

***Straight Up Howzit? A Schema Analysis of The Role of Pidgin in Police Work in
Hawai'i***

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Abstract

While Hawai'i's multilingual and multicultural diversity is celebrated, the nature of multilingual practices in daily life is not well researched. To address this problem, this study draws on interview data to understand the role of languages other than English in the workplace, with a focus on Pidgin (Hawai'i Creole). I analyze interviews with three local police officers to better understand how they make use of Pidgin in their interaction with the community, and I use the officers' reports to construct a set of schemas that govern their language choices. The study demonstrates that Pidgin is a valued resource that is regularly used to empower Hawai'i police officers to connect to their constituents, create harmonious relationships, and resolve problems while on patrol.

Keywords: police officers, Pidgin, Hawai'i Creole, local culture, narratives, language, schema

Introduction

In the past several years, there has been a national spotlight in the US on police reform due to public outrage over clear cases of excessive police brutality. Researching everyday interactions between police and the communities they serve is important since these are sites where trust can be co-constructed. Trust may be established through language use, even in initial interactions between officers and the public. In this study, I investigate how police officers' reports of their language use relates to the building of trust and rapport with the public. This is in line with Chris Brumfit's definition of applied linguistics: it is "the theoretical and empirical investigation of real-world problems in which language is a central issue" (Brumfit, 1995, p. 27). A look into the Hawai'i context may answer questions about how to successfully build communication and trust between police and public. It is hoped that this study can suggest lines for further research of this nature with the aim of understanding how tensions arise in police-community interactions and with the goal of reducing and preventing harm.

Police officers in Hawai'i serve a community that is unique and much more multiculturally and multilingually diverse than in most of the United States. As such, it provides a useful context to examine how successful interactions between the police and community members might unfold, and as a context for understanding how multilingual practices can be a part of their success. Police officers respond to calls from a variety of people, including domestic visitors, international tourists with varying proficiencies of English, local born and non-local born residents. To start to understand how police officers achieve successful communication with the communities they serve, this study analyzes interviews with three police officers regarding Pidgin (also known as

Hawai'i Creole, or HC) as a communicative resource, and uses the officers' reports to construct a set of schemas that govern their language choices.

Literature Review

In the study to be reported here, I am primarily concerned with how communication between police and community members is facilitated. It is highly desirable that such communication be maximally effective. Lives are at stake. Two topics are of primary importance, and others follow.

One major way that we, as humans, arrive at understandings, is through shared schemata. A schema is an abstraction, some kind of form into which we fit preliminary understandings and develop subsequent ones. They can be considered to be both psychologically real and culturally-based. They structure our expectations of unfolding events. And when two people are not using the same schema there is great potential for communication not to be achieved, or for it to break down.

Obviously we communicate using language (including gaze, gesture, intonation, and all the range of pragmatics by which we additionally attempt to achieve shared understandings). For people in a particular cultural or linguistic setting, probably the most locally-accessible variety, or varieties, of language might be most likely to facilitate understanding (providing an appropriate schema is also available to interactants). In the case of Hawai'i, it is likely to be or to involve Pidgin.

In this section, I will first review basic ideas concerning schema. I then establish the practical issue that drives any applied linguistics study of policing - the dangers that follow any high stakes interaction between police and community members. I will then discuss the language importantly used in the location of this study, namely Pidgin, as a

language of Hawai'i. This will lead me to consider detailing what schemas guide Hawai'i police officers in their use of Pidgin.

Enacting social roles via schema

Schemas are generalized conceptual structures and representations of various related data involving events, actions, objects, contextual knowledge, and relationships. Schmit (2022, p. 117) explains that “they are road maps that show us how we got from one point to the next; they are molds that provide ready-made shapes for amorphous matter.” Strandell (2017, p. 26) posits that schemas are “inherently cultural.” Misunderstandings in intercultural communication go beyond inadequate linguistic proficiency; which include but are not limited to a clash of styles in formality and mismatch of schema (Zhu Hua, 2018).

The process of recognizing patterns and learning from them is a process of dynamic construction, where people make use of their individual learning histories to creatively make sense of the world (Oyserman, 2015). Schemas are what we need access to in order to make sense of the world. According to Nishida (2005), there are different types of schemas:

- Fact-and-concept schemas: general information about facts.
- Person Schemas: knowledge about different types of people, including personality traits, behavior, and preferences.
- Self Schemas: knowledge about social roles and behaviors that are expected of people in particular social positions.
- Context Schemas: information about the situation and appropriate settings of behavior parameters.

- Procedure Schemas: knowledge about the appropriate sequence of events in common situations.
- Strategy Schemas: knowledge about problem-solving strategies.
- Emotion Schemas: information about emotional states and affect association with events, activities or states.

Since schemas are systems of knowledge, cultural stereotypes do influence schemas.

Zhu Hua (2018) provides many examples showing how cultural stereotypes can affect interactions, and even lead to misunderstandings. It is not difficult to witness the presence of cultural stereotypes in everyday life in Hawai'i. Moreover, ownership of a language, and one's social response towards a language is a product of schemas.

Randles and Lauchs (2012) highlight that the ethical implications and awareness of schema may mitigate unintentional injustices, and even racism, within policing.

