

## “NO FLIPS IN THE POOL”: DISCURSIVE PRACTICE IN HAWAI‘I CREOLE<sup>1</sup>

Toshiaki Furukawa

### Abstract

Linguistic hybridity is the process of the authorial unmasking of another’s speech, through a language that is double-accented and double-styled. The present study investigates how linguistic resources, especially code-switching is used for meaning making in local comedy shows in Hawai‘i. Local comedy is inseparable from the use of carnivalistic act. This act deconstructs attempts at stabilizing social systems by being playfully and non-violently subversive. While there are many studies of language and humor, there are much fewer studies on the use of code-switching in comedy. The present study is particularly interested in the latter and specifically addresses Bakhtin’s work on carnival. It is often maintained that ethnic jokes marginalize those of Filipino origin as the Other. However, the present paper claims that both functions of comedy - marginalizing of the Other and disrupting of official views of reality - are inseparably intertwined. Andy Bumatai, a local comic, tactically achieves carnivalistic effects while negotiating and juggling his subjectivity. Given this, code-switching as well as language selection can be a powerful tool for doublevoicing. Little is known about the pragmatics of pidgin and creole languages. Hence, the present study provides a starting point for future projects on the discursive practice in Hawai‘i Creole.

**Keywords:** Hybridity; Carnivalistic act; Ethnic humor; Code-switching; Doublevoicing; Hawai‘i Creole.

### 1. Introduction

Hybridity is defined in various ways. For instance, it is defined as invention and intervention that require a sense of newness (Bhabha 1997: 31). It is also defined as “a communicative practice constitutive of, and constituted by, sociopolitical and economic arrangement” (Kraidy 2002: 317). For Bakhtin, hybridity, especially linguistic hybridity means the “process of the authorial unmasking of another’s speech, through a language that is ‘double-accented’ and ‘double-styled’” (Young 1995: 20). It represents a doubleness that “brings together, fuses, but also maintains separation” (ibid: 22). Bakhtin is more concerned with “hybridity as division and separation” (ibid: 21). Although the notion of hybridity has been criticized due to its vagueness and pervasiveness, Kraidy (2002) rebuts the criticism of hybridity, arguing that it is a useful notion because it can be used without rigorous theoretical grounding and that it is

---

<sup>1</sup> I am grateful for the invaluable comments made on earlier drafts by Christina Higgins, Andrew Wong, Michael Forman, Ralph Koga, and Jacob Terrel. I would also like to thank an anonymous reviewer and an editor of IPRA. Thanks are also due to members of Socio Writing Workshop as well as students who were enrolled in either Second Language Studies 760 or Linguistics 414/640G(2) at the University of Hawai‘i at Manoa. All remaining shortcomings are solely my own responsibility.

important to ground hybridity “contextually and theoretically”. The second point is worth noting because it underlines the importance of contextualization that helps us understand the complexity of social process where hybridity plays a role.

A typical speech event in Hawai‘i is referred to as *talkstory* (White & Robillard 1989) and it would be reasonable to include language use in comedy shows within *talkstory*. Local comedy creates Third Space that is hybrid in nature and disrupts the status quo (Bhabha 1994). Through the discursive practice of this type of verbal interaction, the speaker and the audience challenge, negotiate, renegotiate, and shift the meaning and relationship between them as well as between various linguistic, ethnic, gender groups. The present study investigates how linguistic resource, especially code-switching is used for meaning making in local comedy shows. Particular attention is paid to the context that consists of a sequence of actions achieved by the speaker and the audience respectively. More specifically, I explore (1) how local comedians use code-switching in stand-up comedy shows and (2) how they position themselves in relation to the audience as well as to other groups (ethnic, linguistic, gender, etc.).

## 2. Theoretical framework

Local comedy is inseparable from the use of humor and parody that can be labeled as carnivalistic act (Bakhtin 1984). It is necessary to elaborate the notion of carnivalistic act here. According to Bakhtin, “[m]uch was permitted in the form of laughter that was impermissible in serious form”, and he goes on to maintain that “[c]arnivalistic laughter likewise is directed toward something higher - toward a shift of authorities and truths, a shift of world orders” (Bakhtin 1984: 127). In addition, “parodying was employed very widely, in diverse forms and degrees: Various images [...] parodied one another variously and from various points of view; it was like an entire system of crooked mirrors” (ibid).

The carnivalistic act is a practice that disrupts official views of reality. It questions hierarchy by creating an ambivalent space between the high and the low where hierarchical distinctions are not respected (i.e. Third Space). The carnivalistic act ‘jesterly’ deconstructs attempts at stabilizing social systems by being playfully and non-violently subversive (Rhodes 2002: 297). Kraidy (2002) argued in the above that hybridity needs to be grounded contextually and theoretically, and so does a carnival act. Humphrey (2000: 171) maintains, “in order to determine the social dynamics of a particular practice, [...], we need to be thinking in both synchronic and diachronic terms, situating the practice within a wider social and historical context than has previously been called for.”

