From Figure 1 in Inoue 2016)

As Table 1 and Figure 1 shows, interestingly, participants like it most when Pidgin is used in media (Media) and like it least when Pidgin is used by local politicians (Politicians). As expected from the fact that Pidgin has been mostly used in private domains, the mean ratings for the category Friends, Home, and Children were relatively higher. Young students from Hawai'i who live in Honolulu consistently like the use of Pidgin in the media as much as (even slightly more than) its use among friends. This tendency is observed regardless of their gender, ethnicity, whether they speak Pidgin or not.

The question then arose as to whether their young age was the cause for such positive attitudes, or whether media generally becomes a preferred space for Pidgin use in Hawai'i now. Thus, questions to ask in this paper are: 1) What do speakers of Pidgin themselves think about Pidgin being used in the media? 2) Does any demographic factor(s) influence the attitudes towards Pidgin? Especially, do young speakers have different attitudes towards Pidgin? To answer these questions, the speakers' own viewpoints are collected and analyzed.

2. Methodology

The present study analyzes discourses provided in interviews conducted in 2005 with ten Pidgin speakers who were born and raised in the island of Kaua'i. All the ten speakers live in the west side of Kaua'i where Pidgin is used more extensively. Compared with the other islands, the island of Kaua'i is reportedly where the least "decreolized" and therefore the most basilectal varieties are found (Romaine 1994). These interviews were conducted after a one on one grammaticality judgement survey that lasted approximately 30 to 40 minutes. This survey part was conducted for the purpose of other research projects. Depending on the availability of the participants, sometimes the interviews were cut short, and some questions were skipped. Sometimes, they commented on the use of Pidgin in the media during the grammaticality judgement survey, and in such cases, their remarks were also included in the analysis.

After the grammaticality judgement survey, along with other questions, participants were asked (1) if they like it when Pidgin is used by newscasters to read news, and (2) if they like it when Pidgin is used in TV commercials. Since the participants were directly asked about their own perspective on the use of Pidgin in the media, it can be considered as a meta-linguistic interview in the form of self-report, which might affect some aspects of their discourses. The participants know that the researcher is conducting academic research on Pidgin at a university. Even if they had negative opinions about the use of Pidgin, they might have felt awkward to share candid opinions with such a researcher. With that in mind, exploring speakers' own perspectives on the use of Pidgin sheds light on the linguistic attitudes of the speakers.

In the present study, Pidgin speakers' discourse on the use of Pidgin in the media is qualitatively analyzed to explore how speakers talk about the use of Pidgin in the media.

3. Speakers' Metalinguistic Interview Discourses

In this section, some of the excerpts from the interviews are introduced and analyzed. In the excerpts, AI stands for the author/interviewer and the participants are identified with a code number so as not to disclose any personal information. Interviews were transcribed by the author and any emphasis such as underlines, or explanations are also provided by the author. While transcribing the interview, any colloquial and non-standard phonological or grammatical features were reflected in writing as much as possible using the orthographic conventions for American Standard English.

An older male speaker provided a short but definitive negative view about the use of Pidgin in the media—not appropriate in the TV news, nor in the TV commercials, although he did not provide any reasons for his answers.

Excerpt 1: Not in the news, not in the commercials

(K01, Older male speaker)

AI: Do you think it's appropriate if TV newscasters speak Pidgin?

K01: No, ((immediately)) No, No.

AI: You want to hear them speak English?

K01: Yeah

AI: How about TV commercials?

K01: Huh?

AI: TV commercials

K01: I don't think it's good.

AI: Oh you don't think it's good.

Although his replies were negative to both questions, there were slight differences in his reactions to the questions on newscasters and commercials. When asked about TV newscasters speaking in Pidgin, K01 immediately said “No” and repeated it twice, whereas when he was asked about TV commercials, he simply said, “I don't think it's good” a regular, unmarked way of providing negative views. Throughout the interview, K01 was not a very talkative participant. It was his speech style to be brief and to the point, and there were no specific reasons why he did not provide any explanations about his perspective.

Unlike K01, most of the participants provided reasons for their opinions. For instance, an older female participant K05 provided mixed views with reasons. She does not think it is appropriate for TV newscasters to speak Pidgin because news is to be seen internationally and statewide. K05 clearly shows that the targeted audience may include non-speakers of Pidgin and

that is why she thinks it is inappropriate.

Excerpt 2: Not in the news but OK in the commercials: depending on the audience

(K05, Older female speaker)

AI: What do you think if TV newscasters are speaking in Pidgin when they report news, do you think it's appropriate?