Race, policing, and politeness

Understanding how Pidgin functions in policing in Honolulu may provide insights into how interactions between police and community can be managed well. Much of the findings in the recent literature about policing in the United States show racial disparities in police interactions with the public and weak police-minority community relations (Braga et al., 2019; Stewart et al., 2017). While the field of applied linguistics has not addressed this topic in depth, there are a handful of studies that have examined the role of language in police-community relations. Filipović (2022) found that miscommunication arises in police-civilian interviews and interrogations whenever speech participants draw opposing inferences from communicative exchanges. Voigt et al. (2017) analyzed a corpus derived from police body-camera footage in Oakland that

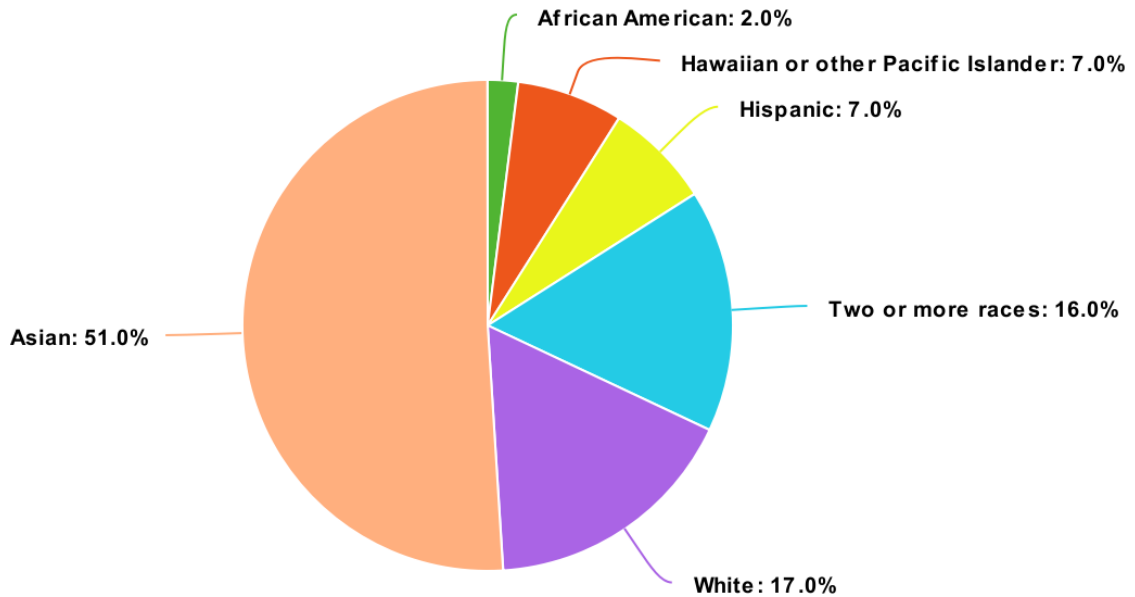
revealed that officers use less polite language with African-Americans than whites during everyday traffic stops for the same violations. In a separate part of this study, raters of initial police interaction recordings identified the following linguistic features as associated with politeness: apologizing, gratitude, and expressions of concern for citizen safety (Voigt et al., 2017). The latter part of the Oakland study opens an exploration of how police officers in Hawai'i report politeness in interactions.

Hawai'i

To further contextualize this study of policing and language in Hawai'i, I will be providing relevant statistics. Due to its archipelagic geography, each of the four counties in Hawai'i is responsible for its own police force. Hawai'i police officers are categorized under the public services umbrella, and are funded by local taxpayers to serve the people living within its jurisdiction. It comes to no surprise that Hawai'i is ranked at the top in terms of diversity, according to the 2020 U.S. Census Bureau. A little over 50% of the Hawai'i state population are local born, 27% are foreign born. Hawai'i, and its largest city, Honolulu, have a different racial climate than the other large cities and states. The City and County of Honolulu, located on the island of O'ahu, is not a predominantly white policing-minority community. For Honolulu, 51% are Asian; 17% White, 16% mixed-ethnicity, 7% Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander, 7% Hispanic, and 2% African-American (demographics of Honolulu are illustrated in Figure 1 below). This diversity can be reflected in the makeup of the local police force: 34% of Honolulu Police Department (HPD) officers are of Asian descent and 27% are of Native Hawaiian lineage (Loxterkamp, 2012).

Figure 1.

Honolulu Demographics. Source: U.S. Census Bureau



Locally, 1 in 4 of the population in Hawai'i speak a language other than English, of which 48% have reported that their English proficiency is less than "very well," as well as a total of 120 languages identified (Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism). Compounded with those statistics, Hawai'i's tourism industry generates 18 billion dollars annually, which is the major contributor to the Hawaiian economy. As a popular tourist destination, out of an annual approximate ten million visitors, about 3.5 million are international travelers, pre-COVID (Hawaii Tourism Authority, 2019). This diversity highlights the linguistic challenges in the workplaces of Hawai'i. Police officers in Hawai'i must be prepared to serve all constituents, who speak a range of languages. This study will explore how they use Pidgin, with whom, and to what ends.

Pidgin & Local Identity

Due to the previous statistics, 'local' is a sociopolitically constructed panethnic identity comprised of Asian and/or Pacific Islanders who were born and raised in the

islands (Labrador, 2022). Much of the literature defining 'local' juxtaposes it to what it is not. A significant structural factor in the emergence of the term 'local' is the presence of 'outsider' groups in Hawai'i (Weintraub, 1998). Okamura (1994, p. 176) finds "local identity, while not organized into a viable social movement, will continue in its significance for Hawaii's people if only because of their further marginalization through the ongoing internationalization of the economy and over-dependence on tourism." In all, this creates a local and lon-local dichotomy in terms of identity. Pidgin can function to project local identity. An identity that creates an insider-outsider speech community.

