Culturally responsive talk between a second-grade teacher and Hawaiian children during writing workshop

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Culturally responsive talk between a second-grade teacher and Hawaiian children during writing workshop

Abstract
This study addresses issues of linguistic and cultural differences in the context of writing workshop in a second grade classroom in Hawaii. The major purpose of the study was to look at the ways a native born teacher responds orally to her students who share her own bidialectical background. Most of the students are part-Hawaiian and speak a nonprestigious dialect called Hawaii Creole English (HCE) as their primary language and standard English (SE) as their secondary language. Not only do these students speak a dialect particular to the Hawaiian Islands, but their classroom interactions can be strikingly different from those of mainstream culture.

The primary data for the study were transcripts from audiotapes of the teacher talking with her students during whole-class mini-lessons, small-group discussions and individual teacher-student conferences. The secondary data for the study were mimeographed copies of the writings of the children with whom the teacher conferred.

The data show that the teacher talked to her bidialectical students in ways that were uniquely responsive to the Hawaiian culture; she encouraged the use of "talk-story" in group discussions and in no situation did she curtail their use of Hawaii Creole English. The teacher's writing conference style was conversational in nature, which was compatible with the Hawaiian culture. The relaxed social interactions in the classroom allowed the Hawaiian children to converse about their writing in a lively manner, especially in the student-teacher conferences. Although the children spoke with many features of Hawaii Creole English, they wrote primarily in standard English. Their use of HCE helped them articulate their knowledge about their personal interests which in turn facilitated their interest in their writing. In other words, the children's use of Hawaii Creole English positively influenced their writing which was in standard English.

The investigator calls for a pluralist position for students who speak languages other than standard English so they can use their native dialect when they talk in the classroom and, in doing so, become increasingly literate in standard English.

Keywords
Education, Elementary, Education, Curriculum and Instruction, Education, Bilingual and Multicultural, Speech Communication

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Culturally responsive talk between a second-grade teacher and Hawaiian children during writing workshop

Rynkofs, John Timothy, Ph.D.
University of New Hampshire, 1993

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CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TALK BETWEEN A SECOND GRADE TEACHER
AND HAWAIIAN CHILDREN DURING WRITING WORKSHOP

BY

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DISSERTATION

Submitted to the University of New Hampshire
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the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

in

Reading and Writing Instruction

September, 1993
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July 26, 1993

Date
DEDICATION

To my parents, Mary and Stan Rynkofs, who always taught me that perseverance would be rewarded.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

An undertaking of this magnitude cannot be accomplished without the support of many people; it has been a very long journey. When I returned from the University of New Hampshire to my teaching position in Hawaii in 1987, I hoped to finish my dissertation in two years, but after two false starts trying to collect data and teaching full time, I put the dissertation "on hold."

When the Graduate School informed me that my deadline was approaching, I realized that the completion of the degree meant too much for me not to finish so I took a leave of absence for one semester to collect my data. I believe now that the long delay allowed me to investigate a topic that is more relevant to my community and to minority students who speak languages other than standard English.

I would not have finished the dissertation without the support of my Dissertation Committee. I am especially grateful to the head of my committee, Jane Hansen, who is one of the best "listeners" I know. Our long phone conversations proved invaluable as I struggled to find a research question to go with the data I was collecting and then verifying that question. Her close readings of my drafts helped me get through the writing.

My weekly meetings with Kathy Au, Kamehameha Schools,
helped me keep the momentum as I tried to verbalize what I was finding in the transcripts. Elizabeth Chiseri-Strater, my colleague in the University of New Hampshire doctoral program, always encouraged me to tell the "story" of the classroom and to breathe life into the document. Thomas Newkirk sometimes demanded more from me than I wanted to give but the study is stronger because he did and I thank him for it. I never would have become the "writing teacher" at my school without the research of Donald Graves, who first went into the classroom and observed children writing. Through his writings and coursework, I came to know about teaching writing.

I am eternally grateful to the classroom teacher in the study, who prefers not to be mentioned by name. We have been teachers at the same school for over twenty years and I have worked with her in her classroom for the last six years. She is an extremely sensitive and caring person and a master teacher. Without her allowing me to come into her classroom and record her talking with her students, this project would never have been accomplished. I am also grateful to the eighteen second grade students who didn't seem to mind my intrusions into their conversations and their writing. As I listened to them talk and watched them write, I came to appreciate how much they understood about language.

Other people at the school where I worked were also
instrumental in supporting me. I am grateful to Thelma Estavillo, who carried the "Writing Program" while I was on leave and helped me keep my life in balance. The KEEP staff (Heather, Grace, Evon, Margie, Sharmaine, Hester, DeeAnne, Debbie, Corina and Deann) were forever patient with me as I learned the word processing program and ran off endless copies of my drafts on their laser printer. Pat Aki read some early chapters and helped me get rid of the educational jargon.

Fred Shaw, a friend, became my computer teacher and helped me when the system broke down. Roger Takayama, my neighbor, helped me with some computer graphics.

Finally, I would like to especially thank Sharon Holaday, a fellow teacher and a true friend. Her daily phone calls when the writing wasn't going well kept me going and pulled me through the rough spots. She never doubted that I would finish nor allowed me to doubt myself. Sharon and her husband, Bill, offered me their home, sustenance and friendship when I needed it most.
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ABSTRACT

CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TALK BETWEEN A SECOND GRADE TEACHER
AND HAWAIIAN CHILDREN DURING WRITING WORKSHOP

by

J. Timothy Rynkofs
University of New Hampshire, September, 1993

This study addresses issues of linguistic and cultural
differences in the context of writing workshop in a second
grade classroom in Hawaii. The major purpose of the study
was to look at the ways a native born teacher responds
orally to her students who share her own bidialectical
background. Most of the students are part-Hawaiian and
speak a nonprestigious dialect called Hawaii Creole English
(HCE) as their primary language and standard English (SE) as
their secondary language. Not only do these students speak
a dialect particular to the Hawaiian Islands, but their
classroom interactions can be strikingly different from
those of mainstream culture.

The primary data for the study was transcripts from
audiotapes of the teacher talking with her students during
whole-class mini-lessons, small-group discussions and
individual teacher-student conferences. The secondary data
for the study was mimeographed copies of the writings of the
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The data shows that the teacher talked to her
bidialectical students in ways that were uniquely responsive to the Hawaiian culture; she encouraged the use of "talk-story" in group discussions and in no situation did she curtail their use of Hawaii Creole English. The teacher's writing conference style was conversational in nature, which was compatible with the Hawaiian culture. The relaxed social interactions in the classroom allowed the Hawaiian children to converse about their writing in a lively manner, especially in the student-teacher conferences. Although the children spoke with many features of Hawaii Creole English, they wrote primarily in standard English. Their use of HCE helped them articulate their knowledge about their personal interests which in turn facilitated their interest in their writing. In other words, the children's use of Hawaii Creole English positively influenced their writing which was in standard English.

The investigator calls for a pluralist position for students who speak languages other than standard English so they can use their native dialect when they talk in the classroom and, in doing so, become increasingly literate in standard English.
CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

In an old wooden classroom in Leeward Oahu, Hawaii, Lincoln, a second grade student, explains to his teacher, Ellen Hino, why he needs to wear gloves to remove the hook from the balloon fish.

Lincoln: Da balloon fish hard for take off.
Ellen: Oh, to take the hook off. Why?
Lincoln: Cause get da stuff on da body.
Ellen: Oh, all that pokey thing, right?
Lincoln: You gotta grab by da head for take off da hook.
Ellen: So what--do you wear gloves?
Lincoln: Yeah, I grab da body and I take out da hook.
Ellen: So any fish you make sure you wear gloves?
Lincoln: Yeah!
Ellen: And then you take the hook out?
Lincoln: Only da balloon fish I wear gloves.
Ellen: Oh, I see. OK. So who taught you everything you know?
Lincoln: My dad. He always go fishing wit’ my uncle.
Ellen: And what do you use for bait?
Lincoln: Squid, any kine--squid and octopus and shrimp.
Ellen: That would be an interesting project, you know, to write about fishing and publish a fishing book. So for somebody who doesn’t know how to fish, they can read your book and they’ll know what they need to take and
how to fish and then how to take off the--

Lincoln: Hook.

Ellen: Hook, yeah, like that!

Since Lincoln has already written several pieces of writing about fishing over the last several months, Ellen suggests he use some of these pieces to publish a book focusing on his fishing adventures. For the next three weeks Lincoln spends part of each school day working on his "fishing stories" as Ellen returns to him several times to help him expand, revise, edit and publish his book.

The beginning excerpt is one of hundreds from a three month study I conducted in Ellen Hino's classroom during writing workshop. The major purpose of the study was to look at the ways this native-born teacher responds orally to students who share her own bidialectical background. Most of these students are part-Hawaiian and speak a nonprestigious dialect called Hawaii Creole English (HCE) as their primary language and standard English (SE) as their secondary language. Not only do these students speak a dialect particular to the Hawaiian Islands, but their classroom interactions can be strikingly different from those of mainstream American culture. This study addresses issues of linguistic and cultural differences in the context of writing workshop.

How and why I came to conduct this study in Ellen's classroom is important for it is through my eyes that you
will see and listen to the teacher and her students. So first let me share with you some of my own background.

Writing Teacher/Researcher

I grew up in a suburb of Los Angeles, California, where I attended parochial grammar and high schools. All of the students in both of these schools were from similar backgrounds, that is, white middle-class families. My favorite subject in grammar school was geography, where I would imagine myself living in some far off land speaking another language. Influenced by John F. Kennedy's "ask not what your country can do for you, but what you can do for your country," after I graduated from college I became a Peace Corps Volunteer. I spent three months training on the Big Island of Hawaii before I left for my two-year stay as a teacher of foreign language (TEFL) in a small rural village in northern Thailand.

After I finished the Peace Corps in 1969, I returned to Hawaii and joined the Teacher Corps Program, a federally funded program to train teachers of the "disadvantaged" student. I did my internship at Waianae Elementary School on the Leeward Coast of Oahu, a low-income area populated primarily by part-Hawaiian students. My coursework during those two years emphasized the "language deficit" model that was prevalent in the 60's and 70's, in which the students' native language was something to be devalued and corrected (Bereiter & Englemann 1966).
Even though I was a "haole" (Caucasian) teacher from the "Mainland," I felt accepted by the staff and the students so I became a member of the faculty at the same school where I did my internship. I taught a variety of grades at the school and initially attributed many of the academic failures of my HCE speaking students to their inability to speak "good English." When I became the Writing Resource Teacher in 1982, I tried to implement a writing process approach in the different classrooms I serviced, but quickly learned that without the teachers' understanding of their students' linguistic competence, that any writing program was doomed to fail. Writing workshop was more successful in those classrooms where the teacher built upon the students' oral language, in most cases HCE, instead of attributing the students' writing problems to their inability to speak standard English.

After my graduate studies at the University of New Hampshire from 1984 to 1987, I returned to my position as the "writing teacher." At UNH I had completed my coursework and comprehensive exams but not my dissertation. I knew I wanted to research a topic that was unique to the students I worked with, but it was unclear to me at the time what it was. My view of the students in Hawaii was somewhat clouded by my three-year stay in New England where I primarily had contact with students similar in backgrounds to mine. In contrast, the students in Hawaii were different in so many
ways—their looks, dress, manner and talk, especially in the way they talked! In spite of what was evident, it took me some time before I realized that the issue of talk should be central to my study.

The Research Question

Believing that "oral language was the key," I approached a second grade teacher, Ellen Hino, who had taught at the same school for as long as I had. Ellen also believed that oral language was important and was willing to audiotape herself while talking with her students during writing workshop. As the "writing teacher" for the school, I spent the majority of my time giving mini-lessons and conferring with the children during writing workshop. By listening in as Ellen talked with her students, I felt somehow I would be listening to a recording of myself and would gain insight into how talk can support children in their writing.

My research question was not well defined in the initial stages of my study, except to say that the students' oral language was at the core of it. I simply asked Ellen to try to get her second-grade students to talk as much as possible. I taped or Ellen taped herself in whole-group, small-group and individual conferences during writing workshop. When I listened to the tapes, I noticed that Ellen’s fine-tuned listening skills enabled her to respond in a variety of ways to what the students said and wrote.
Also, some students needed more support than others and Ellen seemed to sense which students needed the most. Although the overall structure of writing workshop in Ellen’s classroom was similar to writing process classrooms across the nation, the underlying participation structures were somehow different in this classroom. Many students in large group were hesitant to talk when called upon, yet at other times many students seemed to talk all at once. Furthermore, most students spoke HCE as their primary language yet also seemed to know that they should write in standard English. Ellen needed to be sensitive to her students’ ways of speaking in whole-class and small-group discussions and individual conferences, to accept their HCE, and, at the same time, help them create meaning through talk and writing.

As I listened to the tapes and made transcripts, the research question became, "How does Ellen respond orally during writing workshop to students who share her own bidialectical background?" A secondary question became, "If the teacher is culturally responsive to the students' ways of speaking during writing workshop, how do students respond and does that help them develop as writers?" It is not just a matter of students being able to use HCE to express themselves, but how the teacher-student talk supports the writing development of these bidialectical students who shift between two codes, Hawaii Creole English and standard
English, yet write primarily in standard English. By looking carefully at the teacher-student interactions, I will show how this teacher needs to be culturally responsive to her Hawaiian students' ways of speaking throughout the writing process, from selecting topics, drafting, revising and editing, and in doing so, improves the writing abilities of her students.

**Hawaii's Ethnic and Linguistic Diversity**

The ethnic makeup of our nation's schools is rapidly changing. Although our classrooms have never comprised the white homogeneous population that somehow is portrayed as the norm, there is no longer any question that our schools have more and more minority students. Many of these students come from low socioeconomic backgrounds and often speak languages other than English.

Hawaii, our 50th state, already is in the unique position where there is no ethnic majority, where every ethnic group is a minority. Furthermore, the majority of the population originates from Asia or Polynesia, not from Europe or Africa. Hawaii reflects what some sections of our nation will or have already become, settings where non-mainstream groups make up most of the population. Hawaii's ethnic diversity is the result of its unusual historical background which brought together many different cultures.

The Hawaiian Islands were originally settled by peoples from Polynesia through a series of migrations up to the

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thirteenth century (Daws 1968). Hawaii’s first contact with Europeans was in 1778 when the English explorer, Captain James Cook, came to the islands. Hawaii had strong economic ties to the United States in the early 1800s due to the sandalwood trade and whaling industries, and these were later replaced by the trade in sugar. In 1876 the Hawaiian government signed the Reciprocal Trade Treaty with the United States in favor of free trade, which secured a market for Hawaiian sugar. The problem for the sugar planters was there wasn’t a large enough labor force to work on the increasing number of sugar plantations. Laborers from China, Japan, the Philippines, Korea, Portugal and Puerto Rico were recruited to Hawaii. These immigrants outnumbered the native population of Hawaiians and Europeans by two to one by the year 1900 (Bickerton 1983).

Each ethnic group came to Hawaii with their own language and communicated in that language to other native speakers, but they also needed to communicate with different ethnic groups. Thus Hawaii Pidgin English (HPE) developed as a "secondary mode of communication for speakers who conducted the bulk of their interactions in their native tongue" (Sato 1985, 23). Hawaii Pidgin English was made up of Hawaiian and English vocabulary used in the grammatical structure of a speaker’s native dialect. Thus a Japanese "pidgin" speaker and a Filipino "pidgin" speaker would sound differently and use a different word order. It was not
necessary for most of the immigrant workers to become proficient in English, nor did the plantation owners promote English. Because of these conditions, HPE was unstable in its use and varied considerably from speaker to speaker.

Hawaii Creole English (HCE) developed in the 1920s and 1930s from the children of the immigrant parents who spoke their native language and Hawaii Pidgin English. HCE became the mother tongue of the children born in Hawaii from immigrant parents. The basic vocabulary of Hawaii Creole English came from English while its grammatical structure came from Hawaii Pidgin English, which borrowed from English and Hawaiian. The social conditions in Hawaii at the time did not encourage contact between the children of the immigrants and Caucasian children so HCE became the dominant language among large segments of the population. The Caucasians who lived in Hawaii did not want their own children to speak HCE so English Standard Schools were established in 1924 for those students in public schools who could pass the English test. Naturally, most of those students were Caucasian. This segregation of students in the public schools who were proficient in standard English furthered the use of Hawaii Creole English by most of the non-Caucasian population. The last English Standard class from the the public schools graduated in 1960.

Mass education in Hawaii has resulted in decreolization, which is a "linguistic convergence of HCE
with Standard English at the societal, although not at the individual level" (Sato 1985, 265). Thus HCE today continues to change as the population in Hawaii changes and as the media influences the spoken language. Hawaii Creole English is still the primary language of many of its public school students, and in some schools in the state, most of its students. HCE, or "pidgin English" as it is commonly called, is often viewed as a low status dialect, while other people see HCE as an important part of Hawaiian culture and history. Furthermore, the use of HCE solidifies friendship groups among many segments of the population. It would be inappropriate for an HCE speaker to speak standard English when the social group is speaking HCE. Nevertheless, many adult HCE speakers are defensive about using HCE saying they "don’t speak English too good."

**Hawaii Creole English in the Schools**

As a whole, Hawaiian students do not perform well in school and "inability in Standard English is widely regarded as a principal factor in academic underachievement of Hawaiian-American and other Island children" (Gallimore & Tharp 1976, 4-5). As recently as 1987 some members of the statewide elected Board of Education (BOE) wanted to implement a standard-English-only policy in all public schools.

Standard English will be the mode of oral communication for students and staff in the classroom setting and all other school related settings except when the
objectives cover the native Hawaiian or foreign language instruction and practice.
(Hawaii Board of Education memorandum, August 1987)

Although the BOE thought this policy would be well-received by the general public, the outcry from some members of the community against this policy was phenomenal. Linguists from the University of Hawaii spoke strongly against the policy in public meetings and there was a series of articles in the local newspapers about the use of HCE in the public schools (Sato 1989). After a lengthy meeting, the Board of Education backed down from their original position and stated that Department of Education (DOE) staff would "encourage students to use and practice oral standard English." Officials from the DOE went public to defend the BOE's policy toward SE, at the same time admitting it would be difficult to monitor several thousand teachers' and students' use of standard English in the classroom.

Although some Department of Education personnel suggest there is a "pidgin problem," there is still little recognition of the problem and no real direction from the centralized state office regarding HCE. There is a large SLEP (Students of Limited English Proficiency) program in the state for non-native speakers, but this does not include HCE speaking students, as if to say that the differences between standard English and HCE are not distinctive enough to merit attention. This perspective is held by many people who view Hawaii Creole English not as a primary language but
as a broken form of English. DOE has Project Akamai for high school students who speak HCE and are identified as having difficulty communicating in standard English. No such program exists for elementary students, and no real guidelines from DOE regarding HCE are offered to incoming teachers, both locally and from the Mainland.

In all the debates regarding students’ use of Hawaii Creole English in the classroom, no one has denied the importance of standard English for acquiring school literacy. Charlene Sato, a linguist at the University of Hawaii, argues "for a pluralist position in which the acquisition of standard English (SE) is seen as additive bidialectalism rather than remediation" (Sato 1989, 260).

This position does not downplay the importance of HCE in the Hawaiian culture, but also does not deny the importance of standard English for success in school literacy. It also values the students’ primary dialect, HCE, as the starting point where instruction should begin, as students become more comfortable speaking and writing standard English. My study supports the pluralist position; it examines the interplay between oral language and the written text, between Hawaii Creole English and standard English, and the importance of teacher-student talk in the classroom.

A Preview of the Chapters

This chapter provided an overview of the research

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question: "How does the teacher respond orally during writing workshop to students who share her own bidialectical background?" How and why I came to conduct this study in Ellen Hino's second grade classroom was addressed as well as Hawaii's ethnic and linguistic diversity, including the use of Hawaii Creole English in the schools.

Chapter two is a review of the literature, focusing on four major topics: (1) talk-in and out of the classroom; (2) writing workshop; (3) talk and cultural differences and (4) Hawaiian ways of speaking and learning. Chapter three describes the setting where I collected the data and the research methodology.

Chapters four, five, six and seven are the heart of the dissertation. In chapter four I discuss the issues of language and culture and show how Ellen responds to her students in culturally appropriate ways. In chapter five I show how Ellen's conferences resemble "instructional conversations" and are in tune with the Hawaiian culture. In chapter six we hear Ellen help the children bridge between their oral HCE and their written SE. In chapter seven I show how the teacher-student talk supports one child with one piece of writing.

Chapter eight is a summary of the findings and a discussion of their importance.

In any educational study there are individuals who are "inside" the pages--thinking, feeling, caring people. It is
my hope that you will come to know and learn from Ellen and her eighteen students as I did—the discussions, conversations and conferences they had about their lives, their interests, their writing and what this means for students who speak languages other than standard English.
CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The purpose of this review is to situate my study in the various fields of educational research upon which it draws and establish the theoretical rationale on which the study is based. Four major areas of research will be reviewed: (1) talk--in and out of the classroom; (2) writing workshop; (3) talk and cultural differences; and (4) Hawaiian ways of speaking and learning.

**Talk--In and Out of the Classroom**

Talk is the most human of all characteristics for it is the basis of communication. Most children acquire language through interaction between themselves and their parents (de Villiers & de Villiers 1979). Although language acquisition varies considerably from child to child, most children master the complexities of oral language by the age of four or five (Wells 1986).

Bruner (1983) states that language is learned through social behavior in a particular environment and that all children have an innate ability to acquire language. This socio-cultural process of language acquisition is inherent in all social groups and cultures as the child becomes acculturated to the social group, in most cases, the family.
As Bruner (1983, 134) writes: "Language...cannot be understood save in its cultural setting."

Wells (1986) in his longitudinal study of British children found that most children are capable language users by the time they reach school age, although their language development varies considerably, based upon the home environment. But even the most "linguistically deprived" children do not often get a chance to use their language at school as often as they do at home. As Wells writes:

As with other researchers who have compared the language experiences of younger children at home and in the nursery or preschool play group, what we have found is that, compared with homes, schools are not providing an environment that fosters language development. For no child was the language experience of the classroom richer than that of the home--not even for those believed to be "linguistically deprived" (1986, 87).

Wells further states that some lower-class children come to school at a linguistic disadvantage, not because they are not competent language users, but because their parents have not valued literacy by having books in the home or reading to them. Consequently, the children have a "limited understanding of the purposes of literacy and little knowledge of how to set about obtaining meaning from print" (1986, 145). Most likely these same children will have considerable difficulty learning to read and write, and, even when they learn to decode they will not be able to use these skills for the higher level thinking processes needed at school.
Like Wells, Heath (1982, 1983) found that communities initiate their children into literacy quite differently. Heath’s research is based on three working-class communities in the Carolinas: (1) Maintown, a mainstream middle-class community; (2) Roadville, a white working-class mill town; and (3) Trackton, a black working-class community. Heath documented how the acquisition of oral language varied among the three communities and how this affected the children’s early success in school.

In Maintown, parents view their roles as language givers, reading books at a very early age to children and asking them questions about the books similar to those they would have at school. Maintown children are also taught to tell real and fictional narratives. When they go to school, Maintown children are successful, capable readers who can take meaning from books.

In Roadville, the children are also taught to use language at an early age. They are introduced through books to the letters of the alphabet, shapes, colors and other bits of information. But, unlike Maintown children, they are not shown how to connect this information to their daily lives. When Roadville children go to school, they are initially successful in the lower grades answering the “what-explanations,” but by the upper grades they often are not able to move on to the higher levels of thinking that are required in these grades.
In Trackton, adults believe that children "come to know" language without any direct help from them. Trackton children are not taught about books, the alphabet, shapes or colors, nor are they asked to display their use of language. Trackton children, however, are aggressive storytellers as being able to tell a good story is valued in the community. When Trackton children go to school, they have tremendous difficulty learning to read and do not know how to take meaning from books.

Whatever their background, all normal children are competent in oral language by the time they attend elementary school, even though their teachers might feel otherwise. But once they come to school most children do not have many opportunities to talk as the teacher is usually talking to the class at a ratio of three to one (Goodlad 1984). And even when the students are asked to talk, they are usually answering questions posed by the teacher. As Goodlad writes:

Clearly, the bulk of this teacher talk was instructing in the sense of telling. Barely 5% of this instructional time was designed to create students' anticipation of needing to respond. Not even 1% required some kind of open response involving reasoning or perhaps an opinion from students. Usually, when a student was called on to respond, it was to give an informational answer to the teacher's question (229).

Answering the teacher's questions is one of the most prevalent forms of discourse patterns occurring in classrooms today (Cazden 1988). The three part sequence, as
analyzed by Mehan (1979), consists of teacher initiation, student response and teacher evaluation (IRE). Thus the teacher initiates the topic, calls on the student to respond and then evaluates the response. Certainly the teacher needs to evaluate what the students have learned but in the IRE sequence the teacher has primary control of the topic and response and there are very few opportunities for students to come to understand what they know.

Cazden (1988) calls for classrooms that engage in real discussions, where the teacher and students both explore ideas, where the students have more opportunities to talk and where the students respond to other students’ comments. Unfortunately, these kinds of classrooms are hard to find because most teachers depend upon the I-R-E sequence for classroom instruction. Cazden suggests teachers have to make a conscious effort if they want to change their discussions, including seating the class in a circle for real discussions to occur and teachers relinquishing some control of the questioning.

Newkirk (1992) describes one such classroom in analyzing the talk surrounding a small group’s discussion about books. In this first grade classroom students have more time to talk and the teacher consciously waits before asking a question because she’s "interested in what they have to say" (149). This teacher also believes in the importance of collaboration as her students discuss their
books and relate them to their lives, but unfortunately this classroom is atypical of most American classrooms. As Newkirk writes, this teacher's classroom resembled more of the "coeducation" model proposed by the American philosopher and educator, John Dewey:

This spirit of coeducation animated the reading share groups and every other learning center of the classroom. For Dewey (and for Pat [the teacher]), the capacity to contribute to a community was not a set of social skills to be checked on the backside of a report card. Sense of community was central to his (and her) vision of democracy and to the school's role in instilling democratic values (150-151).