K05: The whole presentation? That would be really.. you know that would be really hard... No I don't think that would be appropriate because they are... like seen internationally and statewide and...No... no I don't...Not them. Teachers are okay if they are smart...

AI: How about TV commercials?

K05: ((immediately)) That would be okay because when we... we are trying to get children to get shot [injection], we should be innovative...

The final comments by K05 might require some explanation. K05 was retired at the time of the interview but had been engaged in the medical field for a long time and she provided many stories from her work experiences during the interview. When she said, "when we are trying to get children to get shot, we should be innovative," she was trying to make a metaphorical point about the function of TV commercials—if they want their prospective customers to buy their product, they should be innovative and using Pidgin could be one way of being innovative for them. K05 did not mention the targeted audience for the commercials thus her view is not clear on this point.

How about younger speakers' views? In Excerpt 3, a younger male speaker mentioned a "professional setting" as a context that is not appropriate for Pidgin to be used. Yet as for the TV commercials, he thinks it is okay if the market is local people.

Excerpt 3: Not in the news but OK in the commercials: professional setting, audience

(K04 Younger Male speaker)

K04: (asked about TV newscasters using Pidgin) ... Pretty much in every professional setting, I don't think you should use Pidgin...

AI: How about uh TV Commercials? Do you think it's appropriate to use Pidgin in TV commercials?

K04: um if their... if their market is the local people, yeah... if they they're tryna... show something else... then no, it just depends on the...the commercials what it's for... yeah ...

Another younger male speaker also gives positive views for TV commercials. He likes it because it is portraying how people talk in Hawai'i.

Excerpt 4: OK in the commercials: Portraying Hawai'i

(K03 Younger male speaker)

AI: Do you like it when TV commercials use Pidgin?

K03: Ya, I like it, I mean even...I mean... this is my personal opinion but I like it because it put... it give more exposure to what...da Hawai'i... you know, what Hawai'i, you know the type of way da way we talk...the language how we talk to each other...

AI: Yeah yeah

K03: They get the southern accent, iss the same ting, if you come to Hawai'i, we get Pidgin accent, you know iss like da same ting you know

Interestingly, a different perspective was observed when it comes to the use of Pidgin on a public access channel. A public access channel is a form of non-commercial mass media where general public can create and provide contents to air. K04 from Excerpt 3 did not think it was appropriate to use Pidgin in the news but it is okay in TV commercials targeting local people. Although Kaua'i's public access channel is only targeting residents in Kaua'i as its audience, K04 has negative feelings about the use of Pidgin by a Hawaiian activist on the channel.

Excerpt 5: Not OK in public access channel

(K04 Younger Male speaker)

K04: We have like the public access... TV and If you wanna see... a really terrible Pidgin.. talker, go watch the Hawaiian activist show on public access xxx is just...

AI: Oh they use lots of Pidgin there?

K04: Oh da guy speaks primarily... well I have my own opinion of this individual but I don't think he's very well educated... and you know, if you're gonna be a Hawaiian activist, you have to at least learn how to speak ((laugh)) correctly and this guy is just...his...his has this thick terrible Pidgin and...

AI: He's from Kaua'i?

K04: Yeah this guy's from Kaua'i it's on... it's on the Kaua'i public access channel but uh...

AI: Oh I see so only people in Kaua'i can see...

From his comments, 'if you're gonna be a Hawaiian activist, you have to at least learn how to speak correctly,' we can assume that K04 thinks that the use of Pidgin is not appropriate for activities

done by a Hawaiian activist. In Excerpt 3, K04 said 'Pretty much in every professional setting, I don't think you should use Pidgin...' It is likely that K04 considers the context where talking to local people in public access channel as an activist is one of the professional settings.

Some participants questioned the authenticity of the Pidgin used in the media. A younger female speaker mentioned the authenticity of Pidgin that was used in film. Around the time of the interview in 2005, a Disney movie *Lilo and Stich* (2002) was often talked about in Hawai'i. The setting of this movie is based in Kaua'i, one of the neighbor islands of Hawai'i, where the main character Lilo and her sister live.

Excerpt 6: Authenticity problem in the media

(K13 Younger female speaker)

K13: *Lilo and Stich* [the movie's setting is the island of Kaua'i], Pidgin over there is not Kaua'i
...

K13: But I notice if haole [Caucasians] would come in and try to make movies, especially even if they're based in Kaua'i, it's not Kaua'i Pidgin...