From the many cultures tied to plantation-era Hawai'i, Pidgin serves to unify local culture. The use of Pidgin promotes a sense of community (Lum, 2008) and the persistence of Pidgin among Pidgin speakers retain Pidgin as a marker of local identity (Sato, 1989a). Speakers of Pidgin exist on a continuum. Some speak a "heavy" or "strong" Pidgin, the basilectal form which is distinct from English. While others speak a "lighter" acrolectal form, which is closer to English. Majority of speakers speak varieties in between (Sakoda & Siegel, 2003). It is the language of the locals of Hawai'i and serves as a "badge of honor" (Da Pidgin Coup, 1999) towards the local identity. Pidgin can mark someone local, from someone that is not.

The value of Pidgin amongst locals has been explored. Although it is found that the use of English is still overall idealized in business and formal settings, a study by Marlow and Giles (2008) revealed that Pidgin is an important marker of local identity, and is used to establish solidarity, even in formal workplace talk and in exchanges with local clients in business. Pidgin facilitates talk amongst locals. And in the light of English, there is a covert prestige of Pidgin (Marlow & Giles, 2008, p. 64). In the general

service industry in Hawai'i, there is much value in Pidgin. So much so, a local cable company consulted applied linguists as Pidgin experts to train their offshore and outsourced third-party call center agents in Dominica in hopes to better reach local customers in Hawai'i. Higgins and Furukawa (2020) trained these customer service agents of the pragmatic uniqueness of Hawai'i local talk within the homogeneity confines of call center business practices.

Pidgin is also used as a communicative tool for communicating with local audiences. Choy's (2013) investigation of a local church on O'ahu found that a pastor's use of Pidgin helped establish connections towards sermon messages, brought levity to serious or difficult topics, and contributed to an inclusive atmosphere for both Pidgin and non-Pidgin speaking parishioners. When used playfully, Pidgin can be a positive resource in the classroom for a non-local born teacher (Lamb, 2015). Pidgin can be empowering, regardless of being local born or not.

This study uses interview data to make sense of how Pidgin is used in police work. I draw on the concept of schema as a cultural construct to analyze three police officers' culture-specific explanations for using Pidgin to enact their social roles and positions. Narratives of Hawai'i police officers are essential to discover the value of Pidgin in policing as a part of their schemas while at work. This current study is guided by the following research questions: 1) how does Pidgin facilitate communication between Hawai'i police officers' and the community that they serve?; and 2) What schemas guide their use of Pidgin?

Methodology

Procedure of Data Collection

Initially, ethnographic field methods were identified as an ideal approach to understanding how police use language in their work. However, due to delays and difficulties with human subjects clearance, I chose to conduct interviews with officers in order to obtain their reports of language use at work. While an interactional, first-hand account would be ideal, recounts of past events is also useful for establishing an understanding of how language is used on a regular basis. Narrative retellings and explanations of past experience also provide researchers with metalinguistic data in the form of commentary on retellings of past events that can be useful for unveiling beliefs and value systems that guide people's linguistic choices.

Narrative accounts of policing in Hawai'i were sought out by starting with my personal contacts. Narratives are stories. Block (2015) stated that while stories can be elicited by a variety of means (e.g. diaries, electronic logs), face-to-face interviews have become the elicitation mode of choice. I conducted semi-structured interviews and used my iPhone to record the audio (see interview questions provided in Appendix A). Each interview averaged about 45 minutes. After each interview was conducted, I uploaded the audio file to Sonx.ai for transcription. This AI software enabled transcriptions to be edited line by line with corresponding audio chunks for me to ensure accuracy. To ensure methodological integrity, after I summarized the findings, participants were invited to read the findings relevant to their responses and provide feedback.

Data Analysis

Once I transcribed the data, I labeled any mention of Pidgin in a participant's speech. Next, I identified categories of Pidgin use. I then related these categories to the schema types (from Nishida, 2005). I drew on schemas as a form of "brought along"

knowledge (Giddens, 1979) that the participants enacted when explaining their language choices while on the job. Their interviews contained narratives that provided illustrations of instantiation, that is stories that were told but represented recurring experiences (Tannen, 1989, p. 111). The many experiences they had at work were recounted through these stories, allowing me to see what schemas they drew on to strategically use Pidgin in their interactions.

In analysis, I examine the storied worlds that the officers presented me with in which Pidgin played a role. Storied worlds are what Bamberg (1997) refers to as Level 1 positioning in narrative analysis, where plots are told and characters are created through talk. I use italics to denote the storied worlds in the excerpts (see Appendix B for full transcription conventions). Unitalicized words in the data point to Level 2 (Bamberg, 1997), or the storytelling world, where the officers were engaged in commenting on the storied worlds through evaluative judgements and opinionated statements about language use. Finally, while there is no standard, widely used orthography for Pidgin, Eye Dialect has been incorporated in transcription to make a distinction of Pidgin from English. Eye Dialect is a literary method to portray speech patterns visually in print.

Participants

Three HPD police officers, from researcher's personal contacts, were approached for their willingness to be participants in this current study. Reaching out to personal contacts were valuable to this research, since rapport and trust was already

established prior to data collection. Relationships already established between research participants and researcher mitigated possible uneasiness that may stem from intrusive questions about workplace language practices and on the job police procedures. As a language researcher, being an insider within the Pidgin speaking community was also valuable when conducting interviews with the police officers about Pidgin.

All three participants self-identified as males, in their 30's, as 1.5 or second-generation immigrant backgrounds who speak varying degrees of their heritage languages. Don and Jay report being able to speak Korean fluently, while Rick has receptive skills of Filipino and low speaking proficiency. Don and Rick are local born individuals and are Pidgin speakers. Jay immigrated to California in his early teens and moved to Hawai'i for employment in HPD. He reports to have some receptive abilities of Pidgin and is learning to speak it as an additional language. Pseudonyms were assigned to keep real identities hidden.