The "sense of community" also connotes images of teachers and students engaged in real discussions about books (as shown by Newkirk) and writing as the means to help students become literate, what some people refer to as whole language instruction. This movement from a skills-based education towards a more holistic, child-centered education is supported by the research findings that children do not proceed through a developmental sequence to learn language (Donaldson 1978; Harste, Woodward & Burke 1984; Harste 1993). As Harste writes:

This early-language research also challenged traditional curricular anchors. One of these anchors, the belief that there is an inherent order in the way language is learned and that this order can be used as a basis to sequence instruction, undergirds the skills-based approach to the teaching of reading and the language arts. Another anchor, the belief that there is an inherent order in mental development and that this order can be used to plan appropriate instruction, is the foundation of the developmental perspective on curriculum (1993, 2).
Instead, children come to know language, both spoken and written, through experience—by hearing and using oral language, by listening to and reading books and by using writing for various purposes. As theory re-evaluates how children learn language and teachers change their curriculum, the role of the teacher shifts to being more responsive and less directive.

In summary, learning spoken language is an interactive process. Although communities have different ways of interacting with children, from the active role of giving language to the child to the expectation that children will "come to know" language when they need it, most children become capable in oral language by the age of four or five. But when children come to school, they are not given many opportunities to talk because most of the talk in the classroom is driven by the recitation mode, or answering the teacher's questions. However, this situation is changing as teachers try to move towards a more child-centered curriculum where teachers talk with their students about literature and help them write about topics they know and care about. It is to this second matter that I now turn.
Writing Workshop

To teach [writing] well, we do not need more techniques, activities, and strategies. We need a sense of what is essential...For me, it is essential that children are deeply involved in writing, that they share their texts with others, and that they perceive themselves as authors. I believe these three things are interconnected. A sense of authorship comes from the struggle to put something big and vital into print, and from seeing one's own printed words reach the hearts and minds of readers. (Lucy Calkins, The Art of Teaching Writing, p.9)

Teachers across the nation now teach writing in a workshop-like atmosphere, where students select topics that they care about, share their texts with others and see themselves as authors. Educators such as Graves (1983), Hansen (1987), Newkirk (1988), Murray (1982), Calkins (1986) and Atwell (1987) have made tremendous inroads into promoting the effective teaching of writing. Instead of denying students' experiences, writing "process" teachers encourage their students to write about their experiences and interests, thus clarifying what it is they know and what it is they need to find out.

Henry Giroux calls this "legitimizing student experiences" (1987, 178), which in turn empowers both students and teachers. The empowerment of teachers has contributed to the success of the whole language movement because teachers feel they can make the critical decisions in deciding what the curriculum is and how to implement it.

Coupled with the change towards a child-centered curriculum is the way talk is perceived by the teacher, from
teacher dominated to teacher supportive, such as the collaborative talk among students and teachers in writing workshop. The heart of writing workshop is the writing conference, where students discuss their writing with their teachers and peers. Both Graves (1983), one of the founding fathers of the writing process movement, and his research assistant, Sowers (1985), write extensively about this. As children develop their pieces of writing, they get support through response that is helpful to the writer. This response can come in many forms, from just listening to the child read the piece or making concrete suggestions to improve the writing. Graves and Sowers refer to this as "scaffolding," a term borrowed from Jerome Bruner (1975) who documented how a mother helps a child in language acquisition. The scaffold, or mother's supportive language, changes as the child's language develops.

"Scaffolding," when applied to the writing conference, is a metaphor used to describe the "construction of a piece of writing" (Sowers 1985, 310) as the writer talks with others about it. In this sense, writers don't outgrow the need for dialogue, but the dialogue changes as the writer matures. Sowers suggests that there are "no magic questions" in a writing conference but assures us that students' writing will develop over time if the students are given time to write, opportunities to discuss the draft and criteria for good writing. Sowers discusses three responses
that teachers might give in a writing conference that are helpful to young writers: "reflect (once again, what was it [the experience] really like?, expand (what else is important to add?), and select (what is most important?)"
(1988, 140). Yet Sowers cautions us that even the best conference might not result in revision by the child, who might want to hold on to the text he or she has written.

Hansen (1987) writes about five key areas that are essential for teachers to consider when establishing a process approach to writing in their classrooms: time, choice, response, structure and community. The "response" that teachers give their students might require a "shift in approach" for many teachers. As Hansen writes:

Response rests on Time and Choice. We respond to topics students choose and by responding, we teach. Thus, we teach writing from students’ drafts. At first we may doubt our ability to respond, but we learn to respond, initially, to information, and devote a smaller percentage of our attention to mechanics than previously. Also, we respond not only when students have finished their writing but along the way, while they are in the process of working on a draft. We don’t spend our time doing something else when our students write. We move among them, teaching. This responsive teaching requires a shift in approach for most of us (11).

Thus in writing conferences teachers need to listen and respond to the content of their students’ drafts. The writer is the authority and the teacher is the learner, which is unlike most teacher-student talk in the classroom. Teachers also need to be sensitive to their students’ writing skills and knowledge when they respond to their texts.
In instruction using the zone of proximal development, the adult oversees the construction of an instructional context by establishing references to what the child already knows. This context allows the child to build new information or skills into the existing knowledge structure (Rogoff & Gardner 1984, p.100).

However, Searle (1984) argues that Bruner’s original statement of scaffolding has been misinterpreted and questions the whole notion of scaffolding as applied to writing instruction. Too often teachers try to structure students’ responses into what they themselves find relevant or interesting. As Searle writes:

The notion of scaffolding, however, should not be used to justify making children restructure their experience to fit their teacher’s structures. What we should be doing, instead, is working with children, encouraging them to adapt their own language resources to achieve new purposes which they see as important (482).

Therefore, teachers need to be sensitive to the child’s intentions and not make the outcome of the language event or writing fit their own definition of what is acceptable.

Michaels (1987) and Ulichny and Watson-Gegeo (1989) describe a sixth grade classroom where the teacher’s main focus in the writing conference is getting her students to make corrections. All of the students, who were primarily low achievers from poor working-class families, went on a field trip to the circus. After a brainstorming session to elicit ideas and vocabulary words, the teacher asked the class to write about their favorite act in the circus. But as the students wrote several drafts of the event, the
drafts were done to meet the teacher’s expectations rather than allowing for individual expression.

The classroom described above is the kind that Graves (1984) cautions against in the teaching of writing by replacing old orthodoxies with new orthodoxies—that children must revise every piece of writing; that children should have several conferences for each piece of writing; and that spelling, grammar and punctuation are not important, among others. Instead, Graves urges teachers to allow children to teach them what they know and to keep writing themselves, so they know what their children are experiencing as they write.

Dyson (1989, 1991) and Newkirk (1985) caution against looking for one approach to the writing development of children because each child approaches the writing task differently and teachers must be open to that possibility. Instead, Dyson writes about the multiple literacies of child writers, one that includes writing and other symbols, such as music and art. Dyson conducted her research in an urban multi-ethnic classroom and it is for these students that she is most concerned:

If a curriculum is to be truly responsive to diversity, truly child-centered, it must be permeable enough to allow for children’s ways of participating in school literacy events...Indeed, a child’s way of participating in an event like "story"-composing may not matter so much as that the child participates and, over time, comes to understand how ways of using language situate him or her in the social world (Dyson 1991, 29).
Therefore, the teacher's role is to provide "literacy events" that encourage children to explore different avenues of representation, not just those that fit the expected norm, such as extensions into the visual and dramatic arts.

Farr and Daniels (1986) write about the teaching of writing to speakers of nonstandard English dialects. Number one on their list of key factors for effective writing instruction is teacher awareness and understanding of the linguistic competence that students come to school with and "positive expectations for student achievement" (45). Farr and Daniels state that even the best teaching methods will fail unless teachers appreciate the language knowledge that their students already possess. Teachers must not make their students feel their native language is somehow inferior by overcorrecting their students' errors, as well intentioned as these corrections might be.

In summary, the teaching of writing has changed dramatically in schools as more teachers give children regular time to write, respond as they craft their pieces, and provide settings in which children respond to each other. Response usually comes in the form of a writing conference, where writers have opportunities to talk about their writing and teachers and peers make comments and ask questions to the writer. Yet, teachers should be careful not to use the writing conference as a means to restructure the student's experience into their own. Effective writing
instruction will include various models of writing development and will be responsive to the diversity of all students, respecting their linguistic competence and not overcorrecting their errors.

Talk and Cultural Differences

Most early studies of language acquisition have been based upon the children of the white middle-class, but Labov (1970) found that poor black children were also effective language users when they were put into situations where they were comfortable and were able to use their black dialect. Labov argues that language facility is based upon three factors: the relationship of the speakers, the social context in which the speech event takes place and the topic. Furthermore, all speakers shift their speaking style to fit the social context.

Studies have further shown that students will do better in school if teachers take into account their cultural differences, that is, their ways of speaking learned at home. Heath (1982) wanted to find out why black children in the classroom did not respond to questions the same way that white children did. Her research led her to discover that the black children had not been asked simple what-questions like colors, shapes and the like during their upbringing and had few experiences with books prior to going to school. Consequently, when they went to school their teachers questions often went unanswered, not because they were
linguistically incompetent but because they were unfamiliar with questions usually associated with school. As Heath writes:

    School questions were unfamiliar in their frequency, purposes, and types, and in the domains of content knowledge and skills display they assumed on the part of students (1982, 123).

But when teachers adapted their questions in the social studies lessons to those that were more compatible with the children's culture ("What's this like?" or "What's happening here?"), the black students actively participated in the lessons.

    Even when children are verbal in school and are given opportunities to display this, the teacher needs to be sensitive to the cultural differences in language. Michaels (1981) and Michaels and Cazden (1986) found that when the narrative styles of students and the teacher do not match, then the child might get differential treatment by the teacher which limits their access to language development. When these researchers analyzed the sharing time narratives of middle-class white children as compared to poor black children, they found that the white children told "topic centered" narratives, while the black children told "topic associating or episodic narratives." The topic centered narratives are easily recognizable--focused, elaborated yet concise stories and were well received by the mainstream white teacher in the study. Yet the same teacher viewed the
episodic narratives of the black children, which were unfamiliar to her, as rambling and incoherent. She felt that the black children often did not tell "one important thing" and would interrupt her students to correct them or cut them off. But, as Gee writes, the black children's narratives are no better or worse than the white children's:

I take the position that narrativizing experience is a basic human trait and that, like language, it is not something that children should in any significant sense be better or worse at. Rather, barring the attenuation of this ability by cultural practices or by the school itself, all children make sense of their experiences and do so in a masterful way. Of course, cross-cultural differences also exist, some of them perhaps related to patterns and types of literacy (1985, 9).

Teachers can also help their students in the transition to school if they take into account their students' linguistic diversity, including their dialect. Piestrup (1973) studied the reading groups in predominantly black first grade classrooms. She found that the Black Artful style used by some of the black teachers was the most effective for the students. This style incorporated much that was familiar in Black culture, rhythmic play which included intonation and gesture familiar with black dialect speakers. The Black Artful teacher encouraged the children to speak and listen to others, and set high expectations for the group.

In comparison, teachers with other speaking styles spent more time correcting their students' misreading of
words. The "accommodating" versus "interfering" styles showed markedly different results in the reading scores of the students. Piestrup concludes that the way teachers communicate with their students in the classroom is crucial for children’s success and that dialect should not interfere with a child’s learning to read.

But what if the students seem reluctant to even speak out in class? Philips (1972) asked this question about native American children who were raised on an Indian reservation in Oregon. Philips found that native American children were reluctant to speak out in a large group, but would speak to their peers when working in small groups. The children also did not ask the teachers questions in front of the group, but would ask them questions when they could approach them individually.

Upon further investigation, Philips found that for the native American children verbal interactions learned at home were not compatible to those at school, primarily because the children viewed speaking out in class as a "performance." At home the native American children were peer oriented, usually learned by observation and then could try out the task on their own. Consequently, the children did not have many opportunities to see others succeed or fail. As applied to school, the children were not used to "performing" by speaking in front of others. Philips suggests that instead of trying to change the social
interactions learned at home, that teachers of native Americans adapt to their ways of speaking—not singling out children to speak in class, more choral response by the class, working in small groups and teachers making themselves available to answer questions individually. Philips concludes that the native American children's willingness to speak depended upon the social context.

Erickson and Mohatt (1982) tested Philips' findings at the Odawa Indian reservation in Ontario, Canada, by comparing two first grade teachers, an experienced native teacher and an inexperienced non-native teacher. The native teacher's style was slow and deliberate. She addressed the class as a whole, did not single out individuals to answer questions in front of the class and, when necessary, talked privately to students. The non-native teacher tried to keep control of the class by calling out students' names from across the room instead of individually. Even though this teacher was willing to change his teaching methods after some encouragement from his principal, he still continued to "spotlight" individuals which made them feel uncomfortable.

McCollum (1991) reports on the teaching styles of two third grade teachers, one in Puerto Rico and one in Illinois. Both were considered exemplary by their principals. Mrs. Ortiz, the Puerto Rican teacher, conducted the class discussions in a more open ended manner, asking questions to the whole group instead of individuals. The
discussions consisted of a blend of curriculum and social topics as Mrs. Ortiz allowed the children’s personal experiences to be brought into the discussion and often shared her own experiences too.

The other teacher, Mrs. Thomas, initiated 91% of all interactions, expected the students to keep on the topic and called on students for individual recitation, like Mehan’s I-R-E sequence. The "lesson as recitation" favored by Mrs. Thomas was in marked contrast to the "instructional conversations" favored by Mrs. Ortiz. Although both teaching styles are guided by the belief that social interaction is important, the outcomes were far different.

These studies about African American, native American and Latino speakers show us that the ways children learn to speak at home should be taken into account for insuring children’s success in school. Furthermore, the way children speak at home should not prevent them from participating in lessons at school, but, rather, teachers should build upon their students’ different speaking styles when they conduct classroom lessons.

Another minority group that shares unique speaking styles is the Hawaiian community, which is the subject of this next review.

**Hawaiian Ways of Speaking and Learning**

The culture of the Hawaiian community has been well documented over the last twenty years. In a comparative
study of part-Hawaiian children five to seven years old with children of similar age from professional families in New Haven (Watson 1975; Watson-Gegeo & Boggs 1977) Hawaiian children's narratives were shown to be "long and complex," but their verbal routines were markedly different. The Hawaiian children used a "contrapuntal structure: that is, a joint performance in which two or more speakers alternate rhythmically to produce the event" (1977, 75). The Hawaiian children used this structure in "contradictory routines" learned from parental teasing. Any "claim to know" by the storyteller could be interrupted by a listener who felt free to contradict or support the storyteller.

Studies by Boggs (1972, 1985) on questioning at home and at school found that most Hawaiian children felt uncomfortable when asked a question directly by an adult. Boggs attributes this to parental interrogation of a child:

Parents use questions directed at an individual child for the purpose of obtaining a confession of wrongdoing that will lead immediately to punishment. In this circumstance, the child is expected to say very little beyond what is directly requested, or to remain silent before his accuser...parents rarely use direct questions in any other context, and that when they do children spoke minimally (1985, 134).

However, in the classroom, teachers might interpret students' lack of response to their direct questions to students' disinterest or not knowing the answer, instead of verbal routines learned at home. When teachers called upon an individual in the classroom, that individual, even though
s/he might have volunteered to answer, might not respond; yet when other children started to answer the same question, s/he would answer readily. Boggs found that Hawaiian children were more verbal in the classroom when they could answer questions collectively and did not have the pressure of answering questions individually. Boggs also found that when the children could approach an adult on their terms and the adult was receptive by making comments and asking an occasional question, then the children became much more verbal. But when teachers are not aware of Hawaiian children's ways of talking, then mismatches occur which affect the children's performance in school. As Boggs writes:

It is the thesis of this book that the lack of fit between routines and participation structures learned at home and those encountered in school is the principal cause for the poor performance of part-Hawaiian children from low income families in school (1985, 120).

One educational program in Hawaii that has had a major impact is the Kamehameha Elementary Education Program (KEEP), a privately funded educational program in Honolulu. KEEP's goal is the improvement of the literacy abilities of minority Hawaiian children with the use of culturally sensitive pedagogy. Since 1972, when KEEP first began their research, they have implemented various teaching methods based on anthropological research. Classroom practices are adapted to the Hawaiian "ways of learning." As Au and Jordan
Hawaiian children...are greatly handicapped in learning academic content, we suggest, because the school is ordinarily not adjusted to their ways of learning. As a result, the children appear to be much less competent in school than they appear in other settings. We think that one avenue of improvement is for the school to develop learning situations which are more congruent with those the child has experienced in his own culture (1981, 151).

Thus "a central organizing concept and aim of KEEP's work is cultural compatibility" (Jordan 1985, 109). KEEP looks for effective ways to make their school program educationally compatible with the Hawaiian culture. "Compatible" does not mean that all school practices must be matched with the natal culture, but that the natal culture guides the selection of the educational program.

One way of learning that KEEP uses in their reading lessons is the speech event reported by Watson-Gegeo (1975, 1977) called "talk-story," which is common in everyday conversations in the Hawaiian culture. The participation structure of "talk-story" calls for co-narration by several members of the group and overlapping speech. In the classroom the teacher usually asks questions to the whole group instead of individual students, but makes sure all students get an opportunity to contribute to the lesson. The students often use Hawaii Creole English in their responses, which the teacher does not correct, as long as they are appropriate to the lesson. The teacher must give the students "breathing room," that is, let the students
respond as best they can without being too critical. As Au writes:

The nature of the teacher's role is extremely complex. It is evident that she must be in tune with the children in order to maintain a role which makes it possible to exert control over the topic of discussion without completely inhibiting the children's responsiveness. In a conventional school setting, in which the teacher plays a highly directive role, it is to be expected that Hawaiian children will perform very poorly. Yet, paradoxically, the reading lesson shows both a high degree of teacher control and a high level of appropriate student participation (1980, 109).

Au goes on to say that an analysis of the "talk-story" reading lessons showed that the teacher did not allow the students to engage in a "free-for-all" discussion, but that the skilled teacher carefully orchestrated many different participation structures, resulting in discussions that were a blending of "talk story" and more conventional turn taking discussions.

The "talk story" reading lessons are considered to have a "balance of rights" (Au & Mason 1983) between the teacher and students, where the teacher controls some aspects of the lessons but not all. The teacher can determine what the topic will be and nominate who will speak making sure that everyone gets a turn, but the teacher also encourages the students to relate their own experiences to the story, respond as well as they can (in SE and HCE), and let the children determine some of the turn taking. The results are more involvement by the children in the reading lessons and better comprehension.
KEEP studies of Hawaiian children who were bidialectical (HCE-SE) concluded that "general language facility is more crucial to achievement than use of a specific language code" (Gallimore & Tharp 1976, abstract). Thus children who were competent HCE speakers also tended to be competent SE speakers and those who were less able HCE speakers were also less able SE speakers. It was "a matter of individual, not cultural, difference" (29). Further reporting by KEEP of nonverbal Hawaiian children showed that these children could be verbal in the right settings, but that their stories were limited in narrative elements. Furthermore, the children relied primarily on HCE, even though they understood SE. The researchers concluded that these nonverbal children probably lacked sufficient opportunities to speak in class, thus improving their SE. When Au and Speidel (in Gallimore & Tharp 1976) had Hawaiian children read the same story in standard English and Hawaii Creole English, they did not find any major differences in the students' comprehension abilities, again confirming the children's language facility was more important than the use of standard English or Hawaii Creole English.

Thus studies on Hawaiian children show that their narratives are long and complex but their verbal routines are different from mainstream communities. Hawaiian children co-narrate their stories and often contradict the story teller. Most Hawaiian children feel uncomfortable
answering direct questions by an adult but perform well when they can answer collectively.

The KEEP (Kamehameha Elementary Education Program) has had a major impact in improving the reading instruction of Hawaiian children, where the "talk story" participation structure that is common in everyday events, is used to improve reading comprehension. KEEP now includes writing in their program as part of their overall goal of literacy development.

Conclusion

The literature shows that children, including linguistic and cultural minorities, master the complexities of oral language at an early age by using language in a particular social context. Yet when some children come to school their teachers often feel they don't have language, or at least the language they would like them to have. Studies have shown that children are not lacking in language, but that sometimes the ways they speak at home are not compatible with speaking routines expected in the classrooms. When there is this mismatch between the home and school environments, some children might appear less capable than they really are.

Students with diverse backgrounds are most often the ones who do not succeed in school. Research has shown that these students can be successful in school if the teachers are responsive to their students' cultural and linguistic
differences—their participation structures and use of dialect. Much of the research focuses on how teachers accommodate for cultural differences in reading instruction (KEEP's work with Hawaiian children and Piestrup's study of black children). KEEP research has been instrumental in affecting change primarily in how teachers conduct reading discussions, but has not researched how teachers might also be culturally responsive to their Hawaiian students' ways of speaking to improve writing instruction. Some people fear that if these students are allowed to retain their native dialect in school they will not learn standard English and won't be able to write in standard English. My study will focus on how a second grade teacher accommodates for the cultural differences of her Hawaiian students in writing instruction, specifically how she talks with her students during writing workshop in ways that are responsive to the children's culture and dialect. This insight on the teacher's part leads to a classroom where the students can talk at length with their teacher and write about their experiences.
CHAPTER THREE

THE SETTING AND DATA COLLECTION PROCESS

In this chapter I first provide some background information on the Hawaii Department of Education, the community where the study took place, the school, the classroom, the students, the classroom teacher and then go through a typical school day focusing on the morning time block. Next I describe the research methodology: how I collected and analyzed the data.

The Hawaii Department of Education

Hawaii has the only statewide public school system in the United States, which helps to guarantee equal educational opportunities for all of its students--urban or rural, rich or poor. Hawaii does not depend upon property taxes to support its school system, but draws from the general revenues of the state. Funds are allocated to schools on a per-pupil basis plus "priority" funding at the discretion of the school for major expenditures. In addition, certain schools have been designated "special needs" schools (the research site being one of them) and receive additional funding to support their instructional programs. A thirteen member elected school board administers overall state policies and appoints the state
school superintendent. In 1990-1991 the centralized state department of education administered 238 schools, enrolling 171,793 students with 10,791 classroom teachers.

All schools in Hawaii are multietnic, representing the great cultural diversity of the islands. Hawaii is sometimes referred to as a "chop suey" society, or all mixed together. According to the 1990 census the 1,108,229 state population included 33% Caucasian, 22% Japanese, 15% Filipino, 13% Hawaiian, 6% Chinese, 3% African American, 2% Korean, 1% Samoan, 2% other Asian or Pacific Islanders and 2% other race. These figures, however, misrepresent the real ethnic makeup of the state as about 46% of the marriages in the state in 1990 were interracial and the children are of mixed race, although the families might identify more with one culture than with another. For example, a person of Hawaiian-Chinese-Caucasian ancestry might see themselves culturally as Hawaiian. In 1992, when the study took place, there were approximately 145,000 Hawaiian and part-Hawaiian people living in the state of Hawaii, of whom about 39,000 were students attending public schools.

Even though public school teachers in Hawaii instruct children of all ethnic combinations, the overall majority of the public school teachers are of Japanese descent. In the 1991-1992 school year, over 50% of the teachers identified themselves of Japanese origin. The preference Japanese-
Americans show for the teaching profession most likely is due to their traditional values and their high regard for education (Zulich 1989).

The Community: The Leeward Coast

The research site is on the Leeward Coast on the island of Oahu, the most populated of the Hawaiian Islands. This area is rapidly changing from rural-agricultural to semi-urban as the population shifts to this side of the island where more land for housing and development is available. The string of coastal communities is somewhat isolated from the rest of Oahu because only one dead end highway provides transportation to and from the area. The "Coast" is often perceived by the general public as an undesirable and dangerous area with high unemployment; but, in fact, a great percentage of the people work in or outside of the community and there is less crime there than people imagine. Many residents on the "Coast" boast of living in the "country" even though the area had a total population of 37,411 in 1990 and is less than a one hour commute to Honolulu.

Much of the land along the "Coast" is owned by the U.S. Government, primarily military installations for radar detection. Nonetheless, there is no major military housing available at these installations for their personnel. Small "crop" farms, dairies, piggeries and chicken farms are scattered throughout the valleys, but much of this land is now being turned into housing developments. A large luxury
resort development already exists in Makaha Valley and another massive beach resort is under construction which will provide some employment opportunities for the people on the Leeward Coast. These changes from rural-agricultural to urban-resort sometimes cause conflicts between the developers, newcomers and the longtime residents in the community.

The vast majority of the people on the "Coast" are Hawaiian or part-Hawaiian. The Hawaiian families are close-knit and extended; often more than one family lives in the same dwelling and children are often taken care of by family members other than their parents. Since many of the families prefer to live in the same community where they were raised, it is not unusual for the children to have several of their cousins attending the same school. Most of the children call all family adult friends "aunty" or "uncle," even though there is no blood relationship. When kindergarten children enter school, they sometimes refer to their teachers as "aunty" in the first months of school.

The spirit of "aloha" is highly valued among Hawaiian people. It means more than to "love one another," as it is also connected to sharing, cooperation and hospitality (Boggs 1985). It is the force that connects the 'ohana, or extended family, to each other. As Howard writes:

Hawaiian-Americans generally choose to honor commitments to friends, provide aid to a person in need, and seek to engage in situations of cooperative fellowship, even when it requires material deprivation
for themselves and their families. Individuals with this value orientation tend to dissipate resources as fast as they accumulate, for resources are seen as a means to maintaining and expanding interpersonal networks rather than as an end in themselves (1974, 25-26).

This "commitment to friends" and family is central to the Hawaiian lifestyle, in which the adults enjoy getting together and "talking story" while the young children play among themselves. Since it is sunny almost 300 days a year, the beaches are filled with families picnicking, surfing, boogieboarding, fishing, snorkeling and camping throughout the year. On the weekends, there are large "luaus" where family and friends celebrate birthdays, weddings, anniversaries and graduations with Hawaiian food and entertainment.