Moreover, in order to analyze linguistic practices in local comedy, I rely on the following theoretical frameworks. First of all, one of the features found in the data is code-switching and it is used to create pragmatic effects. The present study adopts a CA-informed approach to the data, paying due attention to the strict conversation analytical perspective (e.g. Heritage 2004) as well as to a sequential approach to code-switching (Auer 1998). In other words, the present study is not following the ‘strict’ CA because it purposefully targets humorous talk in order to investigate how carnivalistic acts are performed through linguistic means. The speaker’s alignment to topic, people, etc. is often changed by means of code-switching and this alignment is referred to as footing (Goffman 1979). The present study also considers code-switching

as one of the contextualization cues (Gumperz 1982) because this notion has formed the basis for Auer's work. Contextualization cues such as code-switching, laughter, pause, and so forth indicate how the speaker's utterance should be interpreted by the audience. The notion of crossing (Rampton 2005) is an indispensable explanatory device for this study as well because Bumatai, a local comedian of Filipino and German decent, attempts to tactically position himself in relation to different ethnic groups.

While there are many studies of language and humor (e.g. Attardo 2001; Hall 2005; Higgins forthcoming; Leeds 1992; Rampton 2005; Scott 1998; Siegel 1995; Stolen 1992), there are much fewer studies on the use of code-switching in a particular speech event, i.e., comedy (Jaffe 2000; Labrador 2004; Tsang & Wong 2004; Woolard 1987). The present study is particularly interested in the latter. It is fair to say that the latter group addresses Bakhtin's work on carnival more specifically since it is interested in performance. There is a wide agreement among the above studies that code-switching is used as a contextualization cue. It should be noted, however, that there are many cases in which the intent of code-switching is unclear. It is also problematic that a CA approach or a sequential approach to code-switching is often inappropriately used, social factors being taken into account out of context that is regarded as a sequence of actions from the CA perspective. In order to overcome these shortcomings, the present study applies a CA-informed approach and refers to social elements only when they turn out to be relevant as a result of a sequential analysis of the interactional data. In other words, indexicality does not imply the direct relation between linguistic resources/practices and social categories such as identity. Their relation or meaning is negotiated through interaction between participants of a speech event. It would produce a more fruitful discussion to presume that linguistic practices do not reflect social reality, but they simultaneously construct, and are being constructed by, social reality.

Labrador (2004) specifically discusses local comedy in Hawai'i, claiming that it is marginalizing those of Filipino origin as the Other. However, a crucial aspect of comedy shows - a carnivalistic practice - is not discussed at all. The present paper claims that both functions of comedy - marginalizing of the Other and disrupting of official views of reality - are inseparably intertwined. That is, many jokes make fun of both sides and, therefore, even the one who marginalizes the Other is not secured from a carnivalistic practice. Also, while Labrador refers to popular local comedians such as Frank DeLima and Da Braddahs, he does not examine Andy Bumatai, another important figure in the local comedy scene (Suzuki 2004).<sup>2</sup> The present study, therefore conducts

---

<sup>2</sup> According to his website, as of May 2006, Andy Bumatai is 52 years old. He started his career as a stand-up comic in 1977 and was hired to play the breaks for Frank DeLima. He was also a member of Booga Booga, a popular comic trio, for about a year. Then he went back to doing stand-up and recorded his first album. He won a Hoku award for "Most Promising Artist" in 1979. He won 3 more Hoku awards for "Best Comedy Album". He did a TV special for KGMB Hawai'i Ch.9 "School Daze" at that time. He did another TV special "All in the Ohana," which became a smash hit. (Twenty years after making it, KGMB and he released it as a video tape and it topped the charts in Hawai'i.) Bumatai decided to "give the mainland a shot" in the mid 1980's and ended up living just outside L.A. for 10 years. He was back in playing small clubs in Waikiki in 1990's. He put out an album and did a couple of TV series. In 2002 he made a short film with his brother and they also made a couple of comedy specials for OC 16. He also worked at Don Ho's showroom in Waikiki with Augie Tulba, at the Brew Moon in Ward Center, and at the Palace Showroom in Waikiki with Frank DeLima and Paul Ogata. In 2003 he put out a CD "Brain Child." He also became a segment host on "Ohana Road" on the ABC affiliate, which won a number of national awards. In 2004 he appeared on the NBC series "Hawaii" and "North Shore". In 2005 he did casual gigs on the neighbor islands, a weekend in San Francisco, and an "Andy Bumatai's Comedy Showcase" at the HighTide Cafe.

a close analysis of Bumatai's linguistic practices. Examining his discursive practice line by line, I demonstrate that he tactically and 'jesterly' achieves carnivalistic, humorous, and parodic effects while negotiating and juggling his subjectivity.

### **3. A history of Hawai'i Creole**

Following contact with Europeans in 1778, Hawai'i became a stopover for whaling and trading between China and the West Coast of North America. At this time no pidgin language had developed, but features of other English pidgins were used in communication (Sakoda and Siegel 2003: 4).

The establishment of the first sugarcane plantation in 1835 and the expansion of the industry in the last quarter of the century brought many laborers from various countries and areas, which included: China, Pacific islands, Portugal, Norway, Germany, Japan, the Philippines, Puerto Rico, Korea, Russia, and Spain (ibid: 4-5). It was Hawaiian and Pidgin Hawaiian that were used as a common language among these immigrants (Da Pidgin Coup 1999: Section 3). By the turn of the century, Hawai'i Pidgin English began to emerge, becoming the primary language of many, including children acquiring it as their first language (ibid). This marked the beginning of Hawai'i Creole, which is locally referred to as Pidgin.