All three participants are patrol officers and have done their field training in both Waikiki District and District 1 of Honolulu, which covers Downtown Honolulu to Ala Moana Beach, including Aloha Tower (Honolulu Police Department, 2023). Rick and Jay remain employed in District 1, while after a few years, Don transferred to a more rural jurisdiction with a larger population of local residents. He is now assigned to District 3, which covers the area from Red Hill to Village Park and includes Waipahu and Pearl City (Honolulu Police Department, 2023). All three patrol officers have an average of five years of employment in HPD. Background summary of the Hawai'i police officers are provided in a table below.

Table 1

Participants

	Age	Years on force	Local status	Immigrant generation	Heritage	Heritage language fluency	Pidgin speaker
Participant 1 Don	30	< 5	Local born	2nd	Korean	Fluent	Yes
Participant 2 Rick	33	> 5	Local born	2nd	Filipino	Low	Yes
Participant 3 Jay	35	< 5	Not local born	1.5	Korean	Fluent	No

Findings**Schema-based Analysis**

While schemas may be layered or even interwoven with other schemas in interaction, I have chosen to identify distinct schemas in the analysis below to show how the officers depicted their sense-making practices for using Pidgin in their narratives of police work.

1. Self Schema

With Self Schema, interpretations of encounters and perception of feedback within encounters enables conscious alignment or misalignment towards expectations. Below, I will illustrate the ways in which patrol officers described Self Schema with their Pidgin-use and non-use. Subsequently, I will list other schemas with the officers' experiences and navigating expectations of Pidgin in police work. In turn, I will be identifying any schema that is salient in all excerpts for analysis.

The excerpts in Self schema will show that Pidgin does reach a broader audience for one particular officer, and the decision making behind not utilizing Pidgin for another.

Excerpt 1 Rick: Pidgin reaches a broader audience

1 It's funny because in today's department majority or there's new guys that come
2 from the mainland, right? So they're proper in English. So to me that's kind of,
3 how should I say, like a different language when you speak, right? cuz growing
4 up, coming from a plantation style housing, right? Where Pidgin was a way of
5 communicating, if you didn't know how to communicate to someone, you broke
6 down your English to simplify for them to understand. So like when you watch,
7 when you observe a mainland person speak, it's so proper. Like someone who's
8 from the island, probably heavy in Pidgin, will look at him like, *What the fuck are*
9 *you talking about?* Like *what?* Right? Just simplifying it and breaking it down. I
10 know this helps out. That's when I will step in and I'll be like, *Bra::ddah man,*
11 *right? All you got to do is just listen to unko over here. Just fucking calm down,*
12 *relax, and, you know, let's have a conversation,* right? And then you feed off their
13 conversation. You vibe off of that like certain keywords you think that you can key
14 in that they use, right? Because that's what Pidgin is all about, right? Keying in
15 on how they use the slang, right? Compared to like you use proper English and
16 they're like, they're thinking about what is that word mean, right? So or in their
17 mind is someone that speaks not too good English and heavy for like Ilokano.
18 They're trying to comprehend what you're saying, but when you speak proper
19 English, you're moving too fast for them. So when you break it down like *a::untie,*
20 *Do:: you:: li::ke d::is?* Right? Rather than, *Hi ma'am, is this what you want?*
21 Right? It's just different. Just wording it because in some language the words are
22 flipped. So yeah, it just helps them out.

Rick deploys Pidgin on the job with everyone. In Excerpt 1, Rick mentions his experiences that Pidgin reaches a broader audience, especially in light of mainland

English speaking partners. In Rick's Self schema, Pidgin is expected to be more comprehensible and linguistically more accessible for local residents, including those who have English as their second language.

Excerpt 2 Jay: Non-Pidgin use

- 1 S: Any instances of using Pidgin on the job?
2 J: So I myself don't use Pidgin or don't try not to use Pidgin just because A, I
3 don't know how to speak Pidgin. So therefore, A, I'll look like, you know, this
4 is out of place and B, you know, that could actually trigger it might in my
5 case that, you know, I think that that could actually trigger the other person.
6 In a bad way. You know what I mean? So I haven't used Pidgin.

Excerpt 3 Jay: Outsider to Pidgin

- 1 S: Would you ever call yourself a Pidgin speaker?
2 J: Absolutely not (.) Why would I ever consider myself a Pidgin speaker? Yeah,
3 I mean, as of right now, No. Or down the line? Um (.) I don't know. You don't
4 know? I don't know. I think that's again, going back to what I said earlier is
5 like, you've got to- I would have to actually invest time and effort to
6 understand and learn the Pidgin language so that A, I can understand
7 myself and, B when I speak it, people can understand it. And three, C, it's
8 like when an outsider speaks Pidgin, you know, a lot of locals, from my
9 understanding, there's a lot of local people A can, you know, figure it out
10 right away that, oh, this is a not a local person trying to speak Pidgin, which
11 to some people, including myself, maybe could be taken as, you know,
12 disrespectful or you know what I mean (.) So, um. Yeah, that's- I guess
13 down the line. I would have to see.

Jay positions himself as an outsider of the Pidgin speaking community. Being of Korean heritage and with a light complexion may play a role in his decision in not

deploying Pidgin. He chooses to 'other' himself. His Self Schema is that it is socially unacceptable for him to speak as a local, inappropriate to enact the social role of being a fellow Hawai'i resident while in uniform, since he is new to Hawai'i. He expects locals to see it as "disrespectful" in line 12. Although he opens Excerpt 3 not being a speaker of Pidgin, he concludes that with a serious consideration in investment in time learning the language, there is a slight possibility in the future.