The Research Site: Waianae Elementary School

The research site, Waianae Elementary School, is one of seven public elementary schools on the Leeward Coast. The original school was the first to be established in the area well over 100 years ago. It later expanded to accommodate the children of the laborers of the sugar plantation and sugar mill, which were founded around 1880. In the early 1900s Waianae town was a thriving community with a railway system to connect it to Pearl Harbor and beyond. The sugar company picked up the children and parents in the company truck and brought them to the school and the plantation. The plantation and the mill closed shortly after World War
II, but a new large subdivision in 1947 with reasonable prices attracted many people to purchase homes in the area (McGrath, 1973).

Waianae Elementary School today is a mix of many new and old buildings spread out over fifteen acres (Figure 1). The old administration building built in 1914 became so termite ridden that it was bulldozed down. All of the old quonset huts left over from World War II that were once used as classrooms and later converted to custodial repairs and maintenance are now gone, cleared for new buildings or open space. Gone too are the old "teachers' cottages" which provided housing for new "Mainland" teachers and some single local teachers who taught out in this predominantly Hawaiian community during the week but spent the weekends with their relatives in or near Honolulu.

In the 1991-1992 school year 720 children attended Waianae Elementary School in grades kindergarten through sixth. Although Hawaiians make up 22% of the statewide public school population, 57% of the children at Waianae Elementary School are considered Hawaiian or part-Hawaiian based on a parental survey with the next largest ethnic group Filipino at eleven percent. But, much like the general population, these figures only begin to tell the real story because most of the children at the school are of mixed ancestry (e.g. Chinese-Hawaiian-Filipino). Thirty-one percent of the children at the school are on public
Figure 1. Map of Waianae Elementary School
assistance and over 75% are on free or reduced lunch. Many parents obtain "geographic exceptions" to send their children to the school because of its good reputation in the community and as the school which they themselves attended when they were youngsters.

The Leeward Coast schools are often seen as a "training ground" on Oahu for the state school system due to the rapid turnover of new teachers. However, many teachers at Waianae Elementary School live in the community or travel considerable distance to teach there. A large core of teachers continue to teach at the school in spite of difficult conditions—a transient low income population, a less than stable faculty, dependance of families on the welfare system, among others. Similar to the state system, 57% of the teachers at the school are Japanese-Americans with the next largest group Caucasian at 25%.

The Classroom Teacher: Ellen Hino

Ellen Hino is a veteran teacher of over twenty years at the school. Of Japanese ancestry, she grew up in Waianae. Ellen’s mother has an interesting personal history relating back to the sugar plantation. Before she was married, Ellen’s mother worked in the sugar plantation manager’s house as a cook and a baby-sitter. As a caretaker for Caucasian children, she was careful not to speak Hawaii Creole English. Later, when Ellen’s mother married and had her own children, she spoke standard English to them at
home. Thus, throughout her childhood, Ellen’s primary language was standard English with some dialectical influences from HCE, the language of the community. Ellen attended Waianae Elementary, Intermediate and High School. Most of Ellen’s classes were ability grouped during her schooling in Waianae and the majority of her classmates were Japanese, primarily children of local farmers and small businessmen in the community. Although Ellen was educated in Waianae, she went to college in central Washington, returning only occasionally to her home in Hawaii during her four years on the "Mainland." When she finished her degree, Ellen returned to teach at the same school she attended as a youngster. She commutes daily from her home in a residential community about fifteen miles away from the school, where she lives with her husband and two sons.

Ellen has taught the lower grades throughout her career, primarily second grade. In 1981 Ellen was one of the first teachers at the school to join the Kamehameha Elementary Education Program (KEEP) and attributes much of her current educational philosophy to KEEP. She learned about "talk story" and the Hawaiian children’s narrative and questioning styles from the anthropological and sociological studies done by KEEP and is considered by the KEEP staff as one of the most effective teachers in the program.

Ellen began teaching "writing workshop" in 1983, after attending a three day in-service at Kamehameha Schools in
Honolulu given by Jane Hansen of the University of New Hampshire. Dr. Hansen reported that children would develop better as writers if they could select their own writing topics, were given daily time to write and received response by the teacher and peers to their drafts. The classroom would resemble a "workshop" where children would learn the craft of writing with help given to the writer throughout the process.

In 1983 writing was not such an integral part of the KEEP program, whose primary focus was reading comprehension. Ellen states the first few years she didn’t feel comfortable with the writing program, especially with conferring since "I was afraid I wasn’t asking the right questions" (Interview, March 1992). But with experience, dialogue with other teachers and professional readings, Ellen eventually became confident in her ability to teach writing.

During the data collection for my dissertation Ellen felt very good about her writing program and viewed it as the best part of her school day. She felt she had grown a lot as a writing teacher over the years and enjoyed the mini-lessons and the conferring. As she said to me in an interview:

Now that I’ve accepted looking at what the child brings and just listening and reacting to that instead of having these questions ready to shoot at them, I feel more comfortable and see writing in the whole framework (Interview, March 1992).

Ellen wanted her second graders to enjoy writing and to
be able to use it in all parts of their lives because when she was young she didn't get many opportunities to write from her personal experiences and found it hard to "put down my thoughts." She often asked the children to "put down their thoughts" in their writing notebooks as the first activity of the day. Several times throughout the study Ellen shared drafts of her stories about herself, her childhood in Waianae and her family.

Ellen Hino's Second Grade Students

The eighteen second grade students in Ellen Hino's class were racially diverse, including Hawaiian, part-Hawaiian, Filipino, Samoan, Portuguese, Chinese and Caucasian. Most of the children were of mixed ancestry (e.g. Hawaiian-Chinese-Filipino), and twelve of the eighteen were either Hawaiian or part-Hawaiian. All of the children, with the exception of a Caucasian girl who transferred from South Carolina in October of the school year, spoke with some features of Hawaii Creole English, especially with each other on the playground.

During the initial weeks of the study there were twenty children, but two transferred to other schools after both had missed close to one month of school due to family problems. There were nine boys and nine girls in the study. Although there were only eighteen children in the class, this was not unusual because the state had mandated that all public kindergarten, first and second grade classrooms have
a maximum enrollment of twenty students.

Most of the eighteen second graders in the study had been at Waianae Elementary since kindergarten. All kindergarten through third grade classrooms in the school were part of the KEEP program and so most of the students in Mrs. Hino's second grade classroom had experienced a "whole literacy curriculum" in both kindergarten and first grade. The children began "writing process" in kindergarten, initially drawing and talking about their drawings with their teachers, and later labelling their drawings and being helped to write a simple sentence. In first grade the children continued with writing workshop each making several illustrated books through the course of the year. Some of the children were still emergent writers when they entered second grade, needing teacher assistance to write a sentence, while the more capable writers entered second grade being able to write a lengthy text independently.

It was with these eighteen second graders and Mrs. Hino that I spent a semester collecting data for this study. Before I tell how I collected and analyzed the data, let me describe the classroom and a typical morning in which the study took place.

The Classroom

Room 34 is one of four classrooms in an old, wooden one-story building on the sprawling campus. Three of the classrooms are for second graders and the fourth classroom
houses the PCNC (Parent/Community Network Center). Room 34 is located conveniently close to the library and the cafeteria but far from the administration building and the staff’s parking lot. There is a large open grassy area in front of the rooms where children often play on the jungle gym before and after school. Each of the second grade classrooms has two small porches with steps for the children to enter; all of the second grade teachers have designated "in" and "out" doors so there will be no collisions.

When the children enter Room 34 there is space for them to leave their rubber slippers if they want to, put a tag in the attendance chart, and return and check out class library books that they take home daily. In the 1970s Room 34 was one of two rooms joined together for a second-third combination classroom with three teachers and sixty children, but a permanent wall now separates the two rooms, except that Room 34 is without a sink and storage closets. That wall is full of cubbyholes and shelving and the children have to go outside to drink water or wash their hands at the faucet next to the porch.

The classroom is quite spacious with high ceilings and one wall of windows above the shelving that are cranked open daily to let the tradewinds blow assisted by several fans strategically placed around the room. There are no heaters in the room as the weather only dips into the 60s in the early morning winter months; most months of the year the air
temperature during the day is in the 80s and during
September and October it is in the low 90s. Even though the
children have assigned desks, there are several round and
trapezoid tables that they are free to use during the school
day. Children gather for whole class lessons in a large
open space on the carpeted floor; this area acts as the
center of classroom activities and from here the children go
back to their seats or to other parts of the room to work
individually or in small groups (Figure 2).

The walls of the classroom are covered with the
children’s projects, graphs, writings and artwork, which are
changed often with the seasons and holidays. The writing
materials are stored in covered boxes and trays on the
shelves. There are several kinds of writing paper, lined
and unlined, erasers, pencils, staplers, colored pencils,
and drawing paper and covers for illustrating their
published books. The children’s finished books are proudly
displayed in a large bookrack made by the woodshop class at
the local high school. The children often choose to read
these books during various periods of the school day.

Ellen’s desk is situated near the door and next to the
large meeting area, but, except for early morning business,
she seldom uses it, at least while the children are in the
room. A small section of the room is off-limits to the
children and houses a large paper cutter and seldom used
classroom supplies. Ellen also keeps a small refrigerator
Figure 2. Ellen Hino's Second Grade Classroom
there for her home lunch and sodas.

April 20, 1992

By the time I arrive at 7:25 a.m., Ellen has already been in the classroom for half an hour. It is the day after Easter Sunday and she is busy putting the room in order since the carpet was shampooed over the three day weekend and the tables and desks are not in their usual places. At 7:30 she opens the door to let the students in even though the room is not ready and the morning bell does not ring until 7:45. Only Brian and Carlton enter the room as the other children are not at school yet or are outside playing or are eating breakfast in the cafeteria. They both put in their attendance tags, return the library books they took home over the weekend and take down the chairs that are stacked on the desks. Carlton notices that the cricket Ginger had caught the previous Thursday has died and Ellen suggests that they leave it under a large magnifying lens for the class to examine.

By 7:35 Roylynn, Keoni and Verlene arrive in the room and spend time returning and checking out library books; Verlene checks out Sylvester and the Magic Pebble by William Steig. Brian shares with Ellen that he went to a chicken fight with his family over the weekend and both cocks died at the same time. Since there was no clear winner and a $3500 bet, a fight ensued and his family left immediately.

Tiare arrives and gives Ellen a paper bag from her
father, who had done a wood making demonstration for the class several weeks before. It is filled with kiawe wood necklaces, a palaua niho or shark’s tooth necklace for each of the boys and a poi pounder necklace for each of the girls. There is also a kiawe bracelet for Ellen. Since it is a surprise for the class, Ellen asks Tiare to leave it by her desk for later in the day. Other children continue to arrive at the classroom, following the morning routine and getting ready for the day by sharpening their pencils.

At 7:41 Ellen writes on the chalkboard: Boys and Girls, I hope that you had a nice Easter. Brian had an exciting weekend that he’s going to write about. We’ll have D.E.A.R. [Drop Everything And Read] this morning and then Writing Workshop. Trading Post is at 12:30.

At 7:43 Napua asks Ellen for another "envelope" for her reading record so she can check out more class library books, but Ellen asks her what an envelope is and Napua corrects herself and asks for a "card." Only ten children out of eighteen are in the room when the first bell rings at 7:45. Ellen reminds Napua that she and Raoul are line leaders for the week and Napua goes up to the Math Their Way bulletin board to change the days of the week and to add another straw for the number of days the children have been in school so far this year.

By 7:50, when the tardy bell rings, three more children have arrived. When the bugle is heard over the school’s
sound system, all the children stand at attention and Napua leads them in saying the pledge of allegiance to the flag using a plastic hand-shaped fly swatter as a pointer. Napua next leads the class in singing "My Country 'Tis Of Thee." Ellen asks Napua to lead everyone in reading the morning message, this time using a ruler to point to the words. Raoul’s voice projects well above the other children’s.

Helen announces to the class that Tiare’s father has sent something special to each of them and they will receive it later in the day. Raoul shares a note with Ellen from his father that he is sending "ice-cakes" for the class before dismissal at 2:00. Helen comments about the children’s sunburns as many of them went to various beach parks along the coast for their Easter parties and then asks the children to "put some thoughts down in your writing notebooks and expand on them later." The children are asked to work in their notebooks until 8:05, at which time they will have D.E.A.R. [Drop Everything And Read]. By 7:55 fifteen of the eighteen children are now present in the classroom; Lincoln doesn’t arrive until 8:25 and Jarvis at 9:12, both with tardy slips from the office. Only LaShawn is absent for the day.

Most of the children write in their notebooks about the three day weekend--camping, Easter egg hunts and fun at the beach. It is unusually quiet in the classroom as they are still tired from their outings on Easter Sunday. After

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circulating around the room for a short time to talk briefly with the children, Ellen sits down next to Keoni, who has yet to take out his writing notebook. Ellen writes in her stenographer's pad about her weekend too and asks the class, "Anybody writing about Easter eggs?" Ellen tries to engage Keoni in a conversation about the weekend, but he shakes his head no to all of her inquiries.

At 8:05 Helen announces to the class if they are through with writing in their notebooks, they should get out their D.E.A.R. books and find a quiet spot to read. The children disperse around the room and read in pairs or individually. Most of them read out loud, even if they are by themselves. Ellen sits down next to Napua and helps her read a letter from Steven Kellogg that Ellen got from the Trumpet Book Club.

Later Ellen directs Keoni, who never did write in his notebook but has become interested in the cricket under the magnifying glass, to a book on insects and reads a page to him about field crickets. When Ellen reads from the book that crickets can be found in houses, Keoni asks, "How come we no see 'om in our house?" Later when Ellen reads the words "male crickets," Keoni asks, "What is dat--male crickets?" and Ellen explains.

Tiare and Shanelle are sitting next to each other reading loudly from their poetry booklets, but they are each reading different poems. Raoul, the most advanced student
in the class, is reading to Brian, who is a poor reader. Dwayne is trying hard to read the words from the big book on dinosaurs. A few children are at their desks but most are scattered on the perimeters of the classroom.

Later Ellen is on the carpet with Keoni, Joshua and Carlton reading a section from an insect book about crickets while the three boys are looking through the magnifying glass. When Roylynn asks if they are hurting the cricket, Joshua answers, "Da ting not alive," and Keoni comments, "Can see da eye."

At 8:30 Ellen asks Dwayne to turn the lights on and off to signal a change of activities and asks those children who want to share their writing to bring their notebooks with them. Ellen and the children sit in a large circle on the carpet. Most of the boys are wearing colorful shorts with a t-shirt or a tank top; most of the girls are wearing sun dresses or matching shorts and tops. A few of the children are wearing sneakers, but most are barefoot or wearing "slippers" (rubber sandals).

Only Ashley, Roylynn and Raoul bring their notebooks to share with the class. Ashley, who is Caucasian and transferred from South Carolina in October, volunteers to share her draft first:

At Camp

On friday all the way thrun Monday it was fun moslley we went on the brick walls and play on them we jumpt off them we played in my blowup boat it was funner then ever and it was a raiet. I got
sunberend real bad. I hert so bad an to this day I hert.

[On Friday all the way through Monday it was fun. Mostly we went on the brick walls and played on them. We jumped off them. We played in my blow up boat. It was funner than ever and it was a riot. I got sunburned real bad. I hurt so bad and to this day I hurt.]

The class asks Ashley where they went camping, and Ashley tells them at a beach park. When Ellen asks the class if they know what the word "riot" means, no one can tell her. She then asks how they might feel if someone says, "It was a riot," and Raoul says happy.

Roylynn next shares her draft about an Easter egg hunt with her relatives:

on easter I went to my aunty house to hont eggs it
had babby hont parrents hont kide hont the babby
hont was funie because thay diddet no wear thay
was going and one of my babby cousine steeped on a
egg we laghed.

[On Easter I went to my aunty's house to hunt eggs. It had baby hunt, parents' hunt, kids' hunt. The baby hunt was funny because they didn't know where they was going and one of my baby cousin's stepped on an egg. We laughed.]

When Roylynn finishes reading, Ellen makes the connection to Ashley's use of the word "riot" in her camping draft: "That sounds like a riot--all these little kids don't really understand. You tell them, go hunt for eggs, go hunt for eggs." And then Roylynn explains: "I know 'cuz he wen stand on da fence for get da eggs. He wen drop 'om right
down and da ting crack."
Next Raoul, who is a Jehovah Witness and does not celebrate Easter, shares his draft about finding eggs in the fence that divides his home from a large public park.

I saw a herd of people playing egg hunt in Pealealau [Pilila’u] park, Then I looked over in another place and saw some eggs in the fence that nobody els saw or got, so I stuck my hand in the park and got the eggs. I gave one to Ben my brother, one to Justine my sister and two to my mouth.

The class laughs at the part where Raoul gives two eggs to his mouth. Next Ellen shares about dyeing Easter eggs with her two sons, ages 9 and 14, but tells the class she isn’t finished with it yet. Some of the other children share briefly their own “Easter stories” and then the children go into writing workshop. Ellen tells them that they may continue working in their writing notebooks or continue with other pieces of writing or publishing from last Thursday.

After Ellen passes out all of the children’s writing folders—which she has looked over during the Easter weekend—she begins the daily ritual of conferring with the children. First she asks Brian to read his draft about the chicken fight that he shared when he first entered the classroom.

I whent to a cikcan faie and I saw alat of didd cikcan an nivs on the cikcan laegs 8 tines.

[I went to a chicken fight and I saw a lot of dead chickens and knives on the chicken legs, 8 times].
When Ellen asks for clarification about the 8 times, Brian says the chicken's legs had eight knives on them. The discussion continues about chicken fights with Raoul and Roylynn joining in, but when they talk about who raises chickens for chicken fights the conversation ventures into a discussion about homing pigeons because Raoul's uncle raises them.

Ellen next works briefly with Keoni, Joshua and Carlton who had started working on a web about crickets the previous Thursday. She reads to them a section about crickets from the World Book Encyclopedia. Joshua lists "where to find" to the cricket's web and adds "under rocks," "in the trees," "in the house" and "in the fields."

Ellen moves on to Shanelle and asks her to share what she wrote in her notebook earlier in the morning.

On Saturday I went camping at pra for sexe whit my anty and couses we swimming unte mornig unte night I was the only one was boydsurfing I was the only one that was not geting pode from the wave only my brother them was geting fonded from the wave I lafte.

[On Saturday I went camping at Pray for Sex (Beach) with my aunts and cousins. We swammed until morning until night. I was the only one (who) was bodysurfing. I was the only one that was not getting pounded from the wave. Only my brother them was getting pounded from the wave. I laughed.]

When Ellen asks Shanelle why she didn't get "pounded" from the wave, Shanelle shares that she "never like bring my surfing board down. I jus' wen use my brother's webbies," which are frog like attachments for hands. Ellen suggests
that Shanelle add the information about the webbies to her
draft and leaves.

After Ellen checks briefly with Tuafili and Dwayne who
are illustrating their new published books, Napua reads to
Ellen her draft about an egg fight she had with her
classmate, Verlene, on Easter Sunday at a beach park.

On Sunday I went to the beach with my mom and my aunt and
I saw Verlene play in the water and me and Verlene and her
cousin were started play egg fight and Verlene
were throwing the egg at me and her cousin and we were
throwing it to me and we went back swimming and
catching big wave and I was getting pounded from the
wave.

[On Sunday I went to the beach with my mom and my aunt and
I saw Verlene play in the water and me and Verlene and her
cousin were started play egg fight and Verlene
were throwing the egg at me and her cousin and we were
throwing it to me and we went back swimming and
catching big wave and I was getting pounded from the
wave.]

When Napua finishes reading her draft, Ellen calls over
Verlene who confirms the egg fight incident at the beach
park. Then Ellen tries to get Napua to elaborate how the
egg fight started.

Ellen: What started the egg throwing? Tell me some more what
actually happened?

Napua: We was throwing da eggs at each oder and den--and
den....[4 second pause]

Ellen: Did you get hit?

Napua: She [Verlene] got hit from her cousin.

Ellen: Like what happened when the egg hit you?

Napua: We still get up and t’row back to dem.

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Ellen: I mean did it make a mess? Was it all--

Napua: Yeah! Yuck!

Ellen: Was all yucky!

Napua: Because da yolk wen--it was boiled and den we was t’rowin all da white stuff at each oder and den da yolk, we wen t’row ’om on top da person and had all yolk on top dem.

Ellen: Yeah, that’s what I want to hear, what happened when the egg hit you! So it had the shell on?

Napua: Yeah!

Ellen: If you threw it hard enough, it caught them and--

Napua: Bust.

Ellen: Yeah. It burst.

Napua: And we never even see ‘om and den we wen pick ‘om up and den we started flying it back.

Ellen: OK. So whatever you hit, you just picked up and threw it back.

Roylynn [who has been listening to the conversation]: You guys even pick up sand, yeah, when you was picking up da eggs?

Napua: No, we never pick up da sand. Da ting wasn’t even on top da sand.

Roylynn: Where you guys was playing den?

Napua: We was playing on da grass and da beach all get our mess. [laughing] Still get our mess!

The conversation continues and Napua shares that she and Verlene were at a Horseshoe Club Party at a beach park and Ellen suggests to Verlene that she might want to write her version of the egg fight too. Ellen leaves and Napua changes her beginning to they were at a Horseshoe Club Party.
Next Ellen talks with Ginger about an Easter swimming party at a military installation in the area, Lualualei Naval Ammunition Depot, and again touches base with Brian who has continued to write more about the chicken fight. Then Ellen talks with Tiare who is writing about her father making kiawe wood tops. Tiare has spent several days working on this piece and is trying to bring it to publication.

Finally, Ellen asks Cherish to read her draft that she started the previous week about almost getting lost when she rode her bike on the "tracks" at the beach park. Part of Cherish's draft reads: I amst get last but I bid not get last [I almost got lost but I did not get lost]. Ellen is confused and asks:

Ellen: What do you mean--you almost got lost?

Cherish: By the tracks, yeah, almost got lost because had one bush.

Shanelle: One big bush!

Cherish: Yeah, so I almost got lost 'cuz da big bush, uh, uh--

Ellen: You went off the track--

Cherish: Yeah.

Ellen: And went behind the bushes and you didn't know how to come back out?

Cherish: Yeah.

Ellen: All right. That helps because you're saying--I almost got lost but I didn't get lost--but I don't have a picture of how you got lost. Maybe you could tell us you got lost because you went behind the bushes.
As this conference is ending, the 9:30 recess bell rings and the children get ready to go out and play. During writing workshop, Ellen has personally talked with all the children, except for Lincoln who was also writing about an Easter egg hunt. She mentions to me as we leave the room that she is concerned about Keoni who accomplished very little since 7:30.

At 9:50 the children have math and then Tiare passes out the kiawe wood necklaces to her classmates. The class goes to lunch at 10:50 in the cafeteria, where everyone in the class has school lunch--shoyu chicken, rice, wonbok salad, orange slices and milk. After lunch recess Kupuna Kahoonei comes to the class to teach Hawaiian Studies. The children are excited about their necklaces and share them with her. During lunch recess one of the boys has given his necklace away to a second grader from another classroom so after Hawaiian Studies Ellen conducts a class discussion about giving away gifts. Each student then writes a letter to Tiare’s father thanking him for the kiawe necklace. Several of the children mention they will never give their necklaces away. Roylynn writes: Dear Mr. Lopez--Thank you for the necklace I no you did so much. for 18 of us. it is so nice I will not give it away.

At 12:30 the class goes to the Trading Post, part of the schoolwide self-esteem program. Here they "trade" points earned for attendance, good behavior and good work.
for various school supplies, books and small toys. At 1:00 half of the class goes to Chapter 1 for remedial reading while the others have reading with Ellen. Usually, the Chapter 1 students would have had formal reading instruction with Ellen but because of Hawaiian Studies, the letter writing and Trading Post today they don’t. At 1:50 Raoul’s father brings ice-cakes for the entire class and they go outside to eat them. At 2:00 the dismissal bell rings and they file out the door with their library books and math homework in their bookbags.

Methodology

Very often researchers do not really know what they are going to study until they have immersed themselves in the context. The task is more a matter of exploring what they have seen than of searching for qualities to test a theory.

Elliot W. Eisner (1991, 238)
The Enlightened Eye

My personal history at the research site was long and involved. This had its advantages and disadvantages, but I believe the advantages far outweighed the disadvantages. I had been a teacher at the site since 1969 and had developed many close friendships at the school with fellow teachers, staff and parents. I was now teaching the "kids of the kids" and was considered an "old timer" by the staff and community. In 1982 I became the writing resource teacher for the school, which meant that I went into different
classrooms to help teachers implement a writing process program. When I returned from professional leave in 1987, I continued in the same teaching position I had before.

As I tried to decide on a research topic, I naturally turned to what I knew best: writing workshop. On the surface, the most noticeable characteristic that made our writing workshop classrooms different from other writing workshop classrooms in the nation was the children's oral language, the fact that they spoke Hawaii Creole English. As stated before, I believed by looking more closely at the children's oral language I would come to understand some of the connections between their oral and written languages. I was also interested in the teacher's role in supporting the children's writing development, so I approached Ellen Hino to gain access to her room for the research.

In order to understand the participant's perspective (Sevigny 1981) I looked at qualitative inquiry as a research base. I must admit my own personal bias towards qualitative inquiry as a point of view as well as a methodology; I further believe qualitative inquiry is an appropriate one for my study. As Elliot Eisner writes:

If qualitative inquiry in education is about anything, it is about trying to understand what teachers and children do in the settings in which they work. To achieve this aim...it is necessary to "get in touch" with the schools and classrooms we care about, to see them, and to use what we see as sources for interpretation and appraisal (1991, 11).

As part of the community and the school for over twenty
years, I "cared about" the education of low income Hawaiian children, specifically in how teachers can help their students become effective writers. But because I was so connected to the school, the teachers, the students and to the writing program, it was difficult to always be objective about what I was seeing as the study proceeded. Nevertheless, qualitative inquiry permitted me to look at a question that I was interested in but did not know the answer to, and to "explore" what I was seeing in the classroom.

