BOOK REVIEW

DA KINE TALK. From Pidgin to Standard English in Hawaii. By Elizabeth Ball Carr. Honolulu, University of Hawaii Press. 1972. Pp xvii + 191.

This book was primarily written for the residents of Hawaii. However, the information which it imparts definitely merits a wider audience.

After a concise and explicit history of the rise and development of the varieties of speech found in Hawaii, Carr devotes five chapters to a division of what she considers to be a speech continuum. Her five types of speech are: immigrant speech (I), early creole remnant (II), basic Hawaiian Creole or da kine talk (III), Hawaiian Near-Standard English (IV), and Hawaiian Standard English (V). It is interesting to note that the speech of the immigrants (type I) is telegraphic. This is reminiscent of the telegraphic speech reported by Roger Brown (1970) in his psycholinguistic studies of first language acquisition where unstressed function words are lost and the stressed content words are retained. This correlation is significant because it suggests that the same psychological factors of speech perception may be operative in both cases. The other types of speech in Hawaii reported by Carr are admittedly arbitrary and therefore merit comment. In lieu of the five types of Carr's classification of five speech types, we envisage only three. At one end of the speech spectrum is the immigrant speech, and at the other end is Standard English. In the center of this speech community is Hawaiian Creole or Da Kine Talk. There are several subclasses of this creole which Carr has overlooked. The Portuguese based Pidgin of Hawaii has developed into a creole dialect. The same pattern of development can be found for other dialectal variants of Hawaiian Creole, viz. Japanese based Pidgin, Filipino based Pidgin, Chinese based Pidgin, and Hawaiian based Pidgin. All of these dialectal variants differ from one another in predictable ways. To further complicate matters, there is also the phenomenon of upward or downward shifting. Hence, in a given sociolinguistic situation a creole speaker may find it imperative to shift upward and adjust his speech so that it is a reasonable approximation of Standard English. The converse of downward shifting occurs when a creole speaker communicates with an immigrant. This phenomenon of sociolinguistic adjustment has been misconstrued by some linguists who refer to Hawaiian Creole as a speech continuum (deCamp, 1971). As native speakers of Hawaiian Creole, we have always been cognizant of the fact that a speech continuum does not exist, and we can readily understand how an outsider to the system would fail to adequately characterize the role that shifting plays in Hawaiian Creole, and thereby consistently

misinterpret the data in terms of a speech continuum.

Carr describes the various grammatical changes that occurs in the spectrum of Hawaiian English as "devices." This description is very perceptive because a native speaker of Hawaiian English can express the same semantic concepts by means of numerous grammatical structures. His choice of expression is usually determined by the social context in which he is engaged. Hence, in the realm of intonation he may employ a stress-timed rhythm or a syllable-timed rhythm, and in emphasizing a lexical form he may use heavy stress, an intensive pronouns, or reduplication.

One of the assets of Carr's discussion of the varieties of speech found in Hawaii is that each speech style is not only taken from a recorded conversation, but it is also analysed in terms of its phonology, morphology, and syntax. The chapter on the immigrant speech by Dong Jae Lee is succint and it provides a working model for the other chapters in the first half of the book. Carr has also judiciously employed the able and scholarly assistance of her colleagues at the University of Hawaii, viz. Reinecke, Tsuzaki, and Knowlton. It is important to note that the problem that Carr has encountered in recording her data is the same one that all sociolinguists face. If the interviewer can only speak Standard English and has no command of Hawaiian Creole, then the person being interviewed will either consciously or unconsciously endeavor to adjust his speech upwards towards Standard English. On the other hand, if the interviewer speaks the language of the immigrant, then he may have some difficulty in eliciting any Hawaiian Creole at all. What this demonstrates, then, is that very subtle and sophisticated techniques of elicitation are necessary in order to avoid the extremes of sociolinguistic adjustments.

The second half of Carr's book is dedicated to a discussion of the lexicon. Her chapters include: loan words, loan blends, a glossary of Island expressions, and an analysis of these expressions. The dominant theme in this section of the book pertains to the nature of lexical relationships in Hawaiian English. Speakers of Hawaiian Creole, for example, use the word "broke" rather consistently to express the concepts of "break," "snap," "crack," etc. in Standard English. It would appear that this single lexical item is inadequate to convey the sundry means of expression available to speakers of Standard English. This is certainly not the case. These lexical differences are deceiving. The semantic domain of the Standard English vocabulary is exactly equivalent to that of Hawaiian Creole. The only difference is that in Standard English the word sequence "break the cloth" never surfaces as it is lexically incorporated into "tear the cloth."

Similarly, "snap" is used for brittle objects, and "crack" is used for glass. Hence, it is the nature of the object that is being broken that determines which verbal form is selected in Standard English. When this means, then, is that at a deeper semantic level Hawaiian Creole does not differ from that of Standard English. Any difference between these two languages is superficial. Furthermore, it is important to note that the tendency of Hawaiian Creole to neutralize such lexical pairs as "say/tell," "come/bring," "push/pull," etc. is not unique. Children make these same neutralizations while acquiring their native languages, and students of foreign languages also generalize such lexical relationships. Evidently this phenomenon suggests that the same semantic factors are involved. What these factors are and how they can be substantiated is an integral part of the current research paradigm of generative semantics. The study of pidginization and creolization offers some interesting empirical data for the serious scholar of a theory of lexicalization.

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