She noticed although *Lilo and Stich* is based in Kaua'i, the Pidgin they use is the pidgin spoken in the island of O'ahu, not Kaua'i. K13 thinks it may be because the movie was made by haole [Caucasians] and not locals, who might be more sensitive to different features of Pidgin within different areas in Hawai'i.

In sum, no speaker examined in this study thinks the use of Pidgin by newscasters to report news is appropriate. Most interviewees liked it when it is used in TV commercials but had different reasons. Some noticed 'inauthentic' use of Pidgin in the films based on Hawai'i. Pidgin speakers in this speech community are well aware of the fact that half the population in Hawai'i does not speak Pidgin. If the media is targeting locals who are born and raised in Hawai'i as their audience, the use of Pidgin seems to be generally appropriate, but remains inappropriate in professional settings, and only if it is authentic Pidgin. If the media is targeting a national or statewide population as the audience, the use of Pidgin is okay only if it is to portray Hawai'i and if they use authentic Pidgin.

4. Discussion

Even though Inoue (2016) found consistent high preferences for the use of Pidgin in media, analysis of speakers' discourses in this study revealed that these attitudes towards media are far from being monolithic. Inoue (2016) indicates very positive attitudes for the use of Pidgin in the media whereas the present study shows mixed feelings.

Most participants have different attitudes depending on the types of media, whether they

are news broadcasting, TV commercials, or other forms such as films or public access channels. None of the participants in this study thought it was appropriate to use Pidgin to report news. The reasons for this varied. Some pointed out the professional setting for the news reporting and others mentioned the audience being a non-local population. On the other hand, when it comes to TV commercials most of the participants felt it appropriate for Pidgin to be used.

The issue about authenticity of Pidgin is sometimes discussed in academic discourse. For example, the webpage *Talking Story about Pidgin* published by the Department of Second Language Studies at University of Hawai'i at Manoa comments on Pidgin used in films. In the page titled *Films about Pidgin*, it introduces some films that feature Pidgin or use Pidgin. At the end of the page, it has a comment on the use of unauthentic Pidgin in some films.

“There are other films that portray Pidgin in Hawai'i (for example, *Lilo and Stitch*, *Forgetting Sarah Marshall*, *North Shore*, *50 First Dates*, and *Honeymoon in Vegas*) but the Pidgin that is spoken by the characters is, in polite terms, inauthentic. The Pidgin is inaccurate in terms of grammar and is often spoken with very exaggerated pronunciation. Still, these films provide interesting material for examining racial and class-based stereotypes about Pidgin, and for thinking about why it is that filmmakers don't worry about making sure that the language used on the films is accurate and authentic.”

Discourses by the speakers suggest that the speakers are well aware of the inauthentic use of Pidgin in some of the movies and they assume that was caused by the people who made the movie. Interestingly, those people are referred to as 'haole.' It is a word originally from Hawaiian language meaning 'foreigner.' Currently in Hawai'i, however, it is frequently used as a contrasting notion to local, meaning Caucasians. The implication would be that since the movie was not directed by local people, but by non-locals, they did not realize the unauthentic use of Pidgin.

Did the result of this study suggest any demographic factor(s) that may influence the attitudes towards Pidgin? Do younger speakers in the participants have different attitudes towards Pidgin? In this study, difference due to speakers' ages was not clearly demonstrated although some older speakers expressed stronger dislikes about the use of Pidgin in the media. It is not clear why the result in Inoue (2016) showed overall positive attitudes for the use of Pidgin in the media since many of the Pidgin speakers in this study clearly provided negative views on the news reporting using Pidgin. It could be that the college age speakers in the urban Honolulu area have very different attitudes than the residents of the neighbor islands, or it could be that the fact that the survey was conducted in a university influenced the data in some way. More studies are needed to provide a firm conclusion about the possible shift in linguistic attitudes towards Pidgin.

5. Conclusion

This study demonstrates complex and mixed attitudes towards the use of Pidgin in the media by analyzing speakers' own discourses in meta-linguistic interviews. Although changing attitudes by younger speakers may be suggested, more studies are needed to confirm these changes. As the notion of 'media' have changed over time with increasing number of Social Network Services, the use of Pidgin in the media has also been changing. As more and more young people use Pidgin in SNSs such as Twitter and Facebook, the contrast between public domain media and private domain media has blurred increasingly. In order to explore linguistic attitudes, especially those in the media, multiple methods should be employed, and multiple sources should be analyzed depending on the specific research questions that are investigated.

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