According to Sakoda and Siegel (2003: 20), "there is no general agreement about what really constitutes Pidgin [i.e. Hawai'i Creole - TF] in Hawai'i" because it means for some people the basilectal variety with its grammar distinct from that of English, while for others it refers to the local accent and vocabulary. This variation, therefore, seems to form a continuum ranging from basilectal through mesolectal to acrolectal varieties. The population of speakers is assumed to be approximately 600,000, half the population of Hawai'i State (Gordon 2005).

Generally speaking, Hawai'i Creole is used among families and friends in informal settings. It is often considered as a marker of local identity. Reinecke (1969: 194) states that this variation is "a local dialect and to a great extent a class dialect, it has a two-fold emotional basis." In other words, Hawai'i Creole has a covert prestige among local people, and it has been mostly used in social domains such as at home, on the playground, and so forth. However, who is "local" is a highly controversial issue. Some people may regard both Native Hawaiians and descendants of plantation laborers as local, excluding other ethnic groups and newly arrivals from the category. Others may not want to include Native Hawaiians within the same category as descendants of plantation laborers.

Many people still consider Hawai'i Creole as a class dialect, as seen in the recent disputes (e.g. Kua 1999a, 1999b). However, advocacy for the variation has also emerged. In 1978, Bamboo Ridge Press launched literary activism in Hawai'i, encouraging local authors to create their work related to local themes and at the same time encouraging them to write in Hawai'i Creole. Since 1998, Da Pidgin Coup, a group of people mainly from the University of Hawai'i at Manoa, has been discussing linguistic, social, and educational issues regarding Hawai'i Creole in order to raise public awareness.

Due to a matter of space, it is impossible to thoroughly explain a sociolinguistic history of Hawai'i Creole. Detailed accounts can be found in the following sources: Da Pidgin Coup (1999), Forman, Kakalia, Lau, and Tomita (1973),

Reinecke (1969), Romaine (1994, 1999), Sakoda and Siegel (2003), Sato (1989, 1991), and Talmy (2004).

## 4. Method

### 4.1. Data collection

The primary text of analysis is Bumatai's (2003) CD *Brain Child*. His recording of stand-up comedy is selected because he is one of the well known local comedians and strategically uses Hawai'i Creole (locally called Pidgin) among other language varieties in his show. Bumatai's CD is also chosen because the present writer had opportunities to go to his show twice in 2004 and 2005 and this first hand experience of local comedy shows is helpful to understand the context better.

For complementary purposes, I have checked twice how Bumatai's jokes are perceived by means of having two groups listen to the data with a transcription that shows the excerpts presented in the next section: Once during my presentation for a graduate seminar SLS760 and once during a consultation with my Hawaiian language instructor and his students. The former group (Group 1) consists of a mixture of L1 and L2 speakers of English only one of whom spent several years of his adolescence in Hawai'i and socialized himself in local culture; the latter group (Group 2) consists of three local individuals who identify themselves as Pidgin speakers. Both presentations were conducted on April 3 and 9, 2006, respectively.

### 4.2. Data analysis

The CD is partly transcribed and is analyzed based on a CA-informed approach. The present writer adopts this approach because it enables him to draw evidence from sociological factors when relevant to interactional analysis. Combining linguistic, interactional, and sociological evidence makes it possible to draw a clearer picture of the phenomenon under investigation. In the CD, Bumatai tells the audience various stories about race/ethnicity, language, gender and culture. The CD is approximately fifty minutes long. Although it contains twenty-two tracks, it seems that it retains the outline of the original performance recorded in Don Ho's Showroom in Waikiki. Based on my own experience of going to Bumatai's show twice, it seems that it was performed before a live audience consisting mostly of local people. Their reactions, i.e. laughter and applause, can also be heard in the recording. Due attention is paid to the way linguistic resources are used to achieve carnivalistic effects.

It is not an easy task to determine which language and variety is used in Bumatai's performance, but when I have to make a decision, I rely on the combination of phonological, syntactic and semantic factors (e.g. Sakoda & Siegel 2003).

## 5. Discussion

This section presents six excerpts taken from five tracks of Bumatai's CD *Brain Child*. These excerpts are discussed in the chronological order as recorded in the CD because

the order is probably the same as that of the original show.<sup>3</sup>

*Excerpt 1* (from Track 3 'Frank DeLima non ethnic joke')

1	Bumatai	He ((i.e. DeLima)) played the machine for me.
2		↑ Andy, listen to this. Listen to this.
3		((in a Filipino accent)) ↑ You stop telling dat Filipino joke (.) I'm going to poke you wit (de knife).
4	Audience	((laugh))
5	Bumatai	((in a Filipino accent)) ↑ You know (da) joke I'm talking about (.) dat one (.)
→6		((Bumatai imitates DeLima's song about Filipinos)).
7	Audience	((laugh))
8	Bumatai	X I tell Frank. Brah, it's a good <u>bit</u> (.) you know.
9	Audience	((laugh))