"Listening In" (Newkirk 1992) to Ellen Hino and the students talk during writing workshop allowed me to think about the importance of teacher-student interactions for these bidialectical children during writing workshop. But my interpretations of what happened in this classroom are, in the end, only true to the extent that they document what took place during the study. As Linda Brodkey writes:

Ethnography is a lived experience...the single most important lesson to be learned from ethnographic fieldwork is that experience is not--indeed, cannot be-reproduced in speech or writing, and must instead be narrated...The controversy specifically raised by ethnographic narratives is whether data are interpreted or analyzed, or, put another way, whether the researcher or the research methodology is telling the story (1987, 25-26).

My "lived experience" as a researcher in the classroom was colored by my history at the research site as the "writing teacher," but hopefully this also provided additional insights into a setting in which I was so
familiar. The "story" I will tell about this classroom, this teacher and these children is seen through my eyes and my own interpretation of what happened in the classroom is, of course, tempered by my own perspectives as the researcher and as the writing resource teacher at the school.

The first semester of the 1991-1992 school year in which the study took place, I was the writing resource teacher and as such went into Ellen Hino's second grade classroom twice a week for 45 minutes to both instruct the students and to help Ellen with her writing program. Usually I conducted the mini-lessons and then we had writing workshop, where I would confer with the children and move some of their pieces to publication. Even though Ellen had writing workshop daily, her students still saw me as their "writing teacher" and had ever since kindergarten.

My new role the second semester was that of researcher and not the "writing teacher." The first day of the study I explained to them that I was in the classroom to learn from them and Mrs. Hino and that I needed to "do my work" just as they did. "Work" meant listening to Mrs. Hino and them talk and taking notes. To aid the transition from teacher to researcher and to put the children at ease I decided not to taperecord the students or Ellen the first week of the study (January 21-24). I wanted them to get used to me as an observer in the room and not as their "writing teacher." This transition from teacher to researcher was initially a
little awkward for me because I was so used to conferring with the children about their writing, but in time the children and I accepted my new role. Naturally, some of the children still asked me to help them or wanted to read their drafts to me. Occasionally, I might help them sound out a word or listen to a draft, but, I tried to restrict my role to that of an observer in the classroom and not to have any input into the children’s drafts. Therefore, I restricted my comments to an occasional "You’re really working hard" or "Thank you for sharing that with me."

The first week of the study also enabled me to think more carefully about my research question. Initially, I thought I would be selecting several case studies and looking at the relationship between the children’s oral language and the written text. I would trace specific children as they wrote their pieces from beginning draft through publication, focusing on the case studies talking to their peers and to Ellen. With that in mind, I spent the first week deciding on my six case studies, which would eventually be narrowed down to three, and finally to one for this dissertation.

The second week of the study I began taperecording Ellen talking with the students and some of the case studies talking with each other. I used two cassette recorders, a Marantz PMD201 and a Sony TCS-430. The Marantz is a more powerful but larger recorder and was used for whole class
mini-lessons and sharing sessions and for small group discussions. I usually operated the recorder on these occasions. Ellen preferred to use the smaller Sony recorder for individual and small group conferencing because it was easy to hold and less obtrusive than the Marantz. If Ellen thought any child was feeling uncomfortable while they were being taped, she would turn the recorder off. This only happened on rare occasion during the first weeks of taping and, as the study progressed, not at all as even the most hesitant students got used to being recorded.

When I listened to the recordings of the case studies talking with their classmates during writing workshop, I did not see many evidences of them helping each other, other than spelling or to borrow erasers or pencils. There was, naturally, a lot of social talk such as what they would do at recess and who they liked in the classroom, but very little talk related to their actual texts.

At the same time, Ellen was recording all of the conversations she had with the students in the classroom during writing workshop. I usually spent my time in the classroom listening in to Ellen talk with the children. Sometimes this meant I could sit quite close to Ellen while I overheard the conversation and, at other times, I kept my distance so as not to make the child uncomfortable. For a few children, just being recorded was enough to cause them concern, without the added burden of me listening in on them.
too. In time, I had a good sense of who I could and could not be close to during the conferring. I could always sit next to Lincoln when Ellen talked with him as my presence did not seem to bother him at all, while for Tuafili I was always careful to distance myself from the conversation because he always seemed to be conscious of my presence.

Whether I could be "close" to the talk being recorded or not, it helped to hear the talk because this aided me in transcribing the tapes as I needed to have a sense of where the conversation had been and where it was going. Listening in also helped me remember some of the subtle nuances, such as facial expressions and body language, that can never be picked up in a recording.

When each writing period was over, I asked every child that Ellen conferred with for their writing so that I could make a copy of it. This enabled me to see firsthand what Ellen was responding to when she conferred with a child and to see what else the child wrote when the conference ended. For example, on April 20, the day described in this chapter, I made copies of the three children who shared in an all-class session as part of the mini-lesson and the six other children Ellen had individual conferences with--Brian, Ginger, Shanelle, Napua, Tiare and Cherish. Throughout the course of the study Ellen recorded all of the conferences with the children except for those dealing with publishing, such as copying over, dividing a draft into sections,
deciding what to illustrate and the title page.

Writing workshop was a daily event in the classroom except when the class went on a field trip or had a special assembly during the morning block from 7:45-9:30; also there were two days that Ellen attended workshops and a week of SAT testing for the children. Every day that Ellen had writing workshop from January 27 through April 30, a total of 46 days, I collected recordings of classroom talk and the children's writing. Writing workshop normally lasted one hour, from 8:30 to 9:30 daily. Helen would usually conduct a mini-lesson or an all-class share for the first ten or fifteen minutes and then the children would work on their individual pieces of writing. Sometimes Ellen would meet with small groups of children to share or discuss their writing, but most of the conferences were individual. Over 30 hours of teacher-student talk were taped during the course of the study. I also went back into the classroom for two days at the end of May to interview each of the students. I wanted to verify their conscious knowledge of code switching from the oral language of Hawaii Creole English to the more formal aspects of written standard English. I discuss these results in Chapter 6.

I usually was able to leave the school at about 10 a.m. when I returned home and would begin listening to the tapes that I had for the day. As I listened the first time, I made notes as to their content (who was talking and what was
discussed) and also made notes as to which tapes I wanted to
listen to a second time and transcribe. In the beginning, I
transcribed any tape that I found "interesting" because of
the teacher-student interactions or because the children
spoke a lot of Hawaii Creole English (HCE). I also followed
certain children more carefully than others as Ellen
supported them in their writing, especially those children
who spoke primarily HCE to her.

I kept a learning journal of what I was finding and
what I thought it meant. My entrees sometimes reflected my
enthusiasm for the study:

Listening to the fine nuances in the tapes is something
that can never be captured through transcripts. There
is a tone--a lilt and a sense of wonder in Ellen’s
voice, more of an attitude, you know so much and I want
to know more about it. Teach me. Tell me. Also, Ellen
on occasion uses touches of pidgin (HCE) herself,
rappor building, especially when the conversation is
jelling. It’s an ebb and flow that can only be captured
if you listen to it on tape and know the context of the
classroom and having been in these classrooms for
twenty years (1-30-92).

Initially I felt apprehensive about how to transcribe
the tapes, not being a trained linguist and not being a
native speaker of Hawaii Creole English. How should I
transcribe certain sounds that HCE speakers substituted in
their dialect without confusing my readers (e.g., da for
"the")? Although I had lived in the community for over
twenty years, I found my own speech patterns interfering
with what the children actually were saying; consequently, I
had to go over the tapes several times to make sure my
transcriptions were accurate.

I tried to have weekly meetings with Kathryn Au, Curriculum Developer at Kamehameha Schools, and the only person on my committee who was in Hawaii. Dr. Au came out to Waianae Elementary School from Honolulu about every other week and went into Ellen Hino's classroom for her own observations. On a few occasions, we were both in the classroom at the same time collecting data. I also had long telephone conversations with the head of my committee, Dr. Jane Hansen, as we discussed my progress and talked about the memos I was sending her.

My hardest task was deciding on a research question. I became attached to certain transcripts and knew that Ellen was particularly effective in talking with her students, but I had a difficult time describing how. But as the study progressed, I began to see emerging patterns--primarily how Ellen was culturally responsive to her students' ways of speaking and how her conference style was in tune with the Hawaiian culture which enabled Ellen to affirm and extend the children's accounts of their experiences. It was not until late in the study that I began to examine more closely how the children codeshifted between Hawaii Creole English and standard English. When I began writing my introductory chapter the act of writing itself forced me to be more precise in what I was discovering in my research. Even then, some of the data supporting my study changed as my
committee challenged me to rethink my analyses of the transcripts.

In the next chapter I describe how Ellen uses talk to help her students create oral and textual meaning by talking with them in culturally responsive ways.
CHAPTER FOUR

DIALECT AND CULTURE: HCE AND CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TALK IN ELLEN’S CLASSROOM

Issues of language and dialect are often inseparable from issues of culture. (Au & Kawakami, “Cultural Congruence in Instruction”)

In this chapter I discuss the two interrelated issues of Hawaii Creole English and culturally responsive talk in the classroom. I discuss the issue of HCE first, not because I think it is the most important (quite the contrary), but because it will explain how HCE is different from standard English and will show how the dialect spoken in this classroom is unique to the Hawaiian Islands. Particular emphasis is given to the features of HCE, when Ellen used HCE in the classroom and some vocabulary strategies that Ellen used to extend the children’s usage of HCE.

I then discuss how Ellen Hino structured the interactions with her Hawaiian students in culturally responsive ways during writing workshop. This in turn helped the students to communicate in ways that were congruent with their culture, which fostered oral communication in the classroom and helped the students’ development as writers. There are several ways Ellen used
talk to accomplish this throughout the writing period: (1) she promoted the use of talk-story in whole class discussions; (2) she supported individual students in whole class settings; (3) she answered children's questions about her writing processes; and (4) she asked direct questions of individual students. I will expand upon each of these uses of talk in the second half of this chapter.

Features of Hawaii Creole English

Many of the grammatical structures of HCE are unfamiliar to standard English speakers. Speidel (1987) writes about the differences between Hawaii Creole English and standard English:

A description of the differences between Hawaiian English and standard English is neither short nor simple. One may make the following general statement: Hawaiian English differs from standard English in grammatical features as well as in pronunciation. Much of the Hawaiian English lexicon is found in the standard English lexicon, but many words are used differently or more broadly in Hawaiian English. The less frequent English words tend not to be used by speakers of Hawaiian English (1987, 240).

Hawaii Creole English is in the process of decreolization, or a linguistic convergence of HCE with Standard English, so there is tremendous variation of HCE use from speaker to speaker. Some children in Hawaii use many HCE features in their speech patterns, while others use only an occasional feature. This is true of the general public at large; HCE use depends upon the context in which the speech event takes place, whether there are other HCE
speakers present and the ability of the speaker to shift from HCE to SE. Nevertheless, certain grammatical features of HCE are representative of HCE speech as determined by studies done by Hawaii linguists. As Gallimore writes about the grammatical features identified in Hawaii Creole English and tested with Hawaiian children of similar background:

They [HCE markers] are not found in SE and many of them do not have SE equivalents (i.e., cannot be translated directly from HCE into SE.) These markers of HCE were chosen because of frequency of occurrence, usage by age, and their placement on the HCE continuum. Frequency of occurrence is self-explanatory; the more common a feature is in HCE, the more it is recognized as an indicator of HCE speech. This criterion is not the same as placement on the HCE continuum, by which is meant the degree of "creoleness" of a feature. Some features, such as zero copula, have a high degree of frequency, but are generally used by speakers on the SE end of the continuum. Other features, such as stay as a copula, do not have a high degree of occurrence, but are thought to indicate "heavy creole"--speech which has not shifted markedly toward the SE end of the creole speech continuum (1978,3-4).

The following lexico-grammatical features are indicators of HCE speech as determined by Gallimone (1978) and Purcell (1984).

1. **Objective case pronouns as subjects.**
   Examples: I tink her stay office.
   My auntie, her no give us lickings.

2. **Past tense affirmative.** Use of wen plus the simple (or uninflected) form of the verb.
   Examples: My sister wen call up her friend.
   He wen shoot the basketball.

3. **Past tense negative.** Use of neva plus the simple form of the verb.
   Examples: He neva make 'om.
   Him neva come school las' week.

4. **Tense neutralization.** This involves the use of the
unmarked tense when the past tense is generally expected.  
Example: Da man come for look my auntie car yestaday.

Examples: Mary sleeping.  
He in da house watching TV.

6. Use of "stay" for SE "be."  
Examples: I tink her stay office.  
My sista' stay cleaning da house.

7. "Om" as unmarked pronoun.  
Example: Put 'om here [Put it here].

8. SE "there be" (existential) vs. HCE "have/get."  
Examples: Get plenty candies.  
Had one older guy wen go fight with 'om.

9. Non-past tense negation. Use of "no" plus simple form of the verb.  
Example: Kawika no like come with us.

10. Indefinite article, "one."  
Example: Had one older guy wen go fight with 'om.

11. "For" as complementizer.  
Example: Easy for play dis game.

Example: Michael, him neva come school last week.

13. Adjective in sentence-initial position.  
Example: Easy for play dis game.

14. SE "want to" vs. HCE "like."  
Example: I like do 'om [I want to do it].

15. Non-past tense negation. Use of no plus the simple form of the verb.  
Examples: Eh Robert, why you no eat your lunch?  
My auntie, her no give us lickens.

The above are only some of the many grammatical features that are used in everyday HCE speech. HCE also uses a different intonational pattern than SE when asking
questions. Thus, in Hawaii Creole English "I can borrow your pencil?" would be said with a falling intonation as compared to standard English's "Can I borrow your pencil?" said with a rising intonation.

Besides grammatical features and intonational patterns used in questions, HCE also has many phonological differences from standard English. Most HCE speakers don't use voiced or voiceless "th." Thus, "the" becomes "da" and "then" becomes "den." Most HCE speakers don't pronounce the second letter in a consonant cluster at the end of a word, so "friend" becomes "frien." When this happens, I inserted an apostrophe to indicate a missing letter—thus, "ask" becomes as'.

The children in Ellen's classroom used both Hawaii Creole English and standard English when they were speaking in the classroom, what is referred to as "codeshifting." Some linguists would call this "codeswitching" as Latino speakers switch between Spanish and English, but "codeshifting" seems to be a more appropriate term for this setting because the differences between Hawaii Creole English and standard English are much more subtle.

In this transcript (3/6/92), Ellen is talking with the whole class at the beginning of the mini-lesson. The day before Ellen shared a draft of her piece "Dangling Earrings" and passed out stars to those children who wanted to wear them as earrings. Ellen notices that Roylynn is wearing
some new earrings and comments about them.

Ellen: Some of you still have your stars from yesterday. Roylynn has some pretty gold earrings on.

Roylynn: My mom bought 'om.

Ellen: When did she buy it?

Roylynn: Yestaday.

Ellen: Really, did she know we were talking about earrings?

Roylynn: Yeah, I told her.

Ellen: You mean you told her you wanted earrings and she went out and bought 'om. Tell us some more.

Roylynn: I ask her ever since Christmas I want earrings an' den she said wait an' den after I wen ask her again when we wen buy--where we got our o'der earrings because our o'der earrings keep coming off an' da ting wen bust an' den my mom got me ano'der earrings because dat earring wen bust.

Ellen [inquiring]: So yesterday?

Roylynn: She bought me a new one and my sista'.

Ellen: You just went to the store and--

Roylynn: And bought.

Ellen: And chose.

Roylynn: We chose.

Ellen: Oh, you got to choose. How did she know which one you wanted? Tell us what you did.

Roylynn: I neva' do noting. She was da one who did eve'yting. I just wen choose da earring.

Roylynn uses many features of Hawaii Creole English in her speech patterns, especially when she speaks in extended dialogue. Notice how she uses wen as a past tense marker several times; in fact, Roylynn used bought in her reply to
Ellen ("My mom bought 'om") but later uses *wen buy* to indicate the past tense in HCE (when we *wen buy*). Roylynn uses *chose* to show past tense but later uses *wen* plus the simple form of the verb "choose" to indicate past tense in HCE (I just *wen choose* da earring). When a child uses *wen* to indicate past tense, that is a clear indicator of HCE speech.

Some of the children in the classroom used many features of HCE while others only used a few, especially when they were speaking with Ellen. Keoni was one of the children who spoke primarily HCE in the classroom, whether he was talking with his friends or with Ellen. In this transcript (2/25/92), Ellen is talking with four boys at the beginning of the writing period. Three of the boys are going to start on new pieces of writing and here they are discussing possible topics. Two of the boys have been talking about playing basketball at home and then Keoni brings up another topic.

Keoni: I got someting else.
Ellen: What?
Keoni: Karate.
Ellen: Oh, you're not into basketball. You're into karate. Well, tell us about it.

Keoni: My mom let me go tae kwon do wit' my cousin. I said to my mom--I not going cuz I too shame. I cannot kick dat high.

Ellen: Wow!
Tuafili [interjecting his own experience]: I was playing any kine ***.

Dwayne: Easy for play ‘om.

Tuafili: Den I had one fight wit’ one boy. He third grade.

Keoni [to Tuafili]: Why? Who wen fight ‘om? Who won?

Tuafili: Me, he wen slap my face and I whack ‘om. His lip was bleeding.

Keoni: Just like my brada [brother]. I bleed his nose.

Ellen: You and Alika fight?

Keoni: Yeah, I bleed his nose twice.

Ellen: When was this?

Keoni: One at my uncle’s house an’ one at our house. I kick in da face an’ his nose was bleeding an’ I wen punch him on da nose.

Ellen: You mean what—you were playing or you were fighting? You were angry with him?

Keoni: Fight cuz my brada’ no like give da girl back, my baby cousin back, da bike. He start picking on my cou— one little baby, so I wen punch him on da nose. He wen chase me around da cars. He like make all kine funny faces an’ teasing me so I kick ‘om on da nose, an’ dat’s his fault. I got da blame so I have to stay in my room an’ I was lying down on our bunkbed and den my dad dem [other people] went beach, huh, an’ auntie * was watching us an’ my bradas [brothers] like see how he did an’ den he was playing wit’ one quarter too an’ den he was grumbling at me again so I neva’ [never] do not’ing. I was in my room.

Ellen: Good for you.

Keoni: I just lying down der. I stay watch out from da window—den dey come back, so I wen tell my dad da trut’ [truth].

Ellen: Good for you, Keoni. See, it helps, right, sometimes when you just get away from Alika.

Keoni’s talk reflects the primary features of Hawaii
Creole English: grammatical structure, vocabulary and pronunciation. Here again is part of the transcript for purposes of analysis.

Keoni: I just lying down der. I stay watch out from da window--den dey come back, so I wen tell my dad da trut' (truth).

Standard English equivalent: I was just lying down there. I was watching out from the window. Then they came back, so I told my dad the truth.

Below is Keoni's oral text with the lexico-grammatical features of HCE found on page 81 and 82.

1. I just lying down der #5--absence of a copula
2. I stay watch out from da window #6--use of "stay" for be
3. den dey come back #4--tense neutralization
4. so I wen tell my dad da trut' #2--past tense affirmative

Tuafili and Dwayne speak to each other in HCE. After Keoni introduces the topic of karate, Tuafili mentions that he had a fight with a third grader while he was playing karate. When Ellen asks Keoni--"You and Alika fight?"--Keoni goes into a long explanation of how he got into a fight with his brother because "he start picking on my cou--one little baby." If Keoni had been expected to speak in standard English to relate this story, he would have been closed off as his language is an integral part of his culture. Ellen accepts this and encourages Keoni and the other children to communicate with her in their native
dialect.

Thus one of Ellen's main objectives during writing workshop was to foster oral communication. Since the children's primary language was Hawaii Creole English, not allowing the children to use HCE in the classroom would, in effect, shut them off from their culture. Ellen felt the children should be allowed and even encouraged to use HCE to help them articulate what they wanted to say. If the children spoke HCE in a class discussion or when she was conferring with someone, Ellen never made them feel embarrassed nor implied that it was inappropriate for them to use HCE. Thus the children always felt comfortable speaking and writing in their own dialect in the classroom.

**Ellen Speaks In HCE**

Ellen used some of the features of HCE when she was talking with the children in the classroom. She did not view this negatively, although she was surprised to see it in the transcripts:

I know I use it [HCE] but seeing it written there surprised me. It's funny to see it written down. It's not the real heavy pidgin [HCE], a here and there kind of thing. I know I do it and maybe that's why I'm hesitant to speak to other people too. I don't do it to patronize the kids. I'm trying to be natural with them and get them to give, too, and it comes out (Interview 3/16/92).

Ellen spoke HCE on occasion in the classroom, but never in extended discourse. She used HCE primarily for two purposes: (1) as a way to solidify the sense of community in
the classroom and (2) to help the children clarify their meanings.

After hearing several of the children's "fishing stories" in a small group discussion, she remarked to them: "Oh, you guys got good fishing stories." Ellen often used the terms "you guys" or "you folks" when talking with the children and in this example uses "got" for standard English "have." Being "natural" with the children meant that Ellen used an occasional feature of HCE.

Ellen used HCE more frequently as a means to help the children clarify their meanings. Here (1/27/92) Ellen is talking with Lincoln about the fish he caught.

Ellen: Rock fish is really ugly, right?
Lincoln: An' had brown spots.

Ellen: Had brown spots on it. And then, so what did you do—so after you caught this big fish, what did you do?

Lincoln says "An' had brown spots" to which Ellen replies "Had brown spots on it," omitting "it" or "the rock fish" as used in standard English. Ellen confirms that she hears Lincoln's message by repeating what he says and then asks Lincoln another question. Ellen often repeated back what the child said to her in HCE and then followed that with a question.

In this next transcript (3/6/92) Ellen works hard to get Tuafili to tell her about the time he fell off his bike and badly skinned his knee. Notice how Ellen tells back to
Tuafili in HCE what he has said in order to keep Tuafili talking.

Ellen: So you had fallen down and your friend went to go call your brother. Why do you think he went to call your brother?

Tuafili: For help.

Ellen: For help you. OK, now tell us what had happened to you. You fell down and--

Tuafili: And I got up.

Ellen: Ummm.

Tuafili: An’ I went in da house get bandaid.

Ellen: And?

Tuafili: An’ I came outside again.

Ellen: Um-hum.

Tuafili: An’ da ting was sore.

Ellen: It was yeah--so, was sore and [playfully] you went to sleep?

Tuafili: An’ I bathe and da ting was sore still. Da water went in da sore.

Ellen: Oh, it kinda stung like. After you put the bandaid on, you went back out to ride again? [Tuafili shakes his head no.] No?

Tuafili: I was walking.

Ellen: And hard time to walk. So let me get this straight then--you and your friend were having a bike race, right, and when you were pushing down on the pedal, the chain broke?

Tuafili: No, I wen press--the pedal was up, den I press down, den da chain broke, den I * * an’ da bike was still going an’ den I fell down.

Ellen uses HCE three different times in this episode

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while conferring with Tuafili: (1) Tuafili replies for help and Ellen responds for help you using the same construction; (2) when Tuafili says An' da ting was sore, Ellen says back to him was sore (omitting the subject "it" used in SE) and tries to get him to elaborate by facetiously asking "you went to sleep"; and (3) Ellen later says to Tuafili And hard time to walk again confirming what Tuafili said to her. The transcripts show that Ellen used HCE almost exclusively with those children who spoke HCE to her. If the children spoke only in standard English, then Ellen did not speak HCE.

**Da Kine, Da Ting, Da Stuff**

Hawaii Creole English is not as explicit as standard English. Although most of the lexicon of HCE is found in standard English, some words are used more broadly in HCE than in standard English and some of the less frequent English words are not used at all by HCE speakers (Speidel 1987). Consequently, speakers of Hawaii Creole English often use the words da kine, da ting and da stuff when referring to a specific word which they don’t know the name of or can’t recall at the moment. For example, in the last transcript, Tuafili says to Ellen: "Da ting was sore," da ting referring to the cut on his knee.

Some speakers of HCE frequently depend on these three terms (da kine, da ting and da stuff) as substitutions when they are speaking. Da kine is sometimes used when the speaker is trying to think of the word: "she da kine--she
fall off the car." Sometimes the speaker can recall the specific word as Ginger did in the previous example and sometimes they can't: "Mrs. Da Kine" referring to their teacher's name. Da ting and da stuff keep the conversation moving; the listener should know what the speaker is talking about. Here (1/27/92) Ellen is talking with Lincoln about the fish he caught.

Ellen: And then what do you do with the fish after?
Lincoln: Den we wen trow 'om back in.
Ellen: Oh, you did. The hook doesn't hurt the fish?
Lincoln: It does--da ting bleed but da ting--when da ting go in da water--da ting go away.
Ellen: How do you know?
Lincoln: No, when you wen put 'om in a bucket.
Ellen: Uh-huh.
Lincoln: Da ting went away.
Ellen: Oh, it stopped bleeding.
Lincoln: Yeah.
Ellen: It was swimming around. It was OK.
Lincoln: Yeah.

In this transcript da ting first refers to the fish and then to the bleeding (da ting bleed but...when da ting go in da water--da ting go away). Ellen questions Lincoln until she makes sure she knows what he is telling her (Oh, it stopped bleeding; It was swimming around. It was OK.). Da ting and da stuff can be used interchangeably as
demonstrated by the continuation of the preceding transcript.

Ellen: So when you’re all through fishing, you just--
Lincoln: Fly ‘om back in.
Ellen [laughing]: Fly ‘om back in.
Lincoln [laughing]: Yeah.
Ellen [laughing]: What do you mean?
Lincoln: I wen fly ‘om.
Ellen: You just throw it in?
Lincoln: Yeah.
Ellen: And you see it swimming around?
Lincoln: Da ting went.
Ellen: They’re OK?
Lincoln: Yeah, da ting stay get ‘om.
Ellen: But you put it in a bucket, but after a while doesn’t
the bucket run out of oxygen?
Lincoln: No, we put da stuff--uh--da--
Ellen: Oh, the little--you have a pump?
Lincoln: Yeah.
Ellen: Oh, OK--yeah.
Lincoln: We get plenty like dat.

Lincoln uses da ting to refer first to the fish that he
caught and later let loose (Da ting went), but two turns
later da ting now refers to the water (Da ting stay get
‘om/The water has the fish). Then two turns later Lincoln
is trying to think of the word "pump" and uses da stuff much
like he might use \textit{da kine}. Ellen supplies the word "pump" for Lincoln and then Lincoln states "We get plenty like dat."