2. Procedure Schema

In the excerpts below, the officers tell stories that relate best to their Procedure Schema, or knowledge about the appropriate *sequence* of events in certain situations. What will be shown are the appropriacy of Pidgin in initial interactions and in heated situations while on patrol. From their stories, it becomes clear that Pidgin is a useful resource for building rapport and de-escalate.

Excerpt 4 Don: Polite greeting

- 1 S: How do you greet? You can give me an example.
- 2 D: So it depends if it's like a:: because the first thing I do is I look at the kind of
- 3 person I'm talking to. If it's like an auntie like a local auntie, then, well, *howzit*
- 4 *auntie? How can I help you today?* Or if it's like a business like like a white,
- 5 you know, not from here from the mainland kind, you know what I mean?
- 6 Then it's more like, *how's it going, sir?* Like I. I don't talk as much Pidgin. It's
- 7 more. I try to talk proper, like it goes off and on and depending on the
- 8 person. Yeah, but for the most part, most people from where I work is from
- 9 here. So it's more like, *how::zit?* Really relaxed.

Excerpt 5 Rick: Polite greeting

- 1 S: How do you greet all like, all these different types of people? You can give

2 me examples.

3 R: *Straight up howzit?* And if they don't understand. Hi. And if they don't
4 understand, aloha.

5 S: Okay.

6 R: Right? At least that's one common thing I noticed they understand, is hi or
aloha.

Excerpt 6 Rick: Polite greeting

1 Well, it's just the Haole tourist is just when they hear howzit, right? They think it's
2 a local thing. Because you know what's funny too? Is a tourist will think Aloha is
3 a tourist thing. So when they hear the word, howzit? They're like- *hey, it's just like*
4 *the movies*, right? So I use it as a way to find that that common ground with them
5 to connect, because that's what the job is, right? It's just finding that common
6 ground to connect. So that way you can build a rapport and establish a
conversation with them, right?

In these excerpts, Don and Rick utilize Pidgin, within their Procedure Schema, when making initial interactions with the public. Pidgin-use at the start, in the way of polite greeting, is deemed appropriate for them when enacting their social role as patrol officers. Don differs in Rick's sequencing of Pidgin-use as a polite greeting. Don reserves Pidgin for instances with local residents, while Rick initiates interactions utilizing Pidgin to all, regardless if the person he addresses is a local resident or a visiting tourist. His second option, utilizing 'Ōlelo (name of the Hawaiian language), enables him to further enact another social role: as an ambassador of Hawai'i and Hawai'i local culture. In Excerpt 6, lines 3-4, he elaborates that Pidgin is known through Hollywood-produced films as a marker for locals, marking himself as a local resident. Although both officers have positive views of Pidgin, Don sees English-use as a more

proper way of greeting non-locals via Excerpt 4, line 7. Serving different jurisdictions may play a role in having differing schema as Don mentions in Excerpt 4, lines 8-9: "most people from where I work is from here. So it's more like, *how::zit?* Really relaxed." Rick's jurisdiction, District 1, covers an area with more tourist attractions than Don's area.

Excerpt 7 Rick: De-escalate via humor and compliments

- 1 S: Top of your head, you have any go to's on like trying to, openers to make
2 this guy laugh?
- 3 R: Depends. So it really depends on the person. So like if it's some guy that's
4 portraying to be hard, right? I'll bump in and I'll say, *Hey, you know what?*
5 *Fuck this guy. Come over here, we go talk stories.* Right? lidat. *And da guy*
6 *will just look at me like you just disrespected your partner.* And I'm like, *Oh,*
7 *you know, it is what it is. He'll. He'll get over it.* It's stuff like that. Or I'll just
8 come in and I'll be like, *ho, nice your shirt ah, unko. Where you got dat*
9 *from?* Something like that. And then, you know, some guys are prideful
10 about their brand of shirts they wear. So they're like, *ho yeah, this is from*
11 *Hawai'i's Finest from so-and-so. Yeah, I like dis,* you know, stuff like that.
12 Yeah? It's just being on the job, you learn that people take pride in certain
13 things and when you look at them, you can kinda understand what they take
14 pride in their shirts. I mean, the shirts could be clean, everything else all
15 dirty. You know, they take pride of their shirts. Yeah. So that's one of the
16 things I look for.

In this excerpt, Rick utilizes Pidgin, within his Procedure Schema, as a de-escalation tactic. In lines 4-5, in the storied world he portrays, he interrupts a heated interaction his patrol partner is having by insulting his own colleague and mentions to his intended addressee, the upset civilian, with "we go talk stories." This changes the

context of interaction: from a difficult police-driven interview to a more informal conversation, such as a check-in of wellbeing. This is parallel to politeness strategies found in previous policing literature: apologizing and expressions of concern for citizen safety (Voigt et al, 2017). Rick dismissing his own colleague is a cold, but an indirect way of apologizing to the civilian he addresses, compounded with Pidgin-use, to attempt an opening towards a polite conversation without his own colleague. The expected politeness towards a colleague was a subversion of the addressee's Procedure Schema as well.

In the storied world of lines 10-11, compliment giving in his interactions with local residents, in Pidgin, was another example he reported as another de-escalation tactic. He used Pidgin to give a compliment about someone's t-shirt, thereby acknowledging what locals value and take pride in. Deploying Pidgin, via compliment giving, is effective in mitigating tensions. Both insulting-style humor and compliments in Pidgin were deemed appropriate in Rick's Procedure Schema. Next, we will move on to Don and Rick's Strategy Schema, where they express knowledge about problem-solving strategies.

3. Strategy Schema

Strategy Schema is knowledge about problem-solving strategies. Below, I demonstrate how Hawai'i patrol officers deploy Pidgin for strategic effects.

Excerpt 8 Don: Reduce power differential

- 1 D: So going back to Pearl City where like that's where I grew up and the Pidgin
- 2 that's spoken over there is like by a lot of Asian people too, right?
- 3 S: Yeah, Yeah.

4 D: So it's more comfortable for me to, like, speak to people. So all the time it's,
5 it's, it's [Pidgin] right off the bat. Like, people open up to you way more, way
6 more if you speak to them, comfortably, because the uniform itself is kind of
7 intimidating. Yeah. So it's hard for them to relate. And once you, this is my
8 opinion, like if you get rid of that authority, factor out of it, you know, and
9 show them that you're just a person too. Just try to help them out. It makes it
10 easier.

Excerpt 9 Rick: Rapport repair

1 So, like, if you see your partner struggling, right? And the person doesn't quite
2 understand, you as a secondary person should start to read off the person and
3 say, okay, what does he understand? What can I use? What kind of solutions can
4 I go in and present myself as? So that way the conversation can turn and it can
5 be more conversing rather than argumentative or just both going two separate
6 ways, right? Yeah. So one of the tings will be, um- I like to come in and start off
7 fresh. So like, if my partner is having trouble, I'll come in and I'll say something
8 stupid and get the person to laugh. I was like, *Oh, you understood that? Okay,*
9 *let's work off that, right? Because sometimes when I notice you're speaking to*
10 *my beat partner, they're going to be like, Oh, this person is an idiot, He doesn't*
11 *understand me.* And you kind of want to come in as a fresh face because guess
12 what? We're wearing the same uniform. So his perspective is, *Oh, the next guy*
13 *is the same thing as this guy.* So I'll come in, I'll say something stupid just to joke
14 around and it kind of gets them to reset. And then when you start talking to them
15 and you're like, okay, *how can I help you?* How can we find this common ground
16 to understand each other? Like, one of the things I like to do is let them talk right
17 when they talk and you let them ramble off for a bit, you start noticing, Okay. His
18 slang is a little bit different from my Pidgin slang because there's different type of
19 slang. Right? So then you start adjusting to it. So and then I like to say my
20 English is somewhat proper, but when you talk to someone full blown Pidgin

21 man, you got to get down to that level. I'm talking about, *Ho, uncle, that ting ovah*
22 *dea*, that kind of shit, right? Because I just. I just noticed *br::ah* proper English
23 just fucks everything up. So to me, it's about vibing, right? If this person is full on
24 Pidgin and you drop your, you drop your vibe or whatever you're presenting to
25 them, at that level, it becomes more communicatable for both sides.

Excerpts from these participating patrol officers reference uniform-wearing (Excerpt 8, line 6; Excerpt 9, line 12). Don and Rick both recognize that the general public view the uniform as unsympathetic, inhospitable, and “intimidating.” Both patrol officers acknowledge that a Strategy Schema is needed when in uniform conducting their police work. Don reports deploying Pidgin “right off the bat” in Excerpt 5, line 5, to humanize himself from the uniform and to enact a shared social role of a local resident of the area that he patrols. Here, we see Pidgin reduces the power differential of an in-uniform authority figure.

Rick, in the latter half of Excerpt 9, reports matching basilectal Pidgin as a resource for rapport repair. Both officers, equipped with native Pidgin proficiency, notice that local residents feel more comfortable whenever Pidgin is deployed. Rick explicitly reports that speaking in English is not appropriate in his Strategy Schema and it is more communicable “for both sides” of interactions to speak in Pidgin, in lines 22-25 of Excerpt 9. In the following excerpt, Rick reports another successful example of deploying basilectal Pidgin for a specific strategy. Here we see once more Rick’s Self Schema of the appropriacy of Pidgin, specifically in greetings: his addressees expect it.

Excerpt 10 Rick: Initiate collaboration

1 When there's a big fight, that one officer shows up, your cover could be 50
2 minutes away flying it because it's a one way in one way out highway. Right?
3 And you got three officers spread out in that big location. So communication is
4 key. And like I said, you got to be able to- West side people, their their their
5 Pidgin is (.) It's Pi::dgin over there. Right? You got to be able to talk. You got to
6 be able to handle it. You got to be able to turn on good cop, bad cop, right? So
7 you come in as good cop because the next cop coming in, he's coming in hot, so
8 he's probably going to be bad. So you play yourself as good and then the next
9 officer comes in rushing in for a fight, right? He's gonna be like, *what the fuck is*
10 *going on?* Blah, blah, blah, blah. So we already established that, *Oh, he's a good*
11 *guy.* I just *fuck, fuck him. I'll go talk to him.* Right? So being in the West side, you
12 got to have good verbal communication. You got to be able to break it down and
13 be like, *Ho, unko, dose your guys? You in charge? Can you tell dem, cut this shit*
14 *out because I no like, shut down da party, right? You gotta cut da shit out.*
15 *People calling, right?*

Rick starts his storied world by awaiting back-up to a noise disturbance call in rural West O'ahu, an area he reports that basilectal Pidgin is essential to problem solving in police work. In line 13, he identifies community members' roles and strategically problem solves with "unko," the hypothetical adult male host of the loud party. Rick collaborates and problem solves in Pidgin, that the party can continue if his request of lowering the noise level will be followed. In this instance, Pidgin is delivered with his *Good Cop Bad Cop* tactic in his Strategy Schema.

4. Person Schema

Finally, I turn to Person Schema, which refers to the knowledge we have about different types of people as informing our actions. It includes behavior and preferences.

Person Schema will shed light on Pidgin use in Hawai'i police officers, and how their degree of local-born appearance affects the reception of their use of Pidgin.

Excerpt 11 Don: Officer with non-local born appearance

1 Dealing with like local unkos that are really pissed off all da time. I try to talk
2 with them and it doesn't work. They're not getting I'm not getting to them.
3 Also, I don't look like I'm from here. I look like I from Korea. So um when I
4 talk with them, they no like talk to me. A lot of times. But then if I have a
5 partner, like a big Hawaiian local braddah, like just talking with them in Pidgin
6 all the time, they'll like instantly calm down and be like- *I no like talk to dis,*
7 *dis, dis Korean guy* or like this. *Dis guy, dis Asian guy. I don't want to talk to*
8 *him. He not from here. He won't understand.* And between my partners and
9 him, like other people, easy, like they'll be able to communicate, they're able
10 to fix whatever problems we have at the time.

Excerpt 12 Don: Officer with non-local born appearance, continued

1 D: Yeah, because like, even though I'm from here, like I said, I don't look like
2 I'm from here for the most part, right? Or I don't look like I would speak
3 Pidgin much and or so. And to me, I feel like I'm part of the same culture.
4 Right? But then there's one time. It was actually D1 and (.) What? You know,
5 it was a domestic argument call, you know, and we had to, like, get the
6 boyfriend. I think it was the husband. So we were. We had to leave the
7 house for a little bit. *You cannot come back here. And he's like, No, you jus*
8 *gonna have to shoot me.* And me being the new guy, you know, I try to step
9 in and try to do most of the talking. And *unko, you know, we just want to help*
10 *you guys out* and say, only when I call him uncle, he's like, *I ain't your*
11 *fucking unko.* I'm like, but then all the other guys who look like they're from
12 here are saying that, and he's only saying that to me. So maybe like that
13 that because that (.) that always sticks when I speak or, you know, when

- 14 like, my Pidgin comes out. I'm like, oh, I know it looks kind of weird because
15 I- especially at work when my hair is up.
16 *Oh, you slick um back.*
17 S: Yeah, yeah. I look. Yeah, *I slick um back* because my hair is kinda long.
18 Yeah. So. I look like very proper, like K-Pop star sometimes.

Excerpts 11 and 12 are reactions of some local residents when Don speaks Pidgin. His attempts to enact his social role as a fellow local resident sometimes backfires due to not having a stereotypically darker complexion of a Hawai'i local, and more so as a foreigner: like a "K-Pop star" in Excerpt 12, line 18. Rather than further attempts to establish himself as a local, he gives in to that positioning of 'othering'. In Don's Person Schema, he accepts that his complexion does not match that of a Pidgin speaker and that it may cause a hindrance in his patrol. In the storied world of Excerpt 11, lines 7-8, he voices the concerns of local residents: "*I don't want to talk to him. He not from here. He won't understand.*" In comparison to Jay's Self Schema of non-Pidgin-use due to non-Pidgin ownership, Don has a misalignment in expected Pidgin reception despite having pride in the language. Moreover, having Pidgin-ownership and pride does not guarantee successful reception.

Excerpt 13 Rick: *On non-local born officers*

- 1 Because he's like, he's from New York and he's trying Pidgin and I'm like, Oh,
2 you don't need to try that hard. He's like, Hey, brother, this, that cause cause this
3 cause that. I'm like, Oh, bro. And the local guys over there. Oh, you'd hear *da*
4 *local guy. ho:: bra::ddah, you fucking the shit up* [laughter] and this shit like that.
5 But it's funny. And I say it's funny because that person really tries to integrate
6 himself. And yes, it does turn off some guys in a funny way. It turns him off for it.

7 It's welcoming because the guy will laugh. And *then da hardest* speaking Pidgin
8 local out there for some reason at times will turn into the most proper English
9 ever. I'm like, whoa, this changed totally. And then you'd see and then you see
10 the white guy, the white cop be like, Oh, man, it worked. I'm like, No, he got you.
11 He got you. *He turned up da English for you*. Yeah, but yeah, it's stuff *lidat*.

Rick reports of a non-local patrol officer activating Person Schema: locals use Pidgin. This police officer, struggling with his attempts of Pidgin, leads to speech accommodation: locals responding in English, "*da hardest* speaking Pidgin local out there for some reason at times will turn into the most proper English ever" in lines 7-9. Sometimes, Pidgin-use attempts by a non-Pidgin speaker can be received lightheartedly by locals.

Discussion

The findings of this study deepen our understanding of how Hawai'i police officers achieve successful communication with the communities that they serve. The first research question was: how does Pidgin facilitate communication between Hawai'i police officers' and the community that they serve? The interview data showed that for these police officers, Pidgin is useful for greetings and building rapport, reducing the power differential with the people they are serving, de-escalating tension through humor, and inviting collaborative problem solving. In other words, Pidgin use in police work is a politeness strategy. In heated situations, deploying Pidgin can mitigate the police-civilian distance, de-escalate, and even initiate collaboration. In rural parts of Hawai'i, comprehending and deploying basilectal Pidgin is reported by these officers to be essential for problem-solving in police work. In contrast to English, it is more polite to

speak in Pidgin. Pidgin is also more comprehensible and linguistically more accessible for local residents with low English proficiency.

The second research question was: what schemas guide police officers' use of Pidgin? Excerpts in Self schema have shown that valuing Pidgin influenced an officer's decision to deploy Pidgin in all initial interactions on the job. His use of Pidgin was welcomed by a broad audience, to visiting tourists and residents with low English proficiency. Within Procedure Schema, Pidgin was deemed polite in initial greetings, and appropriate for de-escalation via humor and compliment giving. As for Strategy Schema, Pidgin can be effectively deployed to reduce power differential, rapport repair, initiate collaboration.

Mismatch of schema led to "othering" of local-identity was an unexpected finding. For one officer, his attempts to enact his social role as a fellow local resident sometimes backfires due to not having a stereotypical complexion of a Hawai'i local. Locals speak Pidgin. However, Pidgin is received more positively when an officer exhibits traits of a local. The traits go beyond Pidgin proficiency and may include having a local appearance as well. Rather than further attempts to establish himself as a local, he accepts that his complexion does not match that of another local's Person Schema of a Pidgin speaker. Even though the use of Pidgin is a marker of Local identity, having pride in the language does not constitute a guarantee of its reception. This makes the deployment of Pidgin complex and not straightforward. Regardless, a Person Schema can still be constructed among Hawaii police officers' that local residents prefer speaking with officers who exhibit local traits.

Pidgin use can lead to English accommodation or even sometimes backfire, despite being a local-born police officer. Stereotypes and appearance break local and non-local binary of Pidgin-use from the reported reception of these Hawai'i police officers. In all, Pidgin-ownership can empower Hawai'i police officers to connect to local residents and tourists alike while on patrol.

There are limitations of this study. Having a larger research participant size may help in identifying possibly more salient schema of and for the Hawai'i police force. This can bring further understanding of strategic and effective deployment of Pidgin for specific purposes on the job. Furthermore, approaches of data triangulation may bolster findings of this study. One way would be including observational data such as ride-along ethnography. Ethnographic data can show schema in action in analysis, as well as the development of more precise interview questions of Pidgin use on the job. Potential follow-up study of this research may consider inviting a collaboration with the Honolulu Police Department.

This study aims to meet the central goal of applied linguistics, which is to “[investigate] real-world problems in which language is a central issue” (Brumfit, 1995, p. 27). This investigation of the Hawai'i context may answer questions about how to successfully build communication and trust between police and public, drawing on Pidgin as a key resource in this process. It is hoped that this study can suggest lines for further research of this nature with the aim of understanding how tensions arise in policy-community interactions and with the goal of reducing and preventing harm. It is likely that politeness and rapport building strategies in all linguistic contexts are

deserving of further attention, with consideration of how to exploit a deeper understanding of these strategies in police training and police work.

Conclusion

The aim of this study was to explore how Pidgin facilitated communication between Hawai'i police officers' and the community that they serve. Factors that contributed to Pidgin-use and non-use were also discussed. Analysis of narratives directly from three Hawai'i police officers, showed the value of Pidgin and its use in five ways how they navigate in policing and interacting with people in their diverse community. It is hoped that this small study will contribute to a better understanding of Pidgin-use in a local workplace setting, especially in the matters of high-stakes interactions such as law enforcement. This knowledge is valuable for all police officers who choose to serve their diverse community in Hawai'i. Foregrounding language and language use in police work research may help prevent instances of unnecessary police violence. More studies that explore language diversity can be empowering, even in the presence of prejudice in other police contexts outside of Hawai'i.

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Appendix A

Interview Questions

Background information

- Preferred pseudonym:
- Age:
- Heritage language fluency:
- Generation:
- Years on police force:
- Languages you know:
- How did you learn them?

Interacting with the public

- What kind of people do you meet on the job?
- How do you greet them?
- What are your communication strategies?
- Communicating in another language, to what degree are you open to it?
- What kind of languages do you encounter on the job?
- What are your personal (language) resources? Tell me an instance of it.
- Tell me an experience of a non-English language on the job? (positive and negative)
- Any other language and communication stories about your job that you want to share?

Hawai'i & Pidgin

- Do you speak Pidgin on the job as a police officer?
- Tell me an experience of Pidgin on the job?
- Are you a Pidgin speaker? Why or why not?
- In terms of languages, tell me how different it is policing here compared to outside of Hawai'i?
- In your own words, what is "Hawai'i local" culture?

- Do you think there is a learning curve to “Hawai'i local” culture?
- Any stories of “culture-difference” on the job in Hawai'i? If so, how was it navigated?

Honolulu Police Department

- Describe HPD values?
- For you, describe the ideal HPD police officer?
- Are you on the *Annual HPD Employees with Foreign Language List*?
- Any perks, such as a hiring advantage?
- Ever used a translator on the job?
- Ever been a translator for another officer?
- One of the guidelines, I have read, is to ask a bystander or family member if they could be a translator. Any instances of doing that?
- What are the policies in place when in touch with a call regarding a non or low-level English speaker? (institutional set of guidance on interactions with people with low English proficiency)
- What language(s) do you see a need for police officers to have communication strategies in Hawai'i? Why? Any personal reasons?
- In your academy, how many of you were local born vs nonlocal born?
- Language training available for pre-service & HPD officers?
- How important is it to know different languages for this job? Any benefits or advantages?
- What kind of language and communication training is ideal for your job in Hawai'i??

Appendix B

Transcription Conventions. In excerpted transcripts, all emphases have been added:

,	a short, untimed pause (roughly 0.5 seconds)
(.)	an untimed paused roughly less 0.5 to 1.0 seconds
But-	dashes indicate an abrupt cut-off to the sound
Li::ke	colons to show a sound being drawn out, marking emphasis
<i>Braddah</i>	Italicized words to denote storied world
Howzit	Eye Dialect to denote Pidgin