To begin with, in Excerpt 1, Bumatai tells the audience an anecdote about Frank DeLima, a leading figure among local comedians, who has received a threatening telephone message from a local Filipino who accuses him for his ethnic joke concerning Filipinos. Bumatai is playing four roles or voices here: DeLima, a Filipino caller, Bumatai himself in a narrated event, and Bumatai himself as a narrator in a narrative event. The distinction between narrated and narrative events is crucial here (Bauman 1986). Bumatai uses a high pitch for DeLima, a Filipino accent for the Filipino caller, and Standard English for two of his roles. As shown below, his utterance is interspersed with laughter from the audience. Let us look at the part where Bumatai performs the Filipino caller who sings DeLima's song featuring local Filipinos (l. 6). This part is particularly interesting because Bumatai is performing a Filipino caller who in order to criticize DeLima is retelling and appropriating DeLima's well-known song about Filipinos. This clearly shows an example of polyphony (i.e. the multi-voiced nature of utterances). To put it differently, this is a parody of another parody. It creates a humorous effect, which is attested by the immediately occurring laughter from the audience.

Note that the exact words of the song are unimportant here. One of the informants in Group 2 commented that Line 6 is nonsense noise. What makes the audience laugh here is the fact that the Filipino caller (performed by Bumatai) switches from English with a Filipino accent into singsong mocking either Ilokano or Tagalog.

On the one hand, it can be said that Bumatai is marginalizing Filipinos as the Other by constructing a Filipino accent with a high tone of voice (ll. 3 and 5) as well as

<sup>3</sup> The contents of *Brain Child* are as follows: (1) Waikiki, (2) From the country, (3) **Frank DeLima Non ethnic joke**, (4) Hearing aid, (5) Off eyes, (6) The chills, (7) I wrecked my car, (8) Labels signs security, (9) Iraqi War, (10) Shock & Awe, (11) Hearts & Minds of Iraq, (12) Fast Food, (13) Neighbor Island directions, (14) Beggars, (15) How eating dog started, (16) **Filipino heritage**, (17) **Accents**, (18) **Non white**, (19) **White people**, (20) Shy locals, (21) Big mahu, and (22) Don Ho. Tracks in bold face are analyzed in the present paper.

by constructing an uncivilized action such as poking with a knife (l. 3). Mock Ilokano or Tagalog (l. 6) also contributes to the othering process. However, Bumatai is mimicking a Filipino who is mimicking DeLima who is originally mimicking Filipinos, which looks like a parody of another parody, an embedded parody. I insist that this leaves possibilities for an act of carnival by an imagined Filipino caller in the narrated world, thereby creating Third Space.

**Excerpt 2** (from Track 16 'Filipino heritage')

1	Bumatai	My f- my father he don't like Filipino jokes, man.
2		I tell ya my first joke I ever told him (.) nine years old.
3		And my dad wanted to go Makaha Inn had (.) swimming pool. <sup>4</sup>
4		((in a Filipino accent)) Come on, boy, we are going to Makaha Inn. They have the swimming pool.
5	Audience	((laugh))
6	Bumatai	Daddy, we cannot swim up there. (They prejudiced) against Filipinos.
7		((in a Filipino accent)) Why do you say that, boy?
→8		Daddy, I see one big sign 'No (.) Flips (.) in the pool.'
9	Audience	((laugh))
10	Bumatai	No. ((Whack))
11		Oh, daddy. No whack ME. 'ass my first JOKE.
12	Audience	((laugh))
13	Bumatai	((in a Filipino accent)) They tell me (.) you are my first joke.
14	Audience	((laugh))

In Excerpt 2, Bumatai constructs his subjectivity as a Filipino. Bumatai speaks with a Filipino accent to quote his Filipino father (ll. 4, 7, 10, and 13). While he uses a Filipino accent for his own part as a child, he puts to good use a heavier accent to represent his father. The punch line "No (.) Flips (.) in the pool" (l. 8) explicitly indicates that Bumatai is engaging in doublevoicing (i.e. re-accentuation of someone else's discourse for a speaker's own purposes by inserting a new semantic intention into a discourse which already has an intention of its own) by appropriating the original meaning of a sign for his own use. The audience's immediate reaction affirms the effect of doublevoicing here.

This excerpt shows that Bumatai is marginalizing Filipinos as the Other but with the purpose of challenging this marginalization through humor. As in the previous excerpt, Bumatai constructs his father by using a Filipino accent. The humorous effect of the accent is attested by the laughter from the audience (l. 5). In addition, Bumatai

<sup>4</sup> According to Sakoda & Siegel (2003), past existential sentences begin with *had* in Hawai'i Creole as "had (.) swimming pool" (l. 3) which means that there was a swimming pool.

uses a third person plural pronoun They (l. 6) and implies those who marginalize Filipinos. What is contentious, on the other hand, would be the punch line (l. 8). The same informant of Group 2 above commented that this kind of joke would be unacceptable nowadays. He did not think that Bumatai could justify his use of this Filipino joke even if he is of Filipino descent. Given this, it might be difficult to claim that the punch line (l. 8) is a carnivalistic act. However, it should be noted that the punch line still makes many people laugh (l. 9). The point is that it is carnivalistic for some and not others (Jaffe 2000). Even the informant in Group 2 who pointed out the political incorrectness of the joke might laugh at a local comedy show.

Furthermore, Bumatai's comment is treated as a joke within a joke (l. 11). He characterizes the little boy (i.e. Bumatai as a child) as someone who is conscious of the racial connotation, but at the same time, someone who can subvert this connotation through humor.

**Excerpt 3** (from Track 17 'Accents')

1	Bumatai	(Wherever) everybody got accents, you know they tease us about our Pidgin,
2		but, man, if you go to the Midwest?
3		there they speak in complete sentences. This guy says to me,
4		((in a mock Midwestern accent)) <u>Andy</u> , I just think(ing) about going on a kitchen get myself (a) ice cold coca cola while I was in the kitchen? I just wonder(ing) maybe you like for me to bring you back an ice cold coca cola for <u>yourself</u> .
5	Audience	((laugh))
6	Woman	Really long, eh.
→7	Bumatai	I- I serious you feel real guilty going (.) Nah.
8	Audience	((laugh))
→9	Bumatai	Even in Pidgin that whole sentence would be (.) Soda.
10	Audience	((laugh))
11	Bumatai	Oh, yeah, a <u>big</u> difference.

In Excerpt 3, Bumatai is saying that 'we are not the only one who got an accent' and takes a Midwestern accent as an example. He is using the 'we-them' opposition (ll. 1 and 3) and is aligning himself to local people, highlighting a distinction between locals and those in the U.S. mainland (especially Midwesterners). This excerpt contrasts the efficiency of English of Midwesterners with that of Hawai'i Creole. Bumatai exaggerates a Midwesterner's speech (l. 4). That his attempt is successful is attested by means of both the audience's laughter that follows (l. 5) and a comment provided by one woman in the audience who said, "Really long, eh" (l. 6). Bumatai's rather short reply "Nah" in Hawai'i Creole (l. 7) to an offer of drink formulated with a lengthy sentence induces laughter from the audience (l. 8). Similarly, a paraphrase from English to Hawai'i Creole "Soda" (l. 9) also causes the audience to laugh (l. 10). The

audience may be inferring that Pidgin is better. It is also implied that *haole* 'white people' talk too much. Most importantly, praising the efficiency of Hawai'i Creole, Bumatai succeeds in aligning himself to a group of local people rather than to particular ethnic groups such as Filipinos, Hawaiians, and so forth.

It is implied in this excerpt that Hawai'i Creole is more efficient than English, thereby upgrading the former and downgrading the latter would constitute a carnivalistic act. Yet, we need to be careful about Hawai'i Creole. Since many jokes can potentially make fun of both sides, Hawai'i Creole may be seen negatively, too. It should be mentioned, however, that the same informant as above (Group 2) does not think that Bumatai is making fun of Pidgin here at all. It seems that Bumatai has succeeded in aligning himself with the audience including this informant.

**Excerpt 4** (from Track 18 'Non white')

1	Bumatai	While I was in the mainland I gotta tell ya
2		I did this one thing one time and an audition in eh Los Angels
3		and a lady stamped on my card non-white. ((bang))
4		You know, I went, Hah? what? Ma (.) what?
5		↑ Well you're not white. ((The whole sentence is nasalized))
6	Audience	((laugh))
7	Bumatai	And the worst part is then I caught a flight (.)
8		Honolulu International Airport XX
9		a braddah from Waianae go
→10		((in Pidgin)) <u>Eh</u> Andy, how's it brah? >Ho ho< you (came) <u>white</u> eh?
11	Audience	((laugh))

Prior to Excerpt 4, Bumatai presents himself to the audience as of German and Filipino descent. In the first half of this excerpt (ll. 1-5), he is trying to orient himself toward subjectivity as a white, but his attempt fails. He narrates this story in English and represents a white woman's voice with a high pitched, nasalized voice, saying "Because you are not white" (l. 5). In the latter half of the excerpt (ll. 7-10), he is trying to orient himself toward subjectivity as a local, but his attempt fails again. He represents his "braddah from Waianae" by switching into Hawai'i Creole, saying "Eh Andy, how's it brah? Ho ho you came white eh?" (l. 10). Bumatai constructs this figure by means of Hawai'i Creole as well as reference to Waianae, which is known as a 'rough' district on the island of O'ahu. This "braddah from Waianae" also expresses a sense of local beauty "Ho ho you came white eh?" (l. 10), making fun of Bumatai who lost a tan probably because he stayed in the mainland so long. Different ethnic references are used for Bumatai by the white woman and the local respectively. As a result, Bumatai succeeds in constructing his subjectivity as someone in the ethnic no-man's-land by effectively quoting the voices of the white lady and the local man both of whom sort of marginalize Bumatai as the Other from their perspective.

**Excerpt 5** (from Track 19 ‘White people’)

1	Bumatai	I think we got to take a big Hawaiian flag over to Europe (.)
2		pop it into the ground ((bang))
→3		((in Pidgin)) We discovered this for Hawaii.
4	Audience	((laugh))
5	Bumatai	((in a British accent)) What about us, governor? (.)
→6		((in Pidgin)) We discover you, too, brah.

In Excerpt 5, Bumatai seems to be orienting to subjectivity even as a Native Hawaiian to which he does not align himself in the above excerpts. This excerpt is a clear example in which Bumatai achieves a series of carnivalistic acts. It is noteworthy to draw the reader’s attention to the use of the pronoun “we” (ll. 1, 3, and 6) and the references to “a big Hawaiian flag” (l. 1) as well as to an action “discover” (ll. 3 and 6). Given this, Bumatai is attempting to distort official views of reality by implying that it is untruthful to maintain that Europeans “discovered” Hawai‘i. Thus, he asserts that “we” could go to Europe, place a Hawaiian flag into the land, and claim it as their own land. Bumatai’s use of code-switching is also characteristic of this excerpt where he uses Hawai‘i Creole to represent the collective “we” (ll. 3 and 6) while he uses a British accent to represent the collective “them” (l. 5). Furthermore, it is noteworthy that Bumatai calls the British person “brah” (l. 6). It changes the person reference from “governor” that is very British in pronunciation, to a person reference that is very Pidgin (i.e. Hawai‘i Creole). The use of “brah” usually marks closeness among Pidgin speakers, or inside status at the least.

Is Bumatai really taking a Hawaiian’s view here? The notion of “Hawaiian” must be carefully scrutinized here because it is also likely that Bumatai is presenting himself as a local rather than as a Native Hawaiian. He is telling the audience that ‘we should do this’ as locals. According to the same informant (of Group 2), Bumatai used to be accepted as one of “us” by Native Hawaiians, but there are some (e.g. indigenous scholars) who do not think so anymore because they think Bumatai doesn’t have blood. In other words, Bumatai’s carnivalistic acts discussed in this excerpt might be challenged by those who are particular about the definition of Hawaiian.

**Excerpt 6** (from Track 19 ‘White people’)

1	Bumatai	One thing always drives me nuts
2		if you ever go these (.) tourist shows they start with ALO::HA:: ((a vowel in the last syllable of <u>aloha</u> is nasalized))
3	Audience	((laugh))
4	Bumatai	Tourists think that’s how we greet each other.
5	Audience	((laugh))
6	Bumatai	<u>Brah</u> , imagine that you (in) Nanakuli ((laugh)) you know (what I mean)

7		(dat) two braddahs you know leaning on da car.
8		So big da other wheels off the grou:nd you know.
9	Audience	((laugh))
10	Bumatai	And you roll up (.) ALO:::HA:::.. ((nasalization, cf. l. 2))
11	Audience	((laugh))
→12	Bumatai	((in Pidgin)) (Wow) brah, when you start smoking ice.
13	Audience	((laugh))

The final excerpt also indicates that Bumatai positions himself as a local person in opposition to tourists - presumably from the U.S. mainland and other countries such as Japan - by pointing out an unusual way of greeting “ALO:::HA:::” (ll. 2 and 10) that he claims is frequently used in tourist shows in Waikiki. The opposition between locals and tourists is constructed by means of the use of pronouns “they” (l. 2) and “we” (l. 4) respectively.

Furthermore, while narrating in English, Bumatai inserts an addressing expression “brah” twice (ll. 6 and 12), which indicates that he is trying to align himself to the audience. His attempt of aligning himself to local people is completed when he finishes delivering a punch line “Oh like brah, you start smoking ice” in Hawai'i Creole (l. 12), performing a local person from Nanakuli, a district on the island of O'ahu that is perceived in a similar way as Waianae (cf. l. 9 in Excerpt 4). This excerpt also describes working class, poor Hawaiians in the district who are so heavy that cars are tipping over (l. 8), which causes laughter among the audience. The above greeting is equated with dosing oneself with methamphetamine (l. 12) for which the districts of Nanakuli and Waianae are infamous. In short, Bumatai ridicules tourist shows such as those described in this excerpt and implies that his own show for local people is more authentic, thereby subverting preexisting views of reality (among tourists) through a carnivalistic act.

All the excerpts tell us that sometimes the code-switching does matter quite a lot (e.g. as in the “Filipino,” “Midwestern” and “British” accents in Excerpt 1 and 2, 3 and 5 respectively). However, it is not always the case that the code-switching is what matters as much as the selection of the language that is used to begin the topic. All the excerpts but Excerpt 2 begin in Standard English. This language selection indicates that the main audience is English speakers. It might be possible to say that, in Excerpt 2 (ll. 1 and 3), Bumatai is orienting more towards “local people” because he begins the topic in Non-Standard English or Hawai'i Creole.

The switching from the above accents back to Hawai'i Creole also needs to be addressed. There are at least three such examples. Excerpt 1 shows the switching back from the Filipino accent. Bumatai quotes himself who is saying to Frank DeLima, “Brah, it's a good bit (.) you know” (l. 8). Bumatai is making a comment on an embedded parody explained above. Similarly, Excerpt 3 shows the switching back from the Midwestern accent. Bumatai contrasts the utterance in the Midwestern accent with a much shorter response in Hawai'i Creole, “Nah” (l. 7). Finally, Excerpt 5 shows the switching back from the British accent. Bumatai's utterance “We discover you, too, brah” (l. 6) is an example of doublevoicing. He is appropriating the discourse of

“discover” for his own purpose by inserting a new semantic intention into the dominant interpretation. It should be noted that these examples imply that code-switching as well as switching back can be a powerful tool for doublevoicing.

## 6. Conclusion

I have discussed a discursive practice in a local stand-up comedy routine based on a CD produced by Andy Bumatai, one of the leading local comics since the late 1970s. After defining the notion of hybridity as well as that of carnival, six excerpts from the CD are specified contextually and theoretically and examined by taking a sequential approach to the data. Particular attention is given to the use of code-switching as well as laughter and parody, two components of any carnivalistic act that intends to distort official views of reality.

Tentative conclusions can be drawn regarding two research questions raised in Section 1. First, it would be reasonable to maintain that quotation is the primary purpose of code-switching by Bumatai. He animates local people’s voice by switching into Hawai’i Creole and his use of code-switching usually coincides with a punch line in the story. Bumatai also uses various linguistic resources such as a tone of voice, laughter, and a mock accent (e.g. Mock Filipino, Mock Midwestern English, etc.) in order to animate other groups of people. Code-switching into Hawai’i Creole in particular enables Bumatai to align himself with the audience consisting mainly of local people. On the other hand, English plays an important role as the language of narration and it enables Bumatai to accommodate those who are not Pidgin speakers. In a sense, the use of Hawai’i Creole is only limited to creating a dramatic effect in certain parts of the story. Nevertheless, it also destabilizes the voice of authority in many cases as well. Bumatai uses Hawai’i Creole to establish ‘reality’ in the “No Flips in the pool” joke (Excerpt 2), and he uses it to assert an alternative ‘reality’ in the “Discover Britain” joke (Excerpt 5). In short, code-switching as well as language selection is a powerful tool for doublevoicing.

Second, Bumatai positions himself with respect to his audience in various ways. He constructed himself as a local Filipino (e.g. Excerpt 2) by using a Filipino accent as well as by making reference to categories such as family relations, place names, and pronouns. It can be assumed that he refers to these categories to formulate and reformulate his stories as something believable and convincing to the audience. Bumatai also performs as a Pidgin speaker (e.g. Excerpt 3) as well as a local (e.g. Excerpt 6) who is knowledgeable about local issues including ‘rough’ districts. However, when it comes to another ethnic reference, Hawaiian, his positionality as a local comic, who thus far is good at ‘juggling’ ethnic categories, turns out to be on rather shaky foundations (e.g. Excerpt 4 and 5).

Consequently, while engaging in the marginalization of Filipinos as the Other, Bumatai also leaves possibilities for carnivalistic acts to distort official views of reality. Some pieces of evidence as such can be found in Excerpt 1 (l. 6), Excerpt 3 (ll. 7 and 9), Excerpt 5, and Excerpt 6 (l. 12). The significance of language selection as well as switching (back) to Hawai’i Creole is addressed. It should be noted, however, that a carnivalistic practice is “just one manifestation of a more fundamental process which operates across the full range of culture whose political dimension is always going to be historically determined” (Humphrey 2000: 171).

The present study is limited in the sense that only Bumatai's CD is analyzed. Other stand-up comedy shows must be investigated. Nevertheless, little is known about the pragmatics of pidgin and creole languages. Hence, the present study provides a starting point for future projects on the discursive practice in Hawai'i Creole.

### Transcription conventions

.	Falling intonation
,	Continuing contour
?	Questioning intonation
(.)	Micropause
–	Emphasis
:	Sound stretching
(XXX)	Unable to transcribe
()	Unsure transcription
(( ))	Other details
↑	Prominent rising intonation
-	Abrupt cut-off
CAPS	Louder than surrounding talk
> <	Quicker than surrounding talk

### References

- Auer, P. (1998) *Code-switching in conversation*. London: Routledge.
- Bhabha, H. (1994) *The location of culture*. New York: Routledge.
- Bhabha, H. (1997) Life at the border: Hybrid identities of the present. *New Perspectives Quarterly* 14: 30-31.
- Bakhtin, M. (1984) *Problems of Dostoevsky's poetics* (C. Emerson, Trans.). Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Bauman, R. (1986) *Story, performance, and event: Contextual studies of oral narratives*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Bumatai, A. (2005, July) Andybumatai.com. Retrieved May 1, 2006 from the World Wide Web: <http://andybumatai.com/>
- Bumatai, A. (2003) *Brain child* [CD]. Honolulu: Hula Records International.
- Da Pidgin Coup (1999) Pidgin and education. Retrieved February 8, 2007 from the World Wide Web: <http://www.hawaii.edu/sls/pidgin.html>
- Forman, M.L., M.H. Kakalia, E.Y.C. Lau, & G.F. Tomita (1973, May). Schoolchildren of Kauai: Failures or resisters [Review of the book *The children of Kauai*]. *Hawaii Council of Teachers of English Paper* 20.
- Goffman, E. (1979) Footing. *Semiotica* 25: 1-2, 1-29.
- Gordon, R.G. Jr. (ed.). (2005) *Ethnologue: Languages of the world* (15th ed.). Dallas, Tex.: SIL International. Retrieved February 8, 2007 from the World Wide Web: <http://www.ethnologue.com/>

- Gumperz, J.J. (1982) *Discourse strategies*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Hall, K. (2005) Intertextual sexuality: Parodies of class, identity, and desire in liminal Delhi. *Journal of Linguistic Anthropology* 15.1: 125-144.
- Heritage, J. (2004) Conversation analysis and institutional talk: Analyzing data. In D. Silverman (ed.), *Qualitative research*. London: Sage Publications, pp. 222-245.
- Higgins, C. (2007) Shifting tactics of intersubjectivity to align indexicalities: A case of joking around in Swahili. *Language in Society* 36: 1-24.
- Hill, J.H. (2001) Language, race, and white space. In A. Duranti (ed.), *Linguistic anthropology: A reader*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, pp. 450-464.
- Humphrey, C. (2000) Bakhtin and the study of popular culture: Re-thinking carnival as a historical and analytical concept. In C. Brandist, & G. Tihanov (eds.), *Materializing Bakhtin: The Bakhtin circle and social theory*. Oxford: Macmillan Press Ltd., pp. 164-172.
- Hymes, D. (1975) Breakthrough into performance. In D. Ben-Amos, & K. Goldstein (eds.), *Folklore: Performance and communication*. Hague: Mouton, pp. 11-74.
- Jaffe, A. (2000) Comic performance and the articulation of hybrid identity. *Pragmatics* 10.1: 39-59.
- Kraidy, M. (2002) Hybridity in cultural globalization. *Communication Theory* 12: 316-339.
- Kua, C. (1999a, September 29) LeMahieu ponders pidgin's effect on state students' writing scores. *The Honolulu Star-Bulletin*. Retrieved July 14, 2002 from the World Wide Web: <http://starbulletin.com/1999/09/29/news/story4.html>
- Kua, C. (1999b, November 2) Speak pidgin, think pidgin, write pidgin? *The Honolulu Star-Bulletin*. Retrieved July 14, 2002 from the World Wide Web: <http://starbulletin.com/1999/11/02/news/story3.html>
- Labrador, R.N. (2004). "We can laugh at ourselves": Hawai'i ethnic humor, local identity and the myth of multiculturalism. *Pragmatics* 14.2-3: 291-316.
- Leeds, C. (1992) Bilingual Anglo-French humor: An analysis of the potential for humor based on the interlocking of the two languages. *Humor* 5.1-2: 129-148.
- Li, W. (2002) 'What do you want me to say?': On the conversation analysis approach to bilingual interaction. *Language in Society* 31.2: 159-180.
- Rampton, B. (2005) *Crossing language and ethnicity among adolescents*. Manchester: St. Jerome Publishing.
- Reinecke, J.E. (1969) *Language and dialect in Hawaii: A sociolinguistic history to 1935*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press.
- Rhodes, C. (2002) Coffee and the business of pleasure: The case of Harbucks vs. Mr. Tweek. *Culture and Organization* 8.4: 293-306.
- Romaine, S. (1994) Hawai'i Creole English as a literary language. *Language in Society* 23: 527-554.
- Romaine, S. (1999) Changing attitudes to Hawai'i Creole English: Fo' find one good job, you gotta know how fo' talk like one haole. In J.R. Rickford & S. Romaine (eds.), *Creole genesis, attitudes and discourse studies celebrating Charlene J. Sato*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Co., pp. 287-301.
- Scott, J.L.C. (1998) The serious side of ebonics humor. *Journal of English Linguistics* 26.2: 137-155.

- Sakoda, K., & J. Siegel (2003) *Pidgin grammar: An introduction to the creole language of Hawai'i*. Honolulu: Bess Press.
- Sato, C. (1989) A nonstandard approach to standard English. *TESOL Quarterly* 23: 259-282.
- Sato, C. (1991) Sociolinguistic variation and attitudes in Hawaii. In J. Cheshire (ed.), *English around the world: Sociolinguistic perspectives*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 647-663.
- Siegel, J. (1995) How to get a laugh in Fijian: Code-switching and humor. *Language in Society* 24.1: 95-110.
- Stolen, M. (1992) Codeswitching for humor and ethnic identity: Written Danish-American occasional songs. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development* 13.1-2: 215-228.
- Suzuki, G. (2004, September 15-21) Hawai'i comedy gets serious. *Honolulu Weekly*, pp. 6-7.
- Talmy, S. (2004) Forever FOB: The cultural production of ESL in a high school. *Pragmatics* 14.2/3: 149-172.
- Tsang, W.K., & M. Wong (2004) Constructing a shared 'Hong Kong identity' in comic discourses. *Discourse and Society* 15.6: 767-785.
- White, G.M., & A.B. Robillard (1989) Doctor talk and Hawaiian 'talk story': The conversational organization of a clinical encounter. In W. Rafter-Engel (ed.), *Doctor-patient interaction*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Company Co., pp. 197-211.
- Woolard, K.A. (1987) Code-switching and comedy in Catalonia. *Pragmatics* 1.1: 106-122.
- Young, R. (1995) Hybridity and diaspora. In R. Young, *Colonial desire: Hybridity in theory, culture, and race*. London: Routledge.