Ellen is often able to infer what the child is trying to communicate because she and the children share a common background. However, she has to work hard to follow the train of thought of the child, asking questions to make sure she is getting the child's message. She also tells back to the child what she thinks the message is, at the same time supplying the word the child might be missing. In spite of all the close listening and verifying that Ellen does with the children, she still reports that "many times I get confused with so much inferring and second guessing."

\textbf{Ellen Gives New Vocabulary To Her Students}

During many conversations in the classroom, Ellen supplied vocabulary words to her students. This sometimes was coupled to the children's usage of \textit{da kine}, \textit{da ting} and \textit{da stuff} as in the preceding transcript.

Ellen: But you put it in a bucket, but after a while doesn't the bucket run out of oxygen?
Lincoln: No, we put da stuff--uh--da--
Ellen: Oh, the little--you have a pump?
Lincoln: Yeah.
Ellen: Oh, OK--yeah.
Lincoln: We get plenty like dat.
Ellen supplies the word "pump" for Lincoln and then Lincoln states "We get plenty like dat." During numerous conversations with the children, Ellen often fed vocabulary words to them, as in the "pump" example with Lincoln. Sometimes this vocabulary feeding was subtle and at other times Ellen worked hard to discover what the child was talking about.

In this transcript (1/29/92) Ellen is helping Lincoln to make a web so that he can make an introduction for his chapter book on fishing. Lincoln has filled in "boat harbor" under where and "we use sahid [squid] and srup [shrimp] and oktipas [octopus]" under always catch. First Ellen spends some time making sure where the boat harbor is and then gives Lincoln two new vocabulary words, breakers and cast.

Ellen: All right, Lincoln. All done with this?
Lincoln: Yeah.
Ellen: All right. Wait--where in the boat harbor?
Lincoln: On da rocks.
Ellen: On the side. Is that where--
Lincoln: On da long rocks.
Ellen: Is that where it kinda comes in?
Lincoln: Yeah.
Ellen: Yeah, OK--so maybe you could explain you go to the boat harbor and--is that the one where the rocks come out and go around?
Lincoln: Yeah.

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Ellen [begins to draw a map]: See, here's the boat harbor and here's where the boats stop, right? These are all the boats—stopped. And then the rock comes like this and it goes all the way out and around like this.

Lincoln: Yeah.

Ellen: And this is all rocks. Is this where you fish?

Lincoln: No, I go anoder (another) boat harbor in Makaha.

Ellen: Oh.

Lincoln: I go almost by the --

Ellen: By the gym, right. Across the gym.

Lincoln: No, you know where is--what is dat--not da high school but da oder school.

Ellen: The intermediate school.

Lincoln: Yeah.

Ellen: Yeah—that's this boat harbor.

Lincoln: Over der * * *.

Ellen: Yeah, that's the one. You have to drive in, right, and they have all the places for the boats.

Lincoln: Oh, yeah, yeah.

Ellen [pointing to the diagram]: So they have this part here and the rock comes out—so it's kind of a rock—so do you fish on this break—what they call breaker?

Lincoln: Yeah.

Ellen: OK, so the breaker at the boat harbor.

Lincoln: You know cuz we catch plenty fish because my fada (father) trow 'om far.

Ellen: So you need to tell us right here [pointing to the web] that we can catch fish because my father—what do you call it—cast. He casts the line out real far.

Carlton [who is writing at the desk across from Lincoln]: Las' time my dad—when he trow da stuff, da ting went right around da *.
Ellen: Wow! Did you folks ever have bad experiences too—nothing like that.

Lincoln: But my uncle's pole almos' go in da water. I wasn't der dat time. Only I go wit' my dad.

Ellen: OK, so maybe you could add that information here [pointing to the web]. At the boat harbor we fish from the rocks--the breakers, OK? We fish from the breakers. And then not only do you use good bait but your dad casts the line out real far.

Ellen works hard to find out exactly where the boat harbor is when Lincoln responds "on da long rocks," even drawing a diagram for a point of reference. When Lincoln replies--"No, I go anoder boat harbor in Makaha"--Ellen seeks further clarification and Lincoln answers, "Not da high school but da oder school." Ellen then gives the name of the school (intermediate), another example of vocabulary building. Once it has finally been determined that she and Lincoln are talking about the same place, then Ellen tells Lincoln the name for "da long rocks"--breaker and puts it into context for him--"OK, so the breaker at the boat harbor."

Ellen seizes another opportunity for vocabulary building in the next turn when Lincoln replies--"You know we catch plenty fish because my fada trow 'om far"--and Ellen tells Lincoln the word "cast" for "trow 'om far," again putting the word into context, "He casts the line out real far." In the last turn of the episode Ellen again places the two new vocabulary words (breaker and cast) into context so Lincoln can use them in his web. Under where Lincoln
then writes "we go on the brak [breaker]" and under **always catch** Lincoln writes "My dad cass [cast] it far."

In summary, the children in Ellen's classroom spoke with many features of HCE, the language of their culture. Ellen, in turn, occasionally spoke HCE herself as a means to solidify the sense of community in the classroom and to help the children clarify their meanings. The children often used HCE terms such as "da ting" and "da stuff" when they didn't know the English equivalent and Ellen helped her students extend their vocabulary by supplying words to them. All of these dialect issues are woven throughout the transcripts: hopefully, by discussing them now, the richness and unigeness of HCE will be all the more evident in the transcripts to follow.

I next discuss how Ellen structured the interactions with her Hawaiian students in culturally responsive ways in order to foster oral communication, the first of which is the use of "talk story" in class discussions.

**Talk-Story In Class Discussions**

Ellen Hino first used the talk-story participation structure in her small group reading discussions when she joined the KEEP program at the school in 1981. She found her reading discussions were more lively and produced a higher level of participation by the children than her more traditional way of directing the discussion had previously allowed. As she shared in an interview:
KEEP gave us [teachers] a good background. They shared their anthropological and sociological studies that they did and they made sure in our training that we did the talk-story...we had to be sure that we gave the kids time to interact and talk. They made me realize that you had to be more accepting of what the kids brought with them (Interview 3/16/92).

"Giving the kids time to interact and talk" or "talk-story" meant that the Hawaiian children "engaged in joint performance, or the cooperative production of responses" (Au & Mason 1983, 149). Thus the children often co-narrated a story line with overlapping speech where one idea was started by one child, continued or reinforced by another and possibly embellished or finished by a third child. But the teacher's authority was also crucial for the success of the lessons. As Au and Mason wrote about the teacher in their study:

Her exercise of authority seemed to be guided by two principles: breathing room and equal time. She gave the children breathing room by withholding criticism of their responses, except when they wandered from the topic of discussion. Answers given in dialect, if appropriate in content, were always accepted. Most importantly, the teacher created breathing room by permitting and even encouraging the occurrence of talk story-like participation structures which allowed the children to produce responses cooperatively. The second principle, equal time, was seen in the teacher's concern for the fair allocation of turns and speaking time within the group of children (Au & Mason 1983, 149).

Since talk-story had proven successful in her small group reading lessons and was part of the children's home culture, Ellen eventually encouraged it in her lessons, discussions and conversations with the children throughout
the school day, including writing workshop. In analyzing the transcripts from her classroom, Ellen permitted and encouraged the use of the talk-story participation structures in whole class mini-lessons, small group discussions and in her conferences with individual students when other students added their own comments and experiences to the conversation.

Ellen believed her students needed to be the authorities when it came to selecting writing topics, thus she often encouraged them to write from their own experiences and had class discussions about topics they were interested in. Often the children would raise the topics during class discussions and Ellen would follow up with them, but she also brought up topics for discussion that they might be interested in, such as their experiences at the beach, fishing, going to the swap meet, riding bikes, playing baseball and the like. She believed what the students knew about and talked about, they could also write about.

Throughout the study Ellen sought out topics for whole class discussions knowing that some students would use them in their writing while other students wouldn't. In the following transcript (3/10/92) Ellen is leading a whole class discussion about skateboarding. The preceding day during a lunch conversation with her students, Carlton brought up this topic and here Ellen capitalizes on it by
using it for her writing mini-lesson. The children are all seated on the floor and Ellen is sitting in front of them with a large piece of chart paper taped to the chalkboard so she can make a web for the children’s reference.

Ellen: At lunch, who was it? I was sitting by Lincoln, was it you? Oh, Carlton, was—we started talking about skateboarding, remember, and then Carlton was telling about your cousin or something skateboarding. It was interesting. How many of you skateboard? How many of you go skateboarding?

Children: I do! [Several children raise their hands.]

Ellen: Oh, quite a bit of you. You have your own skateboards?

Children [Several children raise their hands]: Yeah! Two!

Ellen: Oh, some of you got two. OK, put your hands down. You know, some of us have never experienced anything to do with skateboarding.

[Ellen next talks briefly to the class about what a "chicken" she is when it comes to balancing activities, including skateboarding.]

Those of you who know about skateboarding, tell me some things that you could tell other people about so that they would understand and they would feel your excitement. Tuafili, what can you tell us?

[seven seconds’ pause, no response from Tuafili]

Well, you think about it some more, OK. Maybe when others are talking, you’ll think of something. Raoul?

[six seconds’ pause, no response from Raoul]

Just one thing--one thing you would like to tell us about skateboarding?

Raoul: You hafta put one foot on da board.

Lincoln: Ollie.

Ellen [talking as she begins to fill in the web on the chart]: OK, so ONE FOOT ON THE BOARD AND--
Cherish: **One foot on the ground.**

Raoul: **And one foot on the ground.**

Tuafili [softly]: You can go two foot.

Ellen [writing]: **ONE FOOT ON THE GROUND--Why is this?**

Raoul: So that one foot can make yourself go faster--

Cherish: And den one foot for speed and balance.

Ellen: Oh, OK--this is actually--you're giving us a tip--one foot on the board and one foot on the ground.

Cherish: And den you can go fast.

Ellen [writing and talking simultaneously]: **FOR BUILDING SPEED AND BALANCE.** Lincoln, I heard you say a word!

Ellen begins the skateboarding discussion by first telling the class about her conversation with Carlton at lunch and then sets the stage for some of them to be skateboarding "experts" by inviting them to tell her what they know about skateboarding, implying what you have to do to be able to ride a skateboard. At this point, she calls on Tuafili, who is sitting in the back of the group next to Lincoln, but Tuafili does not respond, even though Ellen pauses for seven seconds. This was not unusual. As Boggs (1972) found in his study, when Ellen called on children directly in a large group, especially when they did not volunteer to speak, they often had no response. Raoul is also hesitant to answer initially, as Ellen pauses for six seconds, but then he answers her second inquiry: "One thing you would like to tell us about skateboarding." Once Raoul replies, this discussion takes off as the children jointly
respond, supporting and embellishing each others’ talk. In
the following transcript the discussion continues as Lincoln
brings up the skateboarding term "ollie," a term Ellen is
not familiar with.

Ellen: Lincoln, I heard you say a word.
Lincoln: Ollie.
Tuafili: Ollie, that’s what I said.
Ellen: Can you guys explain that?
Tuafili: Get ollie.
Ellen: What’s that?
Tuafili: Ollie, you gotta lift da back--get da back going up
like dat [Tuafili demonstrates with his hands] and you
gotta press da back and da ting gonna go up.
Ellen: So your skateboard has to be a certain shape?
Tuafili: Da back--
Lincoln: Da back goes up.
Ellen: The back has to be kinda like a wave.
Tuafili: Yeah.
Ellen: OK.
Tuafili: So you gotta press ‘om down, den da ting gonna go
up.
Raoul: And den gonna stop.
Ellen: So if you lean your weight on that back thing--
Tuafili: Your leg gotta go.
Ellen: Put your leg on that back part and then what,
Tuafili?
Tuafili: Fly up.
Lincoln: Da ting gonna fly up but.
Ellen: The front will lift up--
Lincoln: Even da back.
Raoul: And den you gonna stop.
Ellen: And that's what you call an ollie.
Lincoln: Not only da front gonna lift up, da back too--
Tuafili: Da back too.
Raoul: Da back gonna lift up straight.
Carlton: I know one.
Ellen: So what is an ollie then--it's just a trick?
Tuafili: Yeah!
Ellen [writing and talking]: OK--SOME TRICKS YOU CAN DO IS--
Carlton: I know plenty kine.
Cherish: An ollie!
Lincoln: An ollie!
Ellen: How do you spell that?
Tuafili [laughing]: I don't know.
Ellen: Me either. Ollie [spelling out loud] A-L-L-I-E. We'll just leave it like that. An ollie--when you send your board up.
Lincoln: You can do 'om on your skateboard.
Tuafili: Get some boards dat you can ollie in da front--get one--
Lincoln: Get two humps, one in da front--
Several children: Yeah! And one in da back.
Joshua: Dat's da fast kine.
Cherish: Dat's da Pro.
Ellen: Oh, so you got different kinds of skateboards.
Class: Yeah!
Ellen: Got Pro boards.
Lincoln: Even Pro wheels.
Joshua: Yeah, even Pro wheels. Dat's da kine dat go fast.
Tuafili: Slow poke kine.
Lincoln [laughing]: Some people get slow poke kine.
Ellen: OK, the Pro board has the two slopes?
Tuafili: Yeah.
Ellen: The front and the back.
Lincoln: But da junk one only get one.

This episode shows how Ellen and the children use some talk-story participation structures as they jointly define the term "ollie." Notice that Tuafili and Raoul, both hesitant to speak when directly called upon, now have much to volunteer and are quite dominant in the discussion, as is Lincoln. Tuafili and Lincoln were sitting in the back of the group and obviously were enjoying this interaction, while Raoul, who was sitting in the front next to Ellen and was often quite dominant in class discussions, is vying for floor time with his two classmates. Thus the children in the classroom were more willing to participate in class discussions when they could determine when to speak as compared to when Ellen called upon individual children.

The children also co-narrate their responses as they "piggyback" each other to explain how to ollie to their teacher. To an outsider these rapid exchanges might appear to be somewhat chaotic and unfocused, but, in fact, they are
highly orchestrated and the children are quite aware when
they should or should not contribute to the discussion. The
children seldom raised their hands and Ellen only once
called directly upon a student, Lincoln, so he could
elaborate his response. Notice in this episode when Ellen
calls upon Lincoln directly to elaborate his answer
("Lincoln, I heard you say a word") and Tuafili supports him
that Ellen does not close Tuafili out by insisting that only
Lincoln respond. The primary/supporting speaker pattern in
talk-story is illustrated by the Tuafili/Lincoln exchanges
in the transcript.

Because these whole class talk-story like discussions
can have such a high level of participation and several
children wanting the floor at the same time, Ellen needs to
control the turn taking and call on certain children as this
transcript next illustrates. It is several turns later in
the skateboarding discussion.

Raoul: I know but you move the wheels on dat one to go and--
Joshua: Yeah, but da one get.
Tuafili: Mrs. Hino!

Ellen [Several children are all talking at the same time.]:
Yes, Tuafili. Just a minute. Tuafili raised his hand.

Tuafili: You can jump ramp.

Ellen: That's another trick. You can jump ramp. Can you tell
us more. [lots of talking] Excuse me, girls. Cherish, I'll get to you. [to Tuafili] Can you tell us more
about jumping ramp.

Tuafili: You can jump high.
Ellen: Uh-huh.

Tuafili: And the boy jump * * * so when you ollie, da boy go like dat, den you gotta land on top da skateboard.

Ellen: So you gotta land when the board comes straight.

Tuafili: Yeah!

Because several children are all talking at the same time and to bring the discussion back to order, Ellen calls upon Tuafili when he calls out her name and raises his hand. And then she asks Tuafili, "Can you tell us more about jumping ramp?" inviting him to elaborate. When he next responds "You can jump high," Ellen focuses her attention directly upon him and says "Uh-huh" again asking for elaboration. In this instance, Tuafili becomes the exclusive speaker with the support of his teacher.

This discussion continued as the children told Ellen about their experiences jumping ramps, doing a 360 maneuver and how they sometimes got hurt riding skateboards. This discussion lasted for thirteen minutes from start to finish. Although the boys, especially Tuafili, Lincoln and Raoul, dominated much of the discussion, there was a high level of involvement from the class as they were anxious to tell what they knew about skateboarding and some of their own experiences. Even those children who did not say much were interested in the topic and enjoyed hearing about their classmates' experiences.

Ellen is quite adept at leading this kind of "talk
story" discussion and commented to me afterwards how much she enjoyed it and how much she learned about skateboarding. By placing the children in the situation where they were teaching their teacher what they knew, Ellen helps the children discover the implicit knowledge that is a part of their experience and their language. Ellen further supports their learning by the use of "talk story" which demonstrates that the children could be active participants in a discussion, given the right set of circumstances, including relinquishing some control of the turn taking and letting the children co-narrate their responses. Following this lengthy discussion, Tuafili and Lincoln went off together to write about their skateboarding experiences. Dwayne began some illustrations of making a skateboarding ramp, which will be discussed in chapter 7, and LaShawn started a skateboarding piece the following day.

The kind of "talk story" discussion illustrated by the skateboarding example was not unusual during writing time in this classroom. Often Ellen would open up discussions about topics she knew or felt the children were interested in--such as riding bikes, wearing earrings, and going to the Ice Capades. Often Ellen would read a trade book as part of her mini-lesson and then would open up the discussion for their comments. The children responded in "talk story" fashion in these open-ended discussions. In fact, two days after the skateboarding discussion, Ellen read to the class My
Skateboard (Wilson, 1987) and the children discovered that the term "ollie" was not used in the book. Here again the children "piggybacked" their responses to one another as Ellen helped them talk about what they knew.

Supporting Individual Students In Class Discussions

Studies by Boggs (1972, 1985) have claimed that Hawaiian students do not like to be asked direct questions; however, they do talk willingly and capably when they are able to initiate the conversation or can have the support of their peers, as just shown in the talk-story skateboarding example. But the talk-story participation structure could not always be used in the classroom, especially when one child was the focus of attention. When children shared their pieces of writing from their notebooks in an all-class meeting, some of them were reluctant to answer questions other children asked them even though they had chosen to be the center of attention. In these instances Ellen had to support the individual student being spotlighted or that student could "shut down" speaking or would "feel shame" (embarrassment) as the children expressed it.

Tuafili is one of the students Ellen had to support in the whole class meetings when the spotlight was only on him. In the skateboarding transcript Tuafili is the most dominant speaker in the class as he initiated many of the ideas about skateboarding and shared the "floor" throughout the discussion with his classmates. But Tuafili was often
hesitant to speak when he was the focus of attention. In this next transcript (1/27/92), Tuafili has volunteered to share a piece of writing about his trip to the "Mainland" during Christmas vacation. The children and Ellen are all seated on the carpet in a circle. First, Ellen gains everyone's attention.

Ellen: Good, everyone is looking at Tuafili ready to listen. When he's through reading, we'll tell him what we heard.

[Tuafili reads his draft softly and haltingly.]

I went to the malad to vasat my grad and my grama ban wan was are las day we went siding and we bia clos and pas and I was playing with my khsan football. and was cod up tar we hatto uos owr blangt the rplan was fun had good sik in the rplan

[I went to the Mainland to visit my grandpa and my gramma. But when was our last day we went shopping and we buy clothes and pants and I was playing with my cousin football. And was cold up there. We had to use our blanket. The airplane was fun. Had good snacks in the airplane.]

After Tuafili finishes reading, the children raise their hands and respond.

Ginger: You said you went to your gramma's to visit.

Shanelle: I heard that you was playing with your cousins.

Cherish [adding]: Football.

Napua: I heard that you was playing with your cousins.

Shanelle: I already said that already.

Keoni: Football.

Carlton: With his cousins.

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At this point Ellen steps in as the children begin to argue about what has and has not been said, what Boggs (1985) refers to as the "contradictory routine." This was quite prevalent in the classroom as verbal disputes were an important part of the classroom culture. By having the students "tell Tuafili what we heard," Ellen places the emphasis on listening to the writer and responding in a positive way. Ellen believed it was threatening enough for some of the children just to share their writing without the extra burden of having their classmates being too critical of the written text.

Next Ellen takes the spotlight off of Tuafili, who is feeling uncomfortable, and controls the sharing by asking the class a series of direct questions based on Tuafili’s trip to the Mainland. Notice how Ellen uses a sentence completion technique so many students can respond all at the same time.

Ellen: So what’s Tuafili trying to tell us in this story?
Keoni [responding quickly]: Football.
Ellen: He went for a visit to the--
Class: Mainland!
Ellen: What was the big change for him up there?
Joshua: It was cold.
Ellen: It was--
Class: Cold!
Ellen: And he had to use--

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Several students: Jackets! Blankets!

Ellen: Blankets to keep him warm, yeah. So on the last day he went to buy pants and other clothes, right, to bring back with him.

Cherish: And shoes.

Shanelle: Not shoes!

Although Ellen’s primary emphasis in all-class sharing was to give the children an opportunity to read their writing and have the class respond to what they heard, she also felt it was a time for the children to ask each other questions about their drafts. Ellen next asks the class: "Is there anything more you’d like to know about Tuafili’s trip to the Mainland?" When Ashley comments that she couldn’t hear it very well Ellen reads Tuafili’s draft to the class without any changes into standard English. Next Raoul asks Tuafili a question.

Raoul: Who did you play football with?

Several children [impatiently]: His cousins!

Raoul: You only said you played with his cousins football, but he didn’t say who he played with. I wanted to know the names.

Ellen [intervening]: Oh, you want to know the names. [to Tuafili] So these cousins were from the Mainland or they went up with you?

Tuafili: From the Mainland.

Ellen: OK, at the party you played. You met them and got to play with them. Oh, so is this why you went to the Mainland.

Tuafili: We just went to visit.
Ellen: Oh, OK. Let’s give Tuafili a hand for sharing. You did a good job, Tuafili.

Here Ellen buffers Raoul’s inquiry of the names of the cousins by asking Tuafili where his cousins were from and then closing the sharing session. Raoul would often criticize his classmates’ drafts, but Ellen controlled this, again feeling that she wanted the children to feel safe to share.

Thus the children’s interactions with each other, such as the “contradictory routine,” could get out of hand in a sensitive situation where the child was sharing with the class, and Ellen would intervene. From my own experience as the "writing teacher," many children volunteer to share their drafts, but, once they’ve done that, they "feel shame" about being in front of the class or answering any questions. Consequently, the teacher has to be sensitive to the child’s feelings and be careful when asking questions or determining how many questions the other students can ask of the writer.

The Children Question Ellen About Her Writing Processes

On occasion Ellen would model her own writing processes—retelling the experience she was drawing from, writing a first draft and asking feedback from the children, or how she decided what part to illustrate for a particular part of the text. These occasions gave the children opportunities to make comments and ask questions about their
teacher’s processes. It also placed Ellen as the focus of attention, thus alleviating the "shame" that some of the children felt when they answered their classmates’ questions and modelled for the children how to respond to comments and questions.

In this next transcript (1/31/92) Ellen has just finished sharing with the children a long account of her family’s fishing experience the previous summer at a trout farm in Lake Tahoe, California. In her account, Ellen uses a 6" metal pipe to kill the trout her son caught.

Keoni: Wow! Dat’s a long story.
Roylynn: Was funny one.

Ellen: Was funny? What do you mean was funny? What part was funny?

Roylynn: When you wen whack ‘om, da ting still moving and den you whack ‘om again and da ting go still moving. Ev’etime you wen whack ‘om, da ting go * * *.

Ellen: Yeah cuz we don’t do that in Hawaii, right?
Children [loudly]: No!

Ellen: When you catch, you just unhook it and you throw ‘om in the bucket.

Joshua: Da ting still moving but.

Ellen: It still kinda moves but we just throw it in the bucket, right? Isn’t that how you guys fish?

Children: Uh-huh!

Ellen: Just unhook it and throw it in a bucket and it’ll die.

Roylynn: Oh, we no *

Raoul: Gonna be dead.
Ellen: Yeah, you put a little water in it and then afterwards you put it in an ice chest, right?

Raoul: No, we leave 'om in a bucket.

Ellen: Oh, I know what. She gave me a bucket too and she gave me a wet cloth and she said after you kill the trout, cover it with the wet cloth. That's right, I had forgotten that. There was no water. We just had to cover the trout with a wet cloth. That was it.

Lincoln: Big pond?

Ellen: Oh, it was the size of this room.

Children: Whoa!

Ellen: Two ponds the size of this room and the trout was just jumping--trouts jump.

Raoul: You coulda just catch 'om with da net.

Ellen: That's what my oldest son said. He was having hard time catching so he said--I might as well just dip the thing and catch it--because they raise the trout. It's not a natural lake or a natural stream or a natural pond. They raise the baby trout and then they throw it into the pond so the trout is there and it's easy to catch. It's just like going to a carnival and playing fish pond, right? You always catch something. That's what it was like.

Roylynn: Yeah, you go and like dey give you something.

[several other inaudible responses]

Ellen: I'm glad I talked to you folks about this because I would have forgotten about covering the fish with the wet cloth so it was different. They didn't put water. They just cover it with a wet cloth. We didn't have a reel either.

Raoul: What was dat--bamboo pole?

Ellen: No, it was just a regular fishing pole, only thing, there was no reel. It was just like the bamboo pole--you know, you just cut the line.

Ellen chose to tell the students and write about her "trout fishing" experience with her family at Lake Tahoe
because of her students' interest in fishing, just as she chose to bring up skateboarding in the "talk story" example. She draws upon their knowledge of fishing so they can better understand what it might be like to go fishing at a "trout farm," and then lets the children respond to and question her about it. When Roylynn responds "Was funny one," Ellen receives her words with "Was funny," and then asks Roylynn, "What do you mean was funny? What part was funny?" asking Roylynn to elaborate. Ellen also asks for the children's verification of how they fish--"We don't do that in Hawaii" and "Isn't that how you guys fish?"--which again keeps them involved. Later Lincoln asks Ellen "Big pond?" and Ellen compares it to the size of the classroom and then compares her trout fishing experience with the children's experiences with fishpond at a carnival.

