

This exhibit has been produced by members of Da Pidgin Coup in conjunction with the Hawai'i Council for the Humanities. The exhibit was designed by Dr. Christina Higgins and Andrew Choy (Department of Second Language Studies, UH-Mānoa). Support for the project was provided by Dr. John Rosa (Department of History, UH-Mānoa) and Marlene Booth (Academy for Creative Media, UH-Mānoa). For more information about the exhibit, please contact Christina Higgins at [cmhiggin@hawaii.edu](mailto:cmhiggin@hawaii.edu).

**We like taenk all dese people for dea kokua:**

John Allen II and Candy Suiso, Searider Productions  
 Thomas Bingham, Dean of the College of Arts and Humanities, UH-Mānoa  
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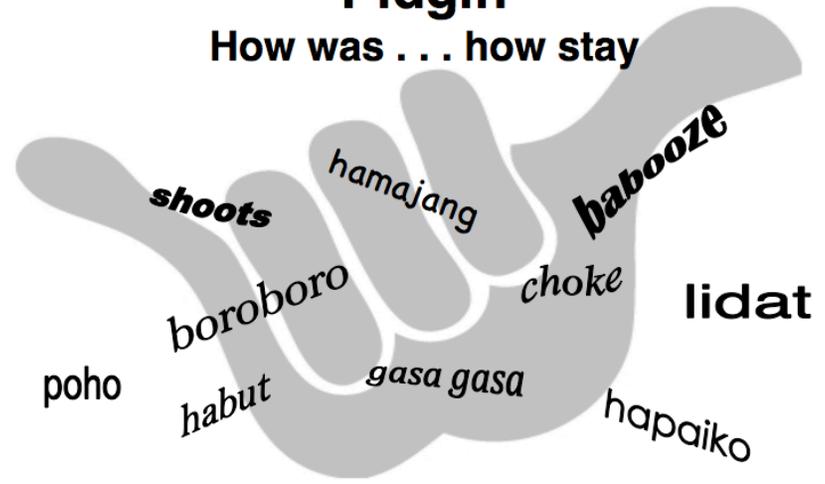
**Charlene Sato Center for  
 Pidgin, Creole and Dialect Studies**

University of Hawai'i at Manoa  
 Department of Second Language Studies



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**Pidgin  
 How was . . . how stay**



babooze	idiot (Portuguese)
boroboro	work clothes, beat-up clothing (Japanese)
choke	a lot, many (English)
gasagasa	rambunctious, rascally (Japanese)
habut	pout (Japanese <i>habuteru</i> )
hamajang	messed up (unknown, but likely Hawaiian and English)
hapai ko	carry cane (Hawaiian)
li'dat	like that, in that way (English)
poho	what a waste (Hawaiian)
shoots	yes, right on, OK (English)

**Wot Pidgin?**

*Pidgin* (with a capital P) is the common way of referring to what linguists call Hawai'i Creole. This language first emerged on sugar plantations in Hawai'i during the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries and is still spoken today by the majority of people who grew up in the State of Hawai'i. Many people who live in Hawai'i are multilingual, as they speak Pidgin, English, and other languages like Hawaiian, Samoan, Japanese, Tagalog, Korean, Cantonese, etc.

**Wot da difference between one pidgin an one creole?**

The terms *pidgin* and *creole* are technical terms that linguists use to distinguish between two very different forms of speech. The term *pidgin* refers to a simplified language that develops as a means of communication between two or more groups that do not have a language in common. Many pidgins have been developed around the world because of trade, plantation systems, and maritime activities. People who speak a true pidgin language speak a different language as their mother tongue. In Hawai'i, the first and second generations of immigrants typically spoke mother tongues such as Cantonese, Japanese, Portuguese, Okinawan, and Ilokano. They spoke the pidgin language, Pidgin English, to communicate across ethnic lines on

plantations. In contrast, *creoles* are the languages that are developed by the children of pidgin speakers. As the second and third generations grow up and spend time together, they expand the vocabulary, pronunciation, and grammar since they use this language as their main way to communicate with one another for many hours a day. The second and third generations are considered to be *native speakers* of creole languages, and some of them may not even speak an additional language at all. In Hawai'i, many people were bilingual in Pidgin and in their ethnic languages in the early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, but over time, many residents lost their ethnic languages due to forces that encouraged assimilation to American norms.



### Local kine literature wit Pidgin

There are many authors who use Pidgin in their writing. Some sprinkle it in to produce "local color," while others write entirely in Pidgin. Here are just a few examples:

- Apio, Alani. *Kāmau A'e*. Honolulu: Kumu Kahua Theater (1998).  
Kanae, Lisa Linn. *Islands Linked by Ocean*. Honolulu: Bamboo Ridge Press, 2009.  
Lum, Darrell H.Y. *Pass on, No Pass Back*. Honolulu: Bamboo Ridge Press, 1990.  
Tonouchi, Lee. *Da Word*. Honolulu: Bamboo Ridge Press, 2001.  
Yamanaka, Lois-Ann. *Saturday Night at the Pahala Theater*. Honolulu: Bamboo Ridge Press, 1993.



### Films about Pidgin an wit Pidgin

These documentary films explain the history of Pidgin and reveal attitudes about this language in present-day Hawai'i:

- Ha Kam Wi Tawk Pidgin Yet?*, by Searider Productions (2009) (on youtube)  
*Pidgin: The Voice of Hawai'i*, by Marlene Booth (2009)

These films illustrate the use of Pidgin in authentic ways:

- Fishbowl*, by Kayo Hatta (2006)  
*One Kine Day*, by Chuck Mitsui (2011)



### Stuffs fo teachers (Social Studies an' Language Arts)

Members of Da Pidgin Coup have created materials for teachers. Try check dis link: [www.sls.hawaii.edu/Pidgin](http://www.sls.hawaii.edu/Pidgin)



### History kine links

The Hawaiian Historical Society  
UH-Mānoa Center for Oral History

[www.hawaiianhistory.org](http://www.hawaiianhistory.org)  
[oralhistory.hawaii.edu](http://oralhistory.hawaii.edu)

### Try test yo Pidgin grammah!

*Ho, brah! Pidgin get grammah? Shoots!! Fo' real.*  
*Try make em good Pidgin sentences if da grammah stay all hamajang.*

#### Beginner level quiz

1. We wen seen dat movie already.  
OK\_\_ Not OK\_\_
2. Da car red.  
OK\_\_ Not OK\_\_
3. Joe not stay playing football.  
OK\_\_ Not OK\_\_
4. She stay eat da cake.  
OK\_\_ Not OK\_\_
5. Mary wen pau cooking da rice.  
OK\_\_ Not OK\_\_

### Ho, you tink you one expert in Pidgin? Try take dis one den!

#### Advanced level quiz

1. Waikiki Beach not get too much sand nowadays.  
'There isn't much sand at Waikiki Beach nowadays.'  
OK\_\_ Not OK\_\_
2. My fadda wen stay go wen I pau hana.  
'My father had already left when I finished working.'  
OK\_\_ Not OK\_\_
3. He no wen like go Vegas this year.  
'He didn't want to go to Vegas this year.'  
OK\_\_ Not OK\_\_
4. Go stay eat lunch bumbye you goin get hungry.  
'You should eat lunch, otherwise you'll get hungry.'  
OK\_\_ Not OK\_\_
5. As no how come he not like go.  
'That's not the reason why he doesn't want to go.'  
OK\_\_ Not OK\_\_

For get da answers, try check [www.sls.hawaii.edu/Pidgin](http://www.sls.hawaii.edu/Pidgin)