This episode shows that the children felt comfortable questioning their teacher in a formal classroom situation, as part of Ellen's mini-lesson, and that Ellen responded to them in an informal or almost conversational way, respecting their comments and questions, drawing them into the conversation and making connections to their own experiences. Because the children's own culture expected some distance between persons of authority and themselves, the ease with which Ellen and the children talk with each other in this classroom exchange is all the more striking. Ellen helps the children move beyond their ways of talking,
specifically in questioning her, and the children respond capably and enthusiastically.

Direct Questions to Individual Students Can Work (Most of the Time)

The children responded better in whole class discussions when they had the choice in joining or not joining the discussion. When Ellen called on them directly, without volunteering, they would often not respond or respond minimally (recall Tuafili and Raoul when Ellen called upon them directly at the beginning of the skateboarding discussion).

Even when some children asked to be called on in an all-class discussion and then Ellen would ask them to elaborate, they had very little to say. In this transcript (3/2/92), Ellen is with the entire class on a Monday morning asking the children to share what they did over the weekend to help them find new writing topics. Ashley shares that she went to the Swap Meet and Ellen asks the class if any of them go to the Swap Meet to sell things. Napua, who is usually quite verbal, is hesitant to talk once Ellen spotlights her.

Ellen: Who goes there to sell things?
Several children: I do. Me.
Napua [very loudly]: My gramma do.
Ellen: Gramma goes to sell. Do you go with her? You help her? What?
Napua: I just watch.

Ellen: You just sit and watch grandma and what happens? Do people come? [Napua nods her head yes.] And--

Napua: Buy.

Ellen: They buy and you help your grandma set everything up? Make it all nice. [Napua nods her head yes.] Oh, how interesting. [Ellen turns and starts to write on the chalkboard.]

Napua: She just sell flowers, dat's it.

Ellen: Oh, your grandma sells flowers and where does she get the flowers from?

Napua: From her garden.

Ellen: OK, she cuts all the flowers from her garden and she takes it to the Swap Meet and sells it there and you help her set it all up and people come and buy.

Napua: Yeah!

Even though Napua spoke out louder than the other children in order to be recognized, once Ellen asks Napua to elaborate ("Do you go with her? You help her? What?") Napua responds minimally ("I just watch"). Again, Ellen asks Napua to expand ("And what happens? Do people come?), but Napua only replies "buy" leaving out any specific details of the event. In episodes like this, when the children asked to be recognized and then had very little to say, Ellen tended to supply the details and asked for verification from the children, as she does here with Napua. Even though Napua had very little to share about the Swap Meet, she still began a piece of writing that day about her experiences there which was eventually published into a

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book.

Ellen also held individual writing conferences with her students where they were expected to speak and answer Ellen’s questions, which could be difficult for some children in the classroom. Boggs (1972) writes: "It is my hypothesis that it is basically unpleasant for a Hawaiian child to have a question directed to him by an adult, even if it is an attempt at friendly conversation" (307). Boggs collected his data in classrooms similar to Ellen’s but he reported on the children’s interactions with the adult observer in the classroom rather than the teacher. From my own experience the Hawaiian children are initially hesitant to speak, but once some trust is established, as with their teacher, they are receptive to inquiries.

Most of the time the children responded to Ellen’s inquiries because they were usually talking about topics they initiated and cared about, which facilitated their use of language in the conference. Here (3/2/92) Ellen is conferring with Dwayne about a piece of his writing. Notice what a willing conversationalist Dwayne is.

Dwayne: I don’t know what else I can write.
Ellen: What have you done so far, Dwayne?
Dwayne: I finish wit’ dis one.
Ellen: What is this one about?
Dwayne: My dad—me and my dad playing.
Ellen: Playing what?
Dwayne: Ball and all kine games.

Ellen: Today?

Dwayne: Da 29.

Ellen: Oh, this happened already. [after reading his piece] You were happy because your dad was going to stay home. He didn’t have to work and he was going to play Nintendo.

Dwayne: He play Nintendo wit’ me.

Ellen: OK, so what—tell us.

Dwayne: And den after we was pau [finished] playing Nintendo and den we went in da parlor play games, all kine games, like you know, da sticky ball.

Ellen: Oh, this thing in your hand, the big glove and then you throw it and the velcro’s on it or something.

Dwayne: And den my dad take me outside and den we play t’row t’row (catch).

Like Dwayne, most of the children in the classroom were very willing to discuss with Ellen the topics they wrote about in individual conferences, and Ellen’s conference style made the children feel comfortable so they could answer her direct questions. I will discuss this issue at length in the next chapter.

Summary

In summary, Ellen was culturally responsive to the participation structures of her Hawaiian students in whole class and small group discussions and in individual conferences with her students. First, Ellen supports their use of talk-story which gives them occasion to use oral language in a culturally familiar way. Second, she curbs
their cultural tendency to contradict each other. Their natural talk patterns are not appropriate for situations when a child shares a piece of writing with the class so Ellen has to redirect their talk in order for the child in the spotlight to feel safe. She is also aware that some children "feel shame" when they are in front of the class so she acts as a buffer between the class and the child. Third, she encourages them to question her, an authority figure. This is not customarily done in Hawaiian culture. Fourth, she asks direct questions to individual students with awareness that direct questions are not common in her students' culture.

The children's use of Hawaii Creole English in no way deterred them from participating in class discussions or conferences. However, Ellen worked hard to help the children "make meaning" (Wells 1986) in their native dialect, encouraging them to tell her more, interpreting what they said and providing new vocabulary words when appropriate. The culturally responsive issues discussed in this chapter, participation structures and the use of HCE, will continue to surface in the following chapters.

In the next chapter I discuss how Ellen's conferences resemble "instructional conversations" and how Ellen uses talk to affirm and extend the students' experiences. This in turn helped the children discover what they knew about their topics and gave them further ideas for their writing.
CHAPTER 5

CONFERENCES AS "INSTRUCTIONAL CONVERSATIONS"

IN ELLEN'S CLASSROOM

The teacher-student talk fueling the writing workshop is invaluable to all students, but even more so to those Hawaiian students in Ellen’s classroom who might not value their own experiences as topics for writing and who might view direct questions by an adult as basically uncomfortable (Boggs 1972, 1985). The very nature of writing workshop demands that teachers ask some direct questions to their students about their topics and their written texts, but if Hawaiian students are uncomfortable with direct questions, how could Ellen confer with her students?

In this chapter, I will show how Ellen’s conferences with her students are similar to "instructional conversations," (Tharp & Gallimore 1988) which appears to be a contradictory phrase but as Tharp and Gallimore explain:

The concept itself contains a paradox: "Instruction" and "conversation" appear contrary, the one implying authority and planning, the other equality and responsiveness. The task of teaching is to resolve this paradox. To most truly teach, one must converse; to truly converse is to teach (111).

I will also show that these Hawaiian children could engage in some lively conversations with their teacher and their classmates about their writing and, yes, could answer direct
questions, but that the teacher-student conference (rather than the all-class conference) seemed to be the best setting for this to occur.

I will examine these issues from the point of view that verbal behavior depends upon three conditions as determined by Labov (1970): (1) social context; (2) relationship of the speakers; and (3) topic of talk. If one of these conditions changes, then a person's verbal behavior can change dramatically. First, I will discuss these three conditions as they relate to Ellen's classroom. Second, I will show how the teacher-student talk in the conferences served different purposes: exploration, confirmation, redirection, shared knowledge and extension. Finally, I will discuss how Ellen's ways of conferring with her students are culturally responsive which allows them to answer her direct questions and engage in some highly interactive conversations.

Conditions for Talk in Ellen's Classroom

The Social Context: Writing Workshop

Ellen talked with her students during writing workshop in four different settings: (1) all-class meetings where the children sat on a carpeted floor with Ellen seated in front (or the student sharing) or all-class meetings where the children sat in a circle; (2) small group discussions at a round table; (3) individual conferences with students seated at their own desks but in a cluster of desks with other children; and (4) individual conferences with students.
seated at open tables throughout the classroom. The children's verbal behavior could be very different in these settings, as the transcripts will show.

In chapter 3, I described a morning time block focusing on writing workshop, where the children wrote in their notebooks, then a few of the children shared writing from their notebooks, and finally Ellen moved from table to table engaging the children in talk about their writing. Ellen arranged the children's desks in clusters of five or six, but she also had desks and tables around the perimeters of the classroom which the children could use if they wanted to. Most of the time, the children sat at their own desks, but sometimes they used one of the tables in the room and their friends would join them. Ellen believed in the collaborative nature of learning and never isolated a child from the group by making a child sit by him or herself. The cluster of desks also encouraged conversation among the children, as Ellen knew that Hawaiian children were more peer oriented than adult oriented (Boggs, 1985).

During writing workshop Ellen always sat down next to the children by using one of the empty chairs that might be in a cluster or by pulling up a chair. By pulling up a chair or sitting at an empty desk, Ellen became a member of the group. Of course, she was still the teacher but I believe she was less of an authority figure and assumed the role of an interested and helpful person. Conferring was
always done within earshot of other students, who often
interjected their comments or questions into the conference.

The Relationship of the Speakers: 
Teacher as Authority Figure vs. Community of Learners

Ellen was the children's teacher which made her the
central authority figure in the classroom. As such, she
commanded their respect and demanded certain behaviors. She
told the children what needed to be done and scolded certain
individuals whom she thought were not putting forth their
best effort. In return, the children were co-operative and
attentive. When she sat in front of them to give a lesson
about writing or lead a discussion, they listened and
responded.

At the same time that Ellen was the authority figure in
the classroom, she was also a member of the classroom
community who had outside interests. She often shared her
own life stories with her Hawaiian students, as shown by her
family's "trout fishing" experience in chapter 4, for the
purpose of modelling that writers draw from their personal
experiences. By sharing her writing with them and asking
for their response, she became a member of the writing
community in the classroom. During the school day, Ellen
often shared her own experiences with the children, not just
for modelling the writing process, but because she enjoyed
telling her students about them.

Ellen's sharing of her life as a member of the
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classroom community also is evident in the transcripts. Ellen often shared her own experiences when she was conferring with her students about their writing. When Ellen was conferring with one of the students about a topic, the other students, who were working on their own writing, would also relate their own experiences to those being shared or discussed. These exchanges contributed to the "conversational" character of the talk during writing workshop.

The Topic of Talk: Writing about Personal Experiences

Most of the talk during writing workshop centered around the children's personal experiences and the writing they produced about those experiences. Although a few children wrote in other genres, personal narratives were the most prevalent. Ellen worked hard to validate the life experiences of all her students through all-class discussions or sharing and small group and individual conferences. Because she validated the children's life experiences through classroom talk, they had a bountiful supply of personal narratives to choose from and to write about. As Ellen made the daily rounds of talking with her students about their lives and their writing, the children came to know that she was truly interested in knowing about their lives and how they expressed their experiences in writing.

There was also the implied understanding in the
classroom that the teacher-student talk would lead to some kind of writing, and not just a sharing of life experiences between students and the teacher. Ellen set high expectations for her students at the same time she was conferring in a very conversational way. For the most part, the children worked hard and wrote as best as they could. There was little "scolding" on Ellen's part or children not working.

The teacher-student talk in the classroom during writing workshop affirmed to the students their experiences were of value not only to talk about but also to write about. The talk promoted the writing and the writing promoted the talk; it was a complementary relationship. Of course, not all the teacher-student talk during writing workshop led to specific topics for the children to write about, but much of the talk led the children to write about their personal experiences. The tone of the writing workshop was that the children had numerous life experiences to draw from to write about and Ellen tried to draw these experiences out so the children would be aware of them.

The interplay of these three conditions of verbal behavior (setting; relationship of speakers; and topic of conversation) had a considerable bearing on the teacher-student talk in the classroom. As I show how Ellen explores, confirms, redirects and extends the children's accounts of their experiences, I will refer back to these
three conditions because I feel they often determined how
the children responded in the classroom.

**Purposes of Teacher-Student Talk in the Writing Conference**

**Teacher-Student Talk as Exploration**

As Ellen was making her rounds to confer with the
children, writing topics had a way of popping up
unexpectedly, and, because much of the talk centered on the
children's experiences, it was only natural that other
children would overhear the discussion and join in. Ellen
took advantage of these occasions and used the conversation
as a way for the children to talk about their experiences
and then suggested that they write about them. The
following transcript (2/28/92) shows one such encounter.

Ellen is sitting at a cluster of desks with Lincoln,
Verlene, Raoul and Ginger. Raoul is illustrating his
published book and Ginger is continuing on her piece of
writing. Previously Ellen had a conference with Verlene
about her sunflower plant and recommended that Verlene add a
few more details so it could be published. Ellen next
suggests to Lincoln, who tells her that he doesn’t know what
to write about, that he look through his writing notebook to
see if there is a piece of writing that he would like to
expand. As Ellen moves over to sit closer to Ginger,
Lincoln, who is flipping through his notebook, mentions that
the two mice he had written about at the beginning of school
have both died. Raoul adds that his rabbits have also died,
to which Ellen responds:

Ellen: Oh, I remember Ethel (Raoul’s sister). When she was in here in second grade, she wrote a story about the rabbits. Does she still have that story?

Raoul: And we’re still yet getting more rabbits and they’re all dying.

Ellen: Where you picking up the rabbits from?

Raoul: Wild. We go up da mountain and catch ‘om.

Ellen: They’re hard to catch, the wild ones. They just run away.

Ginger [speaking softly]: One time, one time my dad cotch one rabbit. Da ting was running in my uncle’s yard and my dad cotch it.

Ellen: Your dad caught [emphasis] it and?

Ginger: It died cause da last time cause, I don’t know, my mom took ‘om somewhere.

Ellen: Oh yeah, and then?

Ginger: Dat was ours second rabbit. Da first one died, da one dat bit my dad.

Ellen: It bit your dad?

Ginger: Yeah, on da hand and had blood.

Ellen: Really?

Ginger: And my sister was going come up, but she fall on her head and had to rush her to da hospital.

Ellen: Oh, wow! Gee, exciting stories, Ginger. Did you write these stories down?

Ginger: No.

Ellen: Oh, you need to do that, huh? Tell us about the rabbits. So the first one that bit your dad that was a wild rabbit too or that was a pet?

Ginger: Dat was a wild rabbit.

Ellen: It was a wild rabbit. That’s the one your dad caught
[emphasis].

Ginger: No, da brown and white one my dad caught.

Ellen: OK, but the first one you had, a white--

Ginger: Rabbit.

Ellen: Rabbit, where did you get that one from?

Ginger: I don’t know. My dad got ‘om.

Ellen: He just brought it home?

Ginger: Yeah!

Ellen: And then what was he doing that the rabbit bit him on the hand?

Ginger: My dad took da cage out to da kine--took him out to play with him.

Ellen: Uh-huh.

Ginger: My dad let him run around.

Ellen: Oh, for exercise, yeah! And then when he caught it to put it in the cage, he--

Ginger: He bit his hand.

Ellen: So what did your dad do?

Ginger: He wasn’t hurt.

Ellen: Oh, it wasn’t that big of a bite.

Ginger [showing Ellen]: It was over here by his hand.

Ellen: Oh, but it was bleeding. And then later on, what--the rabbit just died?

Ginger: Cause da dog bit my rabbit. We have two dogs.

Ellen: So the dog killed the rabbit and then another time dad caught a brown and white rabbit in your uncle’s yard, brought it home, and that one just died.

Ginger: Yeah, cause we leave it on da side.

Ellen: Oh, it got cold and got sick. Ginger, write that down. That’s a nice story, huh, OK? When you have time,
put that story down.

Raoul: Even our fishes, only gold fishes, da cat was playing with 'om. He always trawing 'om out and trawing 'om back in da tank.

Ellen: Gee, you guys have lots of pet stories too. He’s (Lincoln) telling us about his mice. She (Ginger) had rabbits and then you (Raoul) had these goldfish and you had rabbits too. Lots of pet stories.

Raoul: Da cat and da stray dog dat we caught and tamed it--

Ellen [returning to Verlene]: OK, let’s get to you now.

Raoul: And each time it ran away it came back.

The conditions are right for an engaging conversation: a group of children working on their writing at a small cluster of desks, an interested teacher who responds to what the children are telling her and a topic that the children know and care about, their pets.

Ellen capitalizes on the moment when Ginger quietly tries to enter the conversation with her own recollection of her rabbit (One time my dad cotch one rabbit...), by mirroring back to her (Your dad caught it) and invites her to tell her more (and?). Then the conversation takes off as Ginger explains how her father caught a rabbit in her uncle’s yard and how another rabbit bit her father’s hand. Ginger also mentions that her sister fell on her head, but how these two matters are related is not resolved. The key here is that Ellen is an interested conversationalist who collaborates with Ginger as she explains about her rabbits. As Gordon Wells writes:
These are the conditions that foster language development: when one has something important to say, and other people are interested in hearing it. It is then that language and thinking most fully interpenetrate in the struggle to make meanings that capture what one has observed and understood and communicate that understanding to others (1986, 107).

Besides fostering language development, the conversation acts as a trigger for possible writing topics as Ellen reminds Ginger halfway through the conversation (...exciting stories, Ginger. Did you write these stories down?) and then again at the end (When you have time, put that story down). Keep in mind that this conversation took place during writing time, with the direct expectation that some of the teacher-student talk would lead to writing.

How did Ellen respond that made this conversation successful? In talking with Ginger, Ellen’s responses can be divided into at least seven different categories: (1) direct questions (What was he doing that the rabbit bit him on the hand?); (2) mirroring statements showing that Ellen understands what Ginger is telling her (When he caught it to put it in the cage); (3) cues indicating that she wants Ginger to elaborate (And then); (4) requests for information (Tell us about your rabbits); (5) summary statements (So the dog killed the rabbit); (6) personal comments (Gee, exciting stories, Ginger); and (7) suggestions (Ginger, write that down). Often Ellen’s responses are combinations of these categories, for example, mirroring statement and cue (Your dad caught it and?).

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But, even more importantly, Ellen responds to what Ginger is telling her by following Ginger's lead. In the early part of the conversation Ginger tells Ellen that her father caught a rabbit in her uncle's yard and another rabbit bit her father's hand. But there are still many unclear issues so Ellen seeks more specifics and clarification (What was he doing that the rabbit bit him on the hand?). In this context (a teacher-student conference at her desk), and supported by an interested teacher, Ginger is a willing conversationalist who feels comfortable talking about her rabbits. She not only answers Ellen's questions but volunteers new bits of information to the conversation.

Ginger does not speak with as many features of HCE as some of the other students in the class but HCE is still very much a part of her speech patterns (on da hand and had blood; my sister was going come up, but she fall on her head and had to take her to da hospital). Ellen does notice that Ginger uses the word "cotch" instead of "caught" and emphasizes the correct form of the word twice during the conversation (Your dad caught it; That's the one your dad caught). Ginger, in turn, picks up on this and uses "caught" correctly (No, da brown and white one my dad caught).

After this conference, Ginger took Ellen's suggestion and began a piece of writing about her rabbits, which she
later asked if she could work on during her lunch recess. Ellen’s short conversation with Ginger about her rabbits acts as the trigger for the writing topic and as an opportunity for Ginger to recall and verbalize her memories of her rabbits, which then can be included in the written text, which is below.

The first rabbit we had it bit my dad’s hand and my sister falled out of the car and we hat to brisk her to the doctor to put band’s on my sister fast and the next day my rabbit got etn from my bog and my dad pary my rabbit and when we mad cookput we sas a rabbit in my nosk yod my dad cob the rabbit and when my mom pick me and my birther up from my grams house my rabbit was dida dan my dad pary my rabbit.

[The first rabbit we had it bit my dad’s hand and my sister falled out of the car and we had to bring her to the doctor to put band-aids on my sister’s face and the next day my rabbit got eaten from my dog and my dad buried my rabbit and when we made cookout we saw a rabbit in my uncle’s yard. My dad grabbed the rabbit and when my mom pick me and my brother up from my gramma’s house, my rabbit was dead. Then my dad buried my rabbit.]

Ginger writes about her two rabbits, the first one that bit her dad’s hand and got eaten by her dog, and the second one that her father caught in her uncle’s yard and later died. The time transitions between events are uncertain, but she does focus the writing only on her rabbits. The connection between the rabbit biting Ginger’s father and her sister falling out of the car is unclear, but this matter is later resolved when Ellen talks to Ginger about her text at another conference (3/10/93).
Ellen [pointing to Ginger's text]: One more question. Over here you talked about this first rabbit and it bit your dad's hand. Then all of a sudden you're talking about your sister falling out of the car. Can you explain what that has to do with the rabbit?

Ginger: Yeah, cause when da--when da kine, he bit my dad's hand, my sister, she wanted to come over, she da kine, she fall off da car, she fall on da cement.

Ellen: So where did this biting happen, in the car?

Ginger: No, in da garage.

Ellen: So the rabbit was in a cage in the garage. Your sister was in the car watching?

Napua [interjecting]: And den she jumped out.

Ginger: She wanted for come down. She wanted for come down and she hit her head.

Ellen assumes there is a connection between Ginger's father getting bit and her sister falling out of the car and asks Ginger to clarify it for her. Ginger struggles to find the exact words to explain this and uses the common HCE term "da kine" until she can think of them (She da kine--she fall off da car). In this conference, Ellen later suggests that Ginger use another piece of paper, skip lines and "tell us what happened to your dad." Ginger worked on this piece for several more days, adding more details about her rabbits and about her other pets, her cat and her fishes. Eventually, Ellen helped her make it into a published book.

Ginger felt comfortable talking with Ellen throughout this process, from initial discussion of her rabbit until her book was published, answering Ellen's inquiries and freely adding more details. Ellen supported her by
responding to what Ginger told her and helping her with the written text. However, Ginger’s verbal behavior is remarkably different in another setting, the all-class share.

Contrast: Ginger Talking in an All-Class Share

Ellen asked Ginger if she could use her story about her cousin’s birthday for an all-class mini-lesson and Ginger agreed. As this transcript (3/9/10) begins, Ellen and Ginger are sitting on chairs in front of the class, who are seated on the carpet. Ellen has copied Ginger’s draft on chart paper.

Ellen: Ginger wrote two stories about going to a birthday party...I asked her if she wanted to work more on it and she said yes, but she would like your help. If you would listen to her piece and react to it, just like when I told you about my fishing story...I wrote this out for her...

[Ginger reads her text twice.]

My Cousin’s Birthday

On Saturday it was my cousin Michelle’s birthday. She made five. We sang Happy Birthday. The ice cream and cake was delicious. I had my second ice cream and cake.

Then my mom came to the party. My mom and my aunty went to meet my dad and my uncle at the mini-market. My cousin had to watch us at our house. We fell asleep. My cousin left us by ourselves. Then my mom and dad came home.

Ellen: Your reactions to the story...Make some comments.

[5 second pause]

Shanelle: Your cousin is five.

Ellen: Five year old birthday party.
[5 second pause]

Ellen [to Napua]: You’ve been to a lot of birthday parties, haven’t you? [to the class] Remember her story she read to us last Friday about her cousin’s birthday? Only thing, your birthday party was at McDonald’s...OK, any other comments? You people have been to birthday parties. I’m sure you’ve been to your cousin’s or your brothers and sisters have had parties. Can you say anything about those parties that could help?

Shanelle [softly]: My brother had a party.

Ellen: Shanelle, share with us.

Shanelle: My brother had a slumber party.

Ellen: Uh-huh.

[3 second pause]

Shanelle: October 8.

Raoul [imitating Ellen]: And?

Several children [imitating Raoul: And?]

[7 second pause]

Shanelle: And after, dey put a tent out so dey could sleep outside in da night.

Raoul: And?

Ellen: So they stayed over. [to the class] In Ginger’s party, did people stay over at the party?

Several children: No.

Ellen: No, it was at her cousin’s house and then they left to go home. Anything you want to ask her to learn more about her cousin’s birthday. She wants to work more on this story so can you help her?

[10 second pause]

Tim: Ginger, is there anything else you remember now that you read this piece that happened at the party? [Ginger nods head yes] What?

Ginger: Games.
Napua: She forgot to add that.

Ellen: Tell us more about the games.

Ginger: I forgot.

Ellen: Oh, you forgot the games.

[18 second pause]

Ellen: My son went to a party yesterday and you know what they played?

Class: What?

Ellen: Nintendo...they rode ponies too...He said, "Mom, we got to play Nintendo. We played Genesis."

Napua: Mrs. Hino, on my birthday, I had a Game Boy.

Ellen [to Napua]: Oh, you got a Game Boy for a present. [to Ginger] Did you get to play with your cousin’s presents?

Ginger: He didn’t get much.

Ellen: Oh, he didn’t get much. Any other questions, boys and girls?

Several children: No.

Ellen: So, do you want to continue with this piece? [Ginger nods her head yes.] What do you think you would like to work more on, Ginger?

Ginger: Games.

Ellen: OK, you had a question about games and you said you couldn’t really remember. Were those games then enjoyable? Did you have a lot of fun with them? Did you get prizes for them?

Ginger: Grab bag.

Ellen: Oh, you got a grab bag for them.

[The all-class share ends as Ellen asks the class where Ginger would add the information about the grab bag if she wants to.]

Ginger’s verbal behavior is very different in this
transcript as compared to the two previous transcripts when she is explaining to Ellen about her rabbits. Although Ginger agreed to have the class respond to her draft, she shares nothing about the party except that they played games at the party and she got a grab bag. The other students in the class do not volunteer many comments or questions, although Ellen asks them to think about the birthday parties that they have been to (Can you say anything about those parties that could help?).

Shanelle shares that her brother had a slumber party, but she is hesitant to tell more although she is prodded to by Raoul who imitates Ellen by asking "and." When this goes nowhere, again Ellen asks the class, "Anything you want to ask her? She wants to work more on this story so can you help her?" At this point, the silence is interminable (only on rare occasion did I ever make a comment or ask a question) and I ask Ginger a question--"Is there anything else you remember now that you read this piece that happened at the party?" Ginger responds "games," but does not elaborate even when Ellen makes a request for more information (Tell us about the games), to which Ginger replies, "I forgot." Again, there is an eighteen second pause as Ellen waits for the class to make further comments or questions, but then she herself breaks the silence by telling the class about the party her son went to.

Ginger was obviously uncomfortable with being
spotlighted and being put in the position of having to answer direct questions. Because Ginger does not share any information, most of Ellen's inquiries are direct questions (mine too) as Ellen looks for an opening to get the sharing moving. But this all-class share falls flat, punctuated by the children's inability (or unwillingness) to made comments or ask many questions, the long pauses and Ginger's unwillingness to tell any new facts about her cousin's birthday party. Possibly, Ginger didn't recall any more details about the party but I feel it was more a matter of her "feeling shame" at being in front of the class that led her to react in this way. At the end of the all-class conference, Ellen wisely asks the class, and not Ginger, where Ginger could add the details about playing games if she wants to, taking the spotlight away from Ginger. After the all-class conference, Ginger did not change her text in any way.

Certainly not all children in the class were as uncomfortable as Ginger in an all-class share, but some children in the class reacted in this way and Ellen needed to be sensitive to this. Afterwards, Ellen mentioned that she was sorry that she asked Ginger to share with the class. Ginger's verbal ability in the two settings is striking. In the teacher-student conferences Ginger shares many anecdotes about her rabbit, while in the all-class share she is hesitant to say anything. Possibly Ellen could have
reworded her statements to the class (She wants to work on this some more so can you help her?), but all of the children’s and Ellen’s inquiries are met with minimal response resulting in an awkward situation.

**Teacher-Student Talk as Confirmation**

In the last transcript, Shanelle is the student who tells about her brother’s slumber party with some prodding by Ellen and her classmates, especially Raoul. Here is that part of the transcript again.

Ellen: I’m sure you’ve been to your cousin’s, or your brothers and sisters have birthday parties. Can you say anything about those parties that would help?

Shanelle [softly]: My brother had a party.

Ellen: Shanelle, share with us.

Shanelle [softly]: My brother had a slumber party.

Ellen: Uh-huh.

[3 second pause]

Shanelle: October 8.

Raoul [imitating Ellen]: And?

Several children [imitating Raoul]: And?

[7 second pause]

Shanelle: And after, dey put a tent out so dey could sleep outside in da night.

Raoul: And?

Ellen: So they stayed over.

Shanelle, who initially responds to Ellen’s inquiry, is
very hesitant to talk once she is "spotlighted." Although Ellen requests more information (Shanelle, share with us), Shanelle responds only minimally after some prodding and long pauses.

Like Ginger, Shanelle's verbal behavior is very different in another classroom setting, the teacher-student conference. In this setting Shanelle not only answers Ellen's questions but also volunteers new information without any prodding or hesitancy. Here (1/29/92) Shanelle is working on her draft about Chinese jump rope when Ellen approaches her. There are several other children sitting at the cluster of desks including Napua, who is sitting next to Shanelle.

Ellen: What's this piece? What are you trying to tell us?

Shanelle: Jump rope.

Ellen: About jumping rope. Why don't you read it to me.

Shanelle [reading her text]: I played jump rope with my friends. I got to the third floor and I had fun playing jump rope. I had to do Chinese steps because I had to do one foot off. It is hard.

Ellen: OK, so this is about jump rope.

Shanelle: First goes three, den two, den one. Three is wide, two is skinny and one is only one foot.

Ellen: OK, this is not regular jump rope--it's Chinese jump rope? [Shanelle nods yes.] Oh, you played Chinese jump rope with your friend.

Shanelle: Yeah.

Ellen: OK, and you go to the third floor and--

Shanelle: Dat's wide.
Ellen: OK.

Shanelle: And den two feets together and den one feet.

Ellen: Oh, that's interesting. You're the first person who has ever explained Chinese jump rope to me. I never understood it. So when you start, you start off close with both feet close together?

Shanelle: Yeah.

Ellen: And what do you do inside?

Shanelle [clapping as she talks]: Den I go 10, 20, 30, 40, 50, 60, 70, 80.

Ellen: OK, and then you move the rope. Each time the rope gets wider.

Shanelle: No, skinnier.

Ellen: Oh, gets skinnier--and you do different things in it, jumping and you have fun playing jump rope and the best thing is doing Chinese steps and Chinese steps means doing one foot.

Shanelle [demonstrating with her hands]: Yeah, all I have to do is spread da rope and den just go like dis.

There is a considerable contrast between the two class settings; in the all-class setting Shanelle is very hesitant to talk, yet in the individual teacher-student conference, Shanelle is a willing conversationalist as she patiently explains to her teacher the intricacies of Chinese jump rope, a popular activity on the school playground. Ellen states: "You're the first person who has ever explained Chinese jump rope to me; I never understood it," verifying to Shanelle that she is the authority on this subject and confirming what she has written. Ellen then asks Shanelle what she is going to do next with her piece.
Ellen: Um-hum, so what are you gonna do now?

Shanelle: I’m gonna do ano’der foot.

Ellen: You’re gonna tell us some more about it, OK, fine. So what are you gonna tell us?

Shanelle: After I do da washers.

Ellen: So after you do this, the next step is to do--

Shanelle: Washers, den ice cream cone.

Ellen: OK.

Napua [who is sitting next to Shanelle, softly]: Den da butterfly.

Shanelle: One is wide and skinny, den da wash--den after, um--

Napua: Da butterfly.

Shanelle: Yeah, da butterfly is last, dat’s all.

Ellen: Oh, OK. So you’re gonna expand this more, write more things about what you did? [Shanelle nods yes.]

When Ellen asks Shanelle what she is going to do with her text (So what are you gonna do now?) and Shanelle responds, "I’m gonna do ano’der foot," Ellen asks for the particulars (So what are you gonna tell us?). Shanelle then tells Ellen that the next "feet" in Chinese jump rope are washers, ice cream cone, and with Napua’s help, finally the butterfly. Ellen leaves Shanelle at this point to continue with her writing, to make those decisions on her own.

Shanelle first makes some changes on her original text and adds the other "Chinese steps" that she told her teacher about in their conference. As Shanelle is writing, she and Napua enlist the help of Cherish, another avid participant.
of Chinese jump rope, to come up with the complete steps in Chinese jump rope. Here is the final text:

I playd jump rope with my friends I got to the 3 floor and then to the 2 floor then to 1 foot I had to do cins steeps. It is herd. I had to do ice cream cone me then I had to do washschret then butterfly then hse kiss then trvle then blids. then rambes then dasee then laz bones.

[I played jump rope with my friends. I got to the third floor and then to the second floor, then to one foot. I had to do Chinese steps. It is hard. I had to do ice cream cone, then I had to do washerette, then butterfly, then Hershey kisses, then travels, then blindies, then rambees, then daisies, then lazy bones.]

Ellen’s three minute conference with Shanelle serves several purposes. First, it confirms to Shanelle that she is writing about an interesting topic ("You’re the first person who has ever explained Chinese jump rope to me.") Second, it gives Shanelle an opportunity to explain how to play Chinese jump rope, complete with clapping and hand motions. Third, it gives Shanelle an opportunity to list the other steps in Chinese jump rope with Napua’s input. When Ellen ends the conference, Shanelle then comes up with a rather lengthy list of more jump rope steps with the help of Napua and Cherish, which verifies to all three of them their life experiences are of worth and could be possible writing topics. Two weeks after this conference, Cherish wrote her own piece about playing Chinese jump rope with her cousin, in which she explains even more intricacies of the game.

This teacher-student conference, which was typical of
many in the study, acts as confirmation to Shanelle and the other girls that their experiences are of value to write and talk about. Ellen’s role is to act as a sounding board and to draw out the specifics of the experience.

Teacher-Student Talk as Redirection

Like many students, the children in Ellen’s classroom sometimes didn’t see the everyday activities in their lives as possible writing topics and would choose dead-end topics that couldn’t go anywhere. Consequently, Ellen would draw out from her students the explicit knowledge of their experiences and then would redirect their writing to one she felt might be more appropriate.

This next transcript (2/12/92) occurs during writing workshop as Ellen moves around the room conferring with the students. Carlton is sitting at a round table next to Lincoln who is illustrating his published book. Carlton has transferred from another school in November and is still quite dependent upon drawing for writing. He has drawn two boys riding the waves on their surfboards and several fish in the water. As Ellen approaches Carlton, he says he is writing a "fake story" about surfing. Ellen comments that he has to do a "lot of imagining" when he is writing a made-up story. Then she asks him if he goes to the beach.

Ellen: You do go to the beach? Do you surf? [Carlton nods yes.] You have your own board?

Carlton: I use my cousin’s.

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Ellen: Oh! How big is it?

Carlton: Big.

Ellen: Real big. Like from what--the size of that trapezoid table?

Carlton: Bigger dan dat.

Ellen: Bigger than that, like---

Lincoln [who has been listening and coloring]: To dat table like dat.

Ellen: Yeah, the length of this. [Ellen gets up to show Carlton the length of the trapezoid tables.]

Carlton: To..like ***.

Ellen: From there to here. That looks like a six foot board then. [Carlton nods yes.] It’s a six foot board and--

Lincoln (commenting): Get more room.

Ellen: And you carry it?

Carlton: I don’t carry it!

Ellen [surprised]: You don’t carry it. OK, how do you get it to the water then?

Carlton: Push ‘om.

Ellen: Oh, you push it down to the water.

Carlton: I no like carry ‘om. Bumbye (after a while) my arm come sore.

Ellen: Of course, yeah. That’s what I wanted to know. How do you get it from the sand into the water. All right, so when you go the the beach sometimes you borrow your cousin’s six foot surfboard and you push it into the water. It’s in the water now, so how do you jump onto the board?

Carlton: I stand up.

Ellen: So you got it in the water and then you stand on top of it? Here you are, come. [Ellen asks Carlton to demonstrate for her.] OK, you push the board into the water. The board is in the water, the shallow part, so what do you do next?
Carlton: Jump.

Ellen: You just jump on top the board?

Carlton: And lie on da board.

Ellen: OK, so you kinda lie on the board. You put your body on the board.

Carlton: Den I paddle, den I stand up.

Ellen: OK, so you're lying flat on the board and then you paddle, OK, until you get where?

Carlton: I paddle until get wave.

Ellen: All right. So you gotta paddle far out, right to where it's deep and then when you see a wave, then what do you do?

Lincoln [interjects]: You turn around and you paddle so da wave and--you paddle and den you go up.

Ellen [to Carlton]: Is that right?

Carlton: I stand up.

Ellen: Oh, he stands up. He doesn't paddle back.

Lincoln: I know but you gotta turn around and paddle, den stand up.

Carlton: I stand up.

Ellen: Oh, OK, so you paddle out 'til where you see a wave coming and then you paddle around and you turn the board around.

Carlton: Den I stand up.

Ellen: Then you stand up and you catch the wave and come in.

Lincoln: Yeah!

Ellen has a different agenda in this conference. A "fake story" would be appropriate for Carlton to write about, but Ellen recognizes that a novice writer like Carlton might find it easier to write about his own
experiences. Once Ellen confirms that Carlton has some personal knowledge of surfing (Do you surf?), and the size of the board has been determined, she takes Carlton through the steps of riding a wave (pushing the board into the water; lying on the board; paddling out; catching a wave; and riding the wave into shore). Lincoln follows Ellen’s line of questioning and moves the conversation along, obviously enjoying the social interactions. At the end of the conference Ellen suggests to Carlton that he use his knowledge of surfing and draw about it.

Ellen: Well, this doesn’t have to be a made up story then. You could tell us about your surfing, huh? You have a lot of information. Please try and put it down. You know what you could do--[Ellen turns to the next blank page in his writing tablet]--why don’t you do the illustrating first. Maybe you could draw a big board and yourself here to show us that the board is real big [turning to the next page], then the next one you draw a picture of you pushing the board into the water and then [turning to the next page] you said you lie down on the board and you paddle out and then the next one you can be standing on the board and then coming in. You catch the wave and you come in.

Carlton: Den I fall down.

Ellen [laughing]: And then you fall down. Ah, shucks, then you fall down.

Lincoln: Cause you gotta balance good.

Ellen: Right, so you’re just learning yet. So maybe in about ten years you can enter the surfing contests if you keep practicing...Just do the illustrations first and then I’ll come back and help you with the writing. Can you do that? [Carlton nods yes.] Well, OK. Get started then. We’ll start with page one. Just like you were telling us, OK? Just do the illustrations.

In this final section of the transcript Ellen validates
to Carlton what he has already demonstrated to her and Lincoln and asks him to "tell us about your surfing; you have a lot of information." Instead of asking him to write it, which would have been quite difficult, Ellen capitalizes on Carlton's love for drawing by encouraging him to do the illustrating first and she will come back and help him write the words later. She even helps him to visualize how the book might look by turning the pages over for him and giving him possible illustrations for his book. After the conference, Carlton drew himself standing holding a "big" surfboard, and the following day Ellen helped Carlton write a sentence about it. Carlton worked on his "surfing story" for six days and Ellen returned to him several times during this time to help him sound out the words he needed. It was eventually published in an illustrated book, which was shared with the class.

Ellen talks much more than usual in her conference with Carlton. She is almost feeding the words to Carlton, who keeps saying "I stand up," even when he tells her that is the first thing that he does on the surfboard when he enters the water. But Ellen's enthusiasm for taking Carlton through the steps of surfing, including the demonstrations, and Lincoln's support, is even more important than Carlton himself talking about surfing. Ellen redirects Carlton into writing about his experiences with surfing as a means of helping him learn to write.
Teacher-Student Talk as Mutually Shared Knowledge

The talk in the conferences led to the teacher and the students relating their own experiences to those being shared. This mutually shared knowledge between teacher and students helped to reinforce the social interactions in the classroom and contributed to the conversational character of the conferences, where the students felt it was appropriate to interject their own experiences. These exchanges between teacher and students were spontaneous and interspersed throughout the talk during writing workshop. For example, when Ellen was conferring with Shanelle about how to play Chinese jump rope, Napua tells Shanelle that the next step is the butterfly, and in the all-class share with Ginger, Ellen tells the class about the party her son went to.

Sometimes mutually shared knowledge could be the focus of the teacher-student conference, as in the "pet stories" transcript, but, more often, they crept into the conferences and became part of the flow of the conversation. Here Ellen is conferring with Napua (3/30/92) who is writing a draft about playing tetherball with her twin sister, Lehua. Shanelle, Tuafili and Cherish are also sitting at their desks working on their writing.

Ellen: What are you working on?
Napua: My tetherball story.
Ellen: Tetherball. Oh, where did you get this idea from?
Napua: I got it from Cherish. She told me dat she played tetherball so I get one tetherball and I play ev’ry day.

Ellen: You have a tetherball?

Napua: And a pole--my own pole.

Ellen: You get your own pole! Was it yesterday’s paper? They showed these two kids. They wanted to play tetherball and they didn’t have a pole so you know what they used?

Napua: What?

Ellen [laughing]: You know the stop sign. There’s a stop sign outside their house so they tied the tetherball rope on the stop sign and they were playing. I should bring that paper. It was in last night’s paper, I think.

Napua: You know some people--some people, if they don’t have no tetherball--

Shanelle [who is sitting next to Napua and has been listening]: Dey tie ‘om on top da light pole.

Napua: Not! If dey don’t have der own tetherball, not pole--

Ellen: Oh! If dey don’t have der own tetherball, not pole--

Napua: Yeah, you know what dey use--dey use a ball and dey use one package and den dey tie one rope on top and den dey put ‘om on da stop sign.

Ellen: Oh, so they get a big package and they put the ball in the package. They tie a rope around the end of the package.

Napua: Yeah!

Ellen: Oh, that’s smart.

Napua: But when dey hit ‘om hard, da ting fly off and da ting go down da road.

Ellen [laughing]: That’s right, yeah, so they have to find a better way to tie that rope on.

Once Ellen discovers that Napua has her own tetherball and her own pole, she tells her about the recent picture in
the local newspaper of the two "kids" using a stop sign as a tetherball pole. Napua next parrots Ellen's entry into the conversation (Ellen: you know the stop sign...; Napua: you know some people...) and tells about seeing people wrapping a ball in a package and tying it to a pole, but if they hit the ball hard "da ting fly off and da ting go down da road." Shanelle answers Napua's question to Ellen (Dey tie 'om on top da light pole), but Napua contradicts Shanelle (Not!) and continues with her explanation. Tuafili, who is sitting across from Napua, then chimes in as the transcript continues.

Tuafili: At da park get.
Ellen: What?
Tuafili: Tederball, get dis lady named Rachel. She get volleyball and tederball.
Ellen: And you can borrow it from her?
Napua: Yeah, you can borrow 'om.
Tuafili: When I was der, we used to sign our address and phone number.
Ellen: Oh, make sure you return it, right? Otherwise she come after you.
Tuafili: Give you a call.
Ellen: Yeah, she call your house. [To Napua] So you go there to play tetherball too? [Napua nods yes.]

Tuafili enters the conversation with his own shared knowledge about tetherball ("At da park get...dis lady named Rachel, she get volleyball and tederball"--who loans out
sports equipment.) Although Tuafili is working on his illustration for his published book he also feels comfortable interjecting his own experiences into the conversation. Again, the pace of the "writing conference" is relaxed. Ellen's initial focus is on Napua and her topic, not on the written text. Only after a leisurely conversation where Ellen tells about the tetherball picture in the newspaper and Napua shares her personal recollection, which then leads Tuafili to tell about the "tetherball" lady at the park, does Ellen then ask Napua to read her text and later shows Napua how to make some revisions to her text.

Teacher-Student Talk as Extension

Ellen: So let's see what you have written about tetherball.
Napua: Read it?
Ellen: Yeah!
Napua [reading her text]: on vacation I play ta-to-ball want my sister I won my sister and my sister cridn an she tod my mom about me want i did and I didn't gat lakan fome my mom she got lakan but i got soling and when i want in the house my dad did gave me lakan.

[On vacation I played tetherball with my sister. I won my sister and my sister cried and she told my mom about me--what I did--and I didn't get lickens (spankings) from my mom. She got lickens but I got scoldings and when I went in the house my dad didn't give me lickens.]

Ellen: Wait. Did or didn't. [Napua wrote did.]
Napua: Didn't.
Ellen: Oh, she just got upset because you beat her.
Napua: Yeah.
Ellen: Oh, no wonder your mom didn’t scold you.

Napua: She one poor sport. Ev’rytime my friends come over, she play ‘om and den they won her and den she got mad and den I gotta go in da house.

Ellen: Oh, but this time you were lucky. You didn’t get punished. Mom knew all about Lehua.

Napua: Cause I told her.

[Here Ellen briefly tells about how she has seen people play tetherball.]

Ellen: So you and Lehua played tetherball outside and you won.

Napua: Yeah, and then she got mad at me.

Ellen: Because she lost.

Napua: No, she one poor sport, dat’s why.

Ellen: Oh, she went in the house and she told your mom. It [the text] says here [reading] She told my mom about me--what I did. What was it that you did that was so bad?

Napua: I just won her and den she got mad.

[Here Napua tells Ellen why she is a better player than her sister.]

Ellen: Are you going to teach Lehua (how to block the tetherball)?

Napua: No.

Ellen: Why not?

Napua: I don’t know.

Cherish: She like win!

Ellen: Well, we all do, I guess--we all want to win. We can’t all win, yeah. That’s why it’s nice if you taught Lehua a little trick so it would be more fun, right? At least she’ll be able to hit the ball back and you can have a real game.

Napua: We tried getting da practice ball, da soft kine, da yellow one cuz we get da hard kine ball, the game ball,
da real game ball, but my mom was trying to get two balls, da oder one and da soft one. Can practice wit' da soft ball.

Ellen: Oh, that would be good for Lehua. Well, I'm glad you told me about you having a pole and why you're a little better than Lehua. Do you think that would be helpful information to add here [pointing to the paper] for other people that read it about why you do a lot better than Lehua. [Napua nods yes.] Where would you add that? [Ellen reading] ON VACATION I PLAYED TETHERBALL WITH MY SISTER. I WON MY SISTER.

Napua: Right here.

Ellen: Yeah, right here. Maybe you could draw an arrow, come down to here, and then tell us about what you do--why you're able to beat Lehua. You get a lot of practice and your cousin showed you how to play.

Napua: Yeah.

Ellen: How to hit the ball hard and how to block.

Napua: Yeah.

Ellen: OK, you want me to make notes?

After hearing Napua's text, Ellen makes the comment, "No wonder your mom didn't scold you," upon which Napua gives a lengthy description of her "poor sport" sister. At this point Ellen questions Napua (What was it that you did that was so bad?) as she sees some inconsistencies in Napua's written text. After discussing why Napua is a better player than her sister, Ellen suggests to Napua that she draws an arrow to the bottom of her page and "tell us about what you do, why you're able to beat Lehua." Before Ellen leaves, she makes some notes for Napua to use in her writing (practice, cousin teach, block). Napua draws an arrow and writes: "my cousin teach me how to block the ball"
and "I practice avre (every) day with my cousin to gat (get) good."

The end result of this conference are the two sentences above, but much more occurred than that. The conference begins with a leisurely exchange of mutually shared knowledge of tetherball (Ellen’s, Napua’s and Tuafili’s) and then focuses on Napua’s written text, which leads to even more talk about why Napua’s sister is a "poor sport" and how to play tetherball. Ellen affirms Napua’s love of tetherball by having Napua talk about her experiences with her twin sister and also affirms to the children at the table that their everyday experiences are worthy topics. Ellen continually prods for elaboration and clarification of Napua’s text instead of focusing on her spelling errors. Napua also learns the revision strategy of using an arrow and adding more text. However, the focus of the conference is what Napua knows about her topic and secondarily on revision strategies, which are not an important consideration for this second grade writer.

Ellen’s Conference Style: "Instructional Conversations"

The experience of a perfectly tuned conversation is like an artistic experience. The satisfaction of shared rhythm, shared appreciation of nuance, mutual understanding that surpasses the meaning of words exchanged, goes beyond the pleasure of having one’s message understood. It is a ratification of one’s way of being human and proof of connection to other people (Deborah Tannen, Conversational Style, p. 152).

Ellen’s conferences with her students at their desks
were like "instructional conversations." She sat down with her students and engaged them in talk about their experiences and their written texts. As a member of that group, she listened to their experiences, told them of hers and the other children at the table felt comfortable telling about theirs too. The social interactions between Ellen and the children were relaxed in the teacher-student conferences as they conversed about their lives and their writing. The students viewed her as a conversational partner and responded to her comments and inquiries. In contrast, the all-class share for some students seemed strained as the children struggled to think of comments and questions and the person sharing felt uncomfortable, at least in part, because of cultural upbringing.

Labov writes that "the social situation is the most powerful determinant of verbal behavior" (1970, 163). Since the participants (Ellen and the students) and the topic of conversation (the children’s experiences) remained constant, the social context of the talk was the primary variable in the classroom. Some children seemed more comfortable in the teacher-student conference as compared to the all-class share where they would clam up (recall Ginger and Shanelle). Some children did not like to be spotlighted in the all-class share, so the teacher-student writing conference was a better setting to talk about the writing.

During the teacher-student conferences, Ellen responded
to her students' writing by asking questions that were of interest to her. She mirrored back to the children what they told her, which invited more response. She seldom just asked a series of direct questions, but responded in ways that invited response much like a person does when they are having a conversation with a friend. For Ellen, the writing conference was not an interrogation but rather an occasion for her to talk with her students about their interests and lives. She viewed writing workshop as the best part of her school day because she got to know her students better through the conferring.

As in a conversation, Ellen let the talk at the tables digress for she knew that these digressions might lead to additional insights for the writer and might bring up other writing topics. She did this when Lincoln brought up the death of his mice, which eventually led to Ginger talking about her rabbits. Some teachers might not have seen the possibilities of where that conversation could go, but, instead, Ellen capitalized on it because she was always seeking openings.

Sometimes in the conferences she asked the students to explain connections that were unclear to her as she did when Ginger told her about her rabbits. Sometimes she redirected the student to write from his own experiences as she did with Carlton in his surfing piece. Other times, she responded to a draft and left the child on her own to
complete the writing, as she did with Shanelle in her Chinese jump rope piece. Sometimes she directed students to add more information to their texts, as she did with Napua.

As in a conversation, she shared her own experiences with the writer. When Roylynn wrote about the presents that her grandmother gave her on holidays and her birthday, Ellen told her about her two sons, who were more interested in the presents than their grandmother, which then digressed into a conversation about the children's best birthday presents.

Ellen's main emphasis during writing workshop was on the writer and not so much on the writing, although that was important too. Ellen believed that the "key" to improving her students' writing was through oral language so she strove to give her students opportunities to talk about their interests and experiences. By placing her emphasis on oral language and not the text, Ellen's talk in the classroom was more of a conversation with a writer rather than a "scripted" writing conference; it also was in tune with the children's culture. The payoff for Ellen was that the children had ample opportunities to discuss with her their various interests and experiences, some of which the children wrote about and some they did not. Even though much of the teacher-student talk did not end up in the students' writing, it still gave these Hawaiian students an avenue to talk about their own experiences. This was no small matter for these bidialectical students, who spoke in
one dialect and wrote in another. The students' ability to codeshift is the subject of the next chapter.
CHAPTER 6

SHIFTING BETWEEN TWO CODES:
TALKING IN HCE AND WRITING IN SE

Historically, many people in Hawaii, educators among them, have attributed most of the students' problems in academic learning to their use of Hawaii Creole English (HCE). As a consequence, the Department of Education in Hawaii established the English Standard (ES) School system in 1924 for those public school students demonstrating a certain proficiency in standard English. Although the ES system was abolished in 1948 and the last class from high school graduated in 1960, there is still a large segment of the general public who believe that the children's use of Hawaii Creole English causes them lack of success in school and later in life.

As previously discussed in chapter 1, in 1987 the Hawaii Board of Education (BOE) tried to formulate a policy where "Standard English will be the mode of oral communication for students and staff in the classroom setting and all other school related settings." However, as Sato writes, the policy was not favorably received by many segments of the community:

Immediate opposition to the policy was voiced by many: Parents, teachers, university faculty, native Hawaiian professionals and community activists. It was directed
at the policy's implicit denigration of HCE, as well as at Board members' unprofessional rejection of research in creole languages, second language acquisition, and language teaching which uniformly discredited the assumptions and directives of the policy (1989, 202).

Two of the major concerns voiced by opponents to the policy were: (1) HCE was a vital part of local identity and (2) the acquisition of SE should not result in the loss of HCE as a means of communication. The BOE, who only presented the policy because they thought it would help insure students' academic success, were surprised by the strong opposition and soon afterward adopted a much weaker version of the policy which stated that "staff will encourage [emphasis added] students to use and practice oral standard English." This compromise pleased many teachers who were opposed to any policy that would discourage student participation in the classroom.

Like most children of lower or middle class ethnic minorities in Hawaii, the second grade students in Ellen's classroom all speak some Hawaii Creole English. The degree in which they speak HCE varies considerably, but it is the dominant language for most of the students, especially when they talk among themselves. As the transcripts show, most of the students speak with some features of HCE in large group, small group and in conversations with Ellen. HCE is the language of their upbringing and the community so it is only natural that it also be their language in the classroom.

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Ellen never discussed with her students the fact that they spoke HCE as she did not want to make them feel self-conscious or inferior about their language. Ellen’s main focus in the classroom was to enable her students to communicate in any way possible as has been demonstrated by the talk-story discussions, by the children’s use of HCE and by Ellen’s own occasional use of HCE as a culturally appropriate response. Furthermore, Ellen never told her students that she expected them to write in standard English so the codeshifting between the oral language of Hawaii Creole English and the more formal written language of standard English was primarily done by the children themselves. The students developed this expectation for written language in SE by hearing stories read aloud to them, reading stories themselves, encountering varieties of print in SE and watching teachers demonstrate writing, among others.

This chapter will address four main issues related to Hawaii Creole English and the students’ writing:
1. In what ways did the oral language of HCE become evident in the students’ writing?
2. If students were sensitive to differences between their oral language and written standard English, did they do anything on their own to move their texts in the direction of standard English?
3. How did Ellen help some students codeshift from the oral
language of HCE to the written text of standard English?
4. What was the students’ awareness of their codeshifting between talking in HCE and writing in standard English?

**Evidence of Hawaii Creole English in the Students’ Writing**

Even though the students’ primary spoken language was HCE, there is very little evidence of Hawaii Creole English in the students’ writing. Even those students who spoke extensive HCE with Ellen in the classroom still wrote primarily in standard English.

For the purposes of comparison, I will first present the oral language of Lincoln, one of Ellen’s students, and then present the written text that Lincoln wrote after his conversation with her. In this transcript (4/14/92), Ellen sits down next to Keoni and Lincoln for her first writing conference of the day. Keoni is telling Ellen about playing with his friend’s battery-driven, four-wheeler racing car and Lincoln joins in the conversation.

**Keoni:** She get four wheeler--you know da kine ** **

**Lincoln [interjecting]:** Oh! I wen ride da four wheeler before.

**Ellen [to Keoni]:** It has a battery in it?

**Keoni:** Yeah, one big battery.

**Ellen [to Keoni]:** Right, and the back tires are real huge, kinda big. You can ride on the sand.

**Lincoln [excitedly]:** I wen ride ‘om, one blue one. Me and my cousin jump da hill, get one track go like dat [demonstrating with his hands], one big one. Den my oder cousin came on and had us three on top. My cousin
wen try jump ‘om. We got stuck and den we had to give up and push ‘om and den we had to go.

Ellen [laughing]: In the sand. What do you mean you made a track?

Lincoln: No, da oder people did for ride four wheeler.

Ellen: OK, what do you mean?

Lincoln: They made ‘om out of da sand.

Ellen: Oh, so you pile up the sand and make a couple of hills?

Lincoln: Yeah and den just go around, good fun.

Ellen: So you guys were on this track too?

Lincoln: Yeah! It was my mom’s birthday and we was camping.

[Here Keoni briefly tells about his own birthday party.]

Ellen [to Lincoln and Keoni]: So what are you gonna get started on?

Lincoln: Oh, I gonna write about da sand one, da four wheeler.

Ellen: The four wheeler getting stuck--yeah, that’s funny.

This conference between Ellen and Keoni and Lincoln was typical of most in this classroom, where Ellen engages her students in open talk. Both boys had just finished a piece of writing the day before so Ellen sat down next to them at the beginning of writing workshop. As Keoni and Ellen are conversing about Keoni’s four wheeler toy, Lincoln recalls his experience at the beach riding a four wheeler and tells about it. In a conversational manner, Ellen gives Keoni and Lincoln an opportunity to talk about their experiences with the knowledge that this might trigger a writing topic and

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her belief in the importance of oral language, whether any specific writing emerges from it or not. Both Lincoln and Keoni use many features of Hawaii Creole English in their conversation with Ellen, who makes no effort to correct their speech patterns. Instead, by allowing the boys to talk, Ellen helps to make them aware of all the knowledge embedded in these experiences, and of how much they have to write about.

Before I present Lincoln’s writing, I will first take a closer look at Lincoln’s oral discourse and the features of HCE in it. After Lincoln first interjects his topic ("I wen ride da four wheeler before"), he gets the floor four turns later and lunges into an extended discourse about his experience at the beach. Here is Lincoln’s complete monologue separated into sentence fragments for purposes of closer analyses.

I wen ride ‘om, one blue one/ 1
Me and my cousin jump da hill/ 2
Get one track go like dat, one big one/ 3
Den my oder cousin came on/ 4
And had us t’ree on top/ 5
My cousin wen try jump ‘om/ 6
We got stuck/ 7
And den we had to give up and push ‘om/ 8
And den we had to go/ 9

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Lincoln’s speech patterns are representative of many HCE speakers. He uses *wen* plus the simple form of the verb to indicate past tense in lines 1 (*wen ride*) and 6 (*wen try jump*). The use of *wen* as a past tense marker is probably the most common indicator of HCE speech. Lincoln uses *’om* as an unmarked pronoun in lines 1 (*wen ride ’om*, referring to the four wheeler), 6 (*wen try jump ’om*, referring to the track) and 8 (*push ’om*, referring to the four wheeler). Lincoln also uses *one* as the indefinite article in lines 1 (*get one track; one blue one*) and 3 (*one big one*). Lincoln uses the HCE feature of *have* or *get* as compared to "there be" in standard English in lines 3 (*get one track go like dat*) and 5 (*had us t’ree on top*). These are just some of the features of HCE that Lincoln uses in this short passage. Notice that Lincoln does not speak exclusively in HCE; he also uses some SE, as in the sentence *we got stuck*; in HCE Lincoln would have said *we wen get stuck*. Thus his speech is a combination of both HCE and SE, as it is with most HCE speakers. Lincoln also speaks in the rapid manner associated with HCE and his pronunciation of certain sounds is representative of HCE speakers (*den* for then; *dat* for that; *oder* for other; and *t’ree* for three).

Following this brief conversation with Ellen, Lincoln began a detailed drawing of his camping experience at the beach, focusing his drawing on riding the four wheeler. The next day (4/15/92) Lincoln finished his drawing and began to
write his draft in his notebook, a project that took two more writing periods.

Below is Lincoln’s complete draft in the left column with the transcription in the right column.

On the weekend we went to the beach. It was my mom’s birthday, and my uncle asked his friend to ride his four-wheeler at the beach. My cousin packed me. He took me to the tracks. The first time we jumped the hill but when my other cousin was on we cried to climb the hill again but we didn’t make it so we had to push it back down. Then we went to the tent. Then my uncle packed my mom to. Then I went to somme when I got out my cilsn pack me i gan but tuss time we went i rod the trak we went i rod ti tioes.

On the weekend we went to the beach. It was my mom’s birthday. And my uncle asked his friend to ride his four-wheeler at the beach. My cousin packed me. He took me to the tracks. The first time we jumped the hill but when my other cousin was on we tried to climb the hill again but we didn’t make it so we had to push it back down. Then we went to the tent. Then my uncle packed my mom too. Then I went to swim. When I got out, my cousin packed me again but this time we went around the track. We went around it twice.
Even though Lincoln's speech is predominantly Hawaii Creole English, his written text is almost exclusively standard English. The only grammatical difficulty Lincoln has with standard English in his text is that he fails to include the ed ending on the simple form of the verb to indicate past tense (ask instead of "asked," pack instead of "packed," and jump instead of "jumped"). This is not surprising when you consider HCE speakers form the past tense by using wen plus the simple form of the verb (wen ask, wen pack, and wen jump). Nevertheless, Lincoln is still able to use the correct form of the irregular verbs go (we went to the beach); take (he took me to the tracks); come (when my uncle came back; and get (when I got out).

When you compare how Lincoln talked about the heart of the experience—riding the four wheeler—and the manner in which he wrote about the incident, you can see how well Lincoln codeshifts between talking in HCE and writing in SE. Here again is part of Lincoln's oral text telling Ellen and Keoni about his experience at the beach.

Me and my cousin jump da hill/
Get one track go like dat, one big one/
Den my oder cousin came on/
And had us t'ree on top/
My cousin wen try jump 'om/
We got stuck/
And den we had to give up and push 'om/
Yet, when Lincoln writes about his experience he is able to codeshift to the formal written English with little difficulty. Here is part of Lincoln’s written text presented in the same kind of sentence fragments as his oral text.

My cousin pack me [carried as a passenger].
He took me to the tracks.
The first time we jump the hill.
But when my other cousin was on, we tried to climb the hill again but we didn’t make it so we had to push it back down.

Lincoln is able to write about his four wheeler experience with his cousins in some detail as he codeshifts into written standard English, no mean feat when you consider this second grader was not expected to do this nor had he been taught how to do it. Nevertheless, he accomplishes it with relative ease mastering the complexities of written English. The text itself has an opening summary statement (On the weekend we went to the beach. It was my mom’s birthday.); a central theme (riding a four wheeler; and supporting details (who rode and what happened). It is quite a complete piece of writing.
Students Move Their Texts in the Direction
Of Standard English on Their Own

The students in Ellen's classroom also worked out for
themselves how their written texts might better conform to
standard English norms. This was accomplished without any
direct prodding from Ellen but more as a matter of what is
acceptable written English by the individual student. Here
are two examples of children codeshifting by themselves--one
in conference with Ellen and the other in writing by
herself.

Carlton, an emergent writer, has drawn a picture of him
and his cousin playing "shark" in the water. His text,
which he has written himself, reads I play shark. During
the conference (2/21/92) Ellen suggests to Carlton that he
tell more about it.

Ellen: Maybe you could tell us some more here--you played
shark--what else can you tell us about this part? [10
second pause] What's happening in the picture?

Carlton: My cousin trying for out me.

Ellen: Your cousin, OK. So this is your cousin and he's
trying to out you. So you play shark in the water.
[reading his text] I PLAY SHARK. Do you want me to add
for you in the water? [Carlton nods yes.] [Ellen reads
and writes.] I PLAY SHARK IN THE WATER WITH MY COUSIN.
So what happened?

Carlton: He couldn't catch me.

Ellen [writing and reading]: HE COULDN'T. Could you finish
it up--catch...

When Ellen asks Carlton to tell what's happening in his
drawing, he answers *My cousin trying for out me* (SE equivalent—My cousin is trying to get me out). Like Lincoln, Carlton speaks in HCE—in this instance the absence of the copula "is" (*my cousin trying*) and the use of *for* as a complementizer (*for out me*). Yet after Ellen adds to Carlton's original sentence (*I play shark in the water with my cousin*), and she asks him to expand, Carlton then gives the words for the written text in standard English (*he couldn't catch me*). Carlton has the ability to codeshift from the oral language (HCE) of *my cousin trying for out me* to the SE written text of *he couldn't catch me*. Since Carlton's shift from HCE to SE occurred as Ellen added to Carlton's sentence, it demonstrates Carlton's awareness of what code is appropriate for his written text.

The second example (2/11/92; 2/12/92) comes from La Shawn, another emergent writer, who is writing about her dog. Ellen has written for LaShawn on the second page of her story (*SHE [the dog] RAN AWAY. SHE RAN OUT OF THE GATE.*) On the third page in her booklet LaShawn has written *AND MY BROTHER WAS HAPPY*, getting help with the spelling from the children at her table. In the writing conference, Ellen asks LaShawn why her brother is happy that the dog ran away and LaShawn shares that her brother is scared of dogs. Ellen suggests to LaShawn that she add to her draft why her brother is happy and leaves LaShawn on her own to do the writing. After the conference, LaShawn wrote the following—
-because he is sad of our hang dog (because he is scared of any kind dog). "Any kind" is an HCE idiom referring to *all kinds* or *every kind,* such as *Get any kind candy in dat box* (Carr 1972). But when LaShawn read over her sentence "because he is scared of any kind dog," she added of so that the text now read *any kind of dog.* The following day when LaShawn read this sentence to Ellen she read it as *because he is scared of all kinds of dogs.* Again, the progression LaShawn made is as follows:

MY BROTHER WAS HAPPY BECAUSE HE IS SCARED OF--

1. first writing (2/11/92)--ANY KIND DOG
2. rereading to herself (2/11/92)--ANY KIND OF DOG
3. rereading to Ellen (2/12/92)--ALL KINDS OF DOGS

In this example LaShawn is able to codeshift from the HCE expression *any kind* to a closer approximation of standard English *any kind of dog* and, upon still another reading, comes up with the standard English expression *all kinds of dogs,* even adding the plural *s* to *kind* and *dog.* Although this is a very complex task, LaShawn’s careful rereading and her own sense that something is amiss enables her to code shift from Hawaii Creole English to written standard English.

Ellen Helps Her Students Codeshift From HCE To SE

Although most students in Ellen’s classroom spoke with many features of HCE, they wrote primarily in standard
English; however, there were a few students who needed
Ellen's help on occasion to make this transition. One such
student was Tuafili, who was Samoan and a "heavy pidgin"
speaker. Tuafili was a reluctant writer who sometimes did
not accomplish much during writing workshop. He had
difficulty with spelling and often asked the other children
at his table for help to spell words. When Ellen was
conferring with Tuafili, he could "clam up" (as Ellen
referred to it) when she questioned him about his writing.
Yet, as the skateboarding talk-story episode has shown,
Tuafili could on occasion be the most dominant speaker of
the classroom--that is, when he could choose to have the
floor and was supported by his classmates.

In this next transcript (3/6/92), Ellen sits down next
to Tuafili at his desk. He has in front of him an empty
notebook but on the previous day had shown Ellen his scraped
knee and she had suggested that Tuafili write about it.

Ellen: You were gonna tell us how you got all those sore
cuts on your knee. What happened?

Tuafili [softly]: I fell down.

Ellen: Huh?

Tuafili: I gribble.

Ellen: What?

Tuafili: I wen gribble.

Ellen: You gotta tell me more about this cause somebody else
used that same word--grable--and I didn't understand
it. So can you start from the beginning? What were you
doing and then explain grable.
Tuafili [softly]: Gribble.

Ellen: What were you doing first?

Tuafili: I was ready to get race.

Ellen: You were riding bike--

Tuafili: I was ready for race but when I wen press hard da chain wen broke and I was slide--sliding--and I was slide down.

Ellen: Um-hum. And?

Tuafili: And me and my friend was racing and my friend wen call my brother.

[Here Tuafili tells about his brother coming and going into his house to get a band-aid for his sore.] [Note: See pages 89-91 for an analysis of this part of the transcript as to when Ellen uses HCE in the classroom.]

Ellen: So let me get this straight then. You and your friend were having a bike race, right? And when you were pushing down on the pedal, the chain broke.

Tuafili: No, I wen press--da pedal was up, den I press down, den da chain wen broke, den I * * * and da bike was still going and I fell down.

Ellen: The bike was still--you were on the bike and it was still going.

Tuafili: And I was gonna get off.

Ellen: Um-hum.

Tuafili: But da--da handles wen turn, den I wen slide.

Ellen: Oh, and you grable. Now when you grable, what--you fell into the rock?

Tuafili: No, never had no rock. I was on da road.

Ellen: Oh, OK. You just fell straightforward and mostly your knee got hurt. Good story, hmmm.

Tuafili: Even over here. [He shows Ellen his other knee.]

Ellen: Must be sore, looks sore.

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Ellen works hard as Tuafili tells her about his bike accident. She listens intently, although she misunderstands "gribble" for "grable," and tells back to Tuafili what she is hearing, commenting about the details of the incident and asking him questions when it is appropriate. Tuafili is a willing conversationalist in this episode, answering Ellen's questions and volunteering specific details. At the end of the conference Ellen suggests that she help Tuafili to write about the accident.

Ellen: Can you write this story, huh? You did a good job explaining it. You want me to help you get started with it, huh? If I help you get started, can you try and finish it, hmm? I can help you with some of the writing, OK? Let's try. So how do you want to start it? Just the way you told me at the beginning.

Tuafili: I was ready for get race...I was ready for race with my friend. I was in the middle.

Ellen [reading and writing]: I WAS GETTING...

Tuafili: Ready for race.

Ellen [reading and writing]: getting READY...

Tuafili: For race.

Ellen [reading and writing]: TO RACE. What??

Tuafili: My friend.

Ellen: But with what, to race with what?

Tuafili: Da bike.

Ellen [reading and writing]: OK, race BIKE WITH MY--one friend or two?

Tuafili: That was his brother.

Ellen: So two guys, so three of you were going to race--
Tuafili: Cause my bike was on da side cause was flat. Dat’s why I couldn’t ride ’em.

Ellen [reading and writing]: I was getting ready to race bike with my FRIEND AND HIS BROTHER.

After Ellen elicits from Tuafili the details of his bike accident, she helps shape his oral language into a written text by acting both as his language facilitator and scribe. Ellen first asks Tuafili—"How do you want to start it? Just the way you told me at the beginning"—and Tuafili responds, "I was ready for get race...I was ready for race with my friend." Tuafili shifts to the more conventional wording without any direction from Ellen by leaving out get from his statement, but as Ellen takes Tuafili’s dictation, she changes his wording from HCE’s for race to SE’s to race. The progression is as follows:

1. Tuafili [initial statement]—I was ready for get race.
2. Tuafili [self-correction]—I was ready for race.
3. Ellen [acting as scribe]—I was getting ready to race.

Ellen also works hard to have Tuafili tell her who he was racing with, one or two friends, and she includes this information in his text. Next Tuafili volunteers that he was riding his brother’s bike.

Ellen: And where were you? Your bike was in the middle?
Tuafili: And my brother’s bike was big.
Ellen: Oh, you were riding your brother’s bike.
Tuafili: Yeah, da chain always broke.

Ellen [reading and writing]: I WAS RIDING MY BROTHER’S BIKE. HIS CHAIN ALWAYS BROKE.

Tuafili: Even when he ride. He ride slow when he race.

Although Ellen is acting as the scribe, this time she does not change Tuafili’s oral language—*da chain always broke*. Instead, she writes Tuafili’s statement almost as he said it—*HIS CHAIN ALWAYS BROKE*—because it was Ellen’s belief that for some students, like Tuafili, if she changed the language too much, then the students could not recognize the text as their own and would not be able to read it. The conference ends as Ellen suggests what Tuafili might write on his own and asks him to read the text so far.

Ellen: It wasn’t a good idea to race this bike, yeah. [reading] His chain always broke. Now can you go on over here and tell us what happened when you almost pushed down on the pedal?

Tuafili: Yeah, and da ting wen broke.

Ellen: The chain broke.

Tuafili: And da ting wen fas’ down.

Ellen: You were going on a hill?

Tuafili: No, started from da bump.

Ellen: OK, let’s read what you have so far then.

Tuafili [reading very slowly]: I was getting ready to race bike with my friend and his brother. I was riding my brother’s bike. His chain always broke.

Ellen [turning to the next page in Tuafili’s notebook]: So you’re going to start here—when I push on the pedal. Tuafili, this is a neat story. Work hard on it.
Although Ellen wrote the text for Tuafili, he is able to read it, although somewhat haltingly. Here again is the first page of Tuafili's bike accident story.

(page 1) I was getting ready to race bike with my friend and his brother. I was riding my brother's bike. His chain always broke.

After Ellen leaves, Tuafili continues to write in the next page in his notebook. He worked on this draft this period and the next day the class had writing. His writing and the transcription is below.

(page 2) When I push the pado the chain broke. Then I when silad down on the grond. My lag was bleeding. I went in the hos to gat bandad.

(page 2) When I push the pedal the chain broke. Then I (wen) slide down on the ground. My leg was bleeding. I went in the house to get band-aid.

(page 3) then I went wes in the hos and ladr then I went fas the charn.

(page 3) Then I went wash in the house and later then I went fix the chain.

Tuafili is able to complete his story about his bike accident, although he has some difficulty with the correct use of verbs. On page 2, he does not indicate the past tense of the verb push. He also uses when silad for the past tense of the verb "slide," thus replicating his speech pattern in HCE (wen slide). On page 3, he writes went wes (went wash) and went fas (went fix) to indicate past tense. Again, Tuafili uses three different ways to indicate past tense other than standard English.
1. push instead of "pushed"
2. wen slide instead of "slid"
3. went wash and went fix instead of "washed" or "fixed"

When Ellen had a publishing conference with Tuafili, she left some of the text as he wrote it, including some of the influences of HCE, and made some minor changes to his text. This again was consistent with her belief that if she made too many changes she took away ownership from the students and they wouldn't be able to read their text. Below is Tuafili's final text as it was published.

(page 1) I was getting ready to race bike with my friend and his brother. I was riding my brother's bike. His chain always broke.

(page 2) When I push the pedals the chain broke. Then I went sliding down on the ground. My leg was bleeding. I went in the house to get band-aid.

(page 3) Later I fix the chain.

The Students' Awareness of Codeshifting Between HCE and SE

The students in Ellen's classroom codeshifted rather easily between talking in HCE and writing in SE. The transcripts of teacher-student talk and the children's writing attest to this. I was interested in the children's awareness of the codeshifting that they managed so adeptly; therefore, three weeks after I had completed classroom observations, I interviewed each student (5/26/92; 5/27/92; 6/3/92). I waited until after I finished collecting my data because Ellen and I both felt that we didn't want the
children to be self-conscious about how they talked or how they wrote during the data collection.

I did not ask the children a prescribed set of questions during the individual interviews. Rather I presented them a sentence in Hawaii Creole English and asked them how they would write it.

Tim: People might say--**I wen ride my skateboard.** How would they write that?
Student: I rode my skateboard.

Tim: People might say--**Us never have money.** How might they write that?
Student: We didn’t have (any) money.

Tim: People might say--**Easy for play dis game.** How might they write that?
Student: It’s easy to play this game.

After completing three or four examples, I asked each student to explain to me how they were able to talk one way but write in another way. Although most students were able to hear these sentences in HCE and tell them back to me in SE, they had some difficulty explaining to me in any depth how they were able to codeshift. Below are some of their responses.

Dwayne: I just do that.
Shanelle: I change the words around.
Brian: I add more words to it.
Joshua: I make new words.

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Roylynn: I say different words.
Carlton: You change words.
Verlene: You change the words around.

"Changing the words around" is how many students referred to their ability to shift codes from speaking in HCE to writing in SE. It is not surprising that many of these second graders would respond so similarly since the main differences between Hawaii Creole English and standard English are found in the grammatical features and not in the lexicon. "Changing the words around" is the primary task for these students who speak in one code and write in another and their ability to move back and forth between the two codes can be seen in the transcripts and in their writing. When they spoke they used both HCE and SE, but they wrote almost exclusively in SE.

Raoul was the most capable writer in Ellen's classroom and he was the only student who could explain in any detail when and how he codeshifted.

Raoul: I change the words because you figure out that it doesn't sound right... like sometimes I talk pidgin and then I write it a different way.

Tim: And how do you do that?

Raoul: I just say it over in my mind and find out if it doesn't sound right.

Tim: It doesn't sound right?

Raoul: Yeah!

Tim: So you think about how it should be--
Raoul: In just plain English and not pidgin English.
Tim: So how do you know about pidgin?
Raoul: My mom.
Tim: What does she say about it?
Raoul: She says what it sounds like and she says that everybody speaks pidgin sometimes.
Tim: Yeah, they do, don't they because we live in Hawaii. They speak in pidgin, but when they write they--
Raoul: Write in plain old English.
Tim: Who would you speak pidgin to?
Raoul: Joshua.
Tim: Why Joshua?
Raoul: He's my best friend and we both talk pidgin sometimes.
Tim: So you speak pidgin to your friends?
Raoul: Yeah, because it sounds better to me.
Tim: Do you ever write any pidgin?
Raoul: No, never.

The discussion with his mother about "pidgin English" helps Raoul's awareness of codeshifting. Raoul states that he speaks in "pidgin English" to his friends because it sounds better but writes in "plain old English." When I asked some of the other students if they ever heard of "pidgin English," no one indicated they knew what I was talking about. Even though these second graders had never heard of the term "pidgin English" like Raoul or couldn't explain why they "changed the words," they had a tacit
understanding of when to speak "pidgin" and when to write in "plain old English."

Even though Ellen never explicitly taught her students about codeshifting in school, her students learned about codeshifting because they were implicitly taught about it. All the written texts in school, those they have read or have read to them, are in standard English. Teachers model standard English in their own writing, e.g., through morning message. For the vast majority of these students, this implicit instruction is enough to get the idea across that all writing in school should be in standard English.
CHAPTER 7

DWAYNE: ONE STUDENT, ONE PIECE OF WRITING

Ellen is typical of most teachers who teach writing workshop: she helps her students choose topics that they know and care about. She also gave her students time in class to write about these topics and she conferred with them about their writing throughout the process. Yet, as the data has shown, Ellen had to talk to her students in ways that were uniquely responsive to their Hawaiian culture, use of the "talk-story" in group discussions and use of Hawaii Creole English, among others. In previous chapters I discussed the issues of language (HCE) and culture (participation structures), how Ellen’s conferences resembled "instructional conversations" and how the children spoke in HCE but wrote in SE.

In this chapter I want to show how these issues come together to affect students’ writing. I will do this by showing how the teacher-student talk supported one student, Dwayne, and one piece of his writing, Skateboarding, throughout the writing process from the idea stage through final publication. You will see how Ellen uses Dwayne’s drawings as the basis for extended conversations, which are then incorporated into a written text with Ellen’s guidance. You will see how Dwayne is able to continue writing on his
own without Ellen's support, but that the on-going conversations between Ellen and Dwayne keep the writing going and give it form as Ellen collaborates with Dwayne to help him write about his skateboarding adventures. Finally, you will see that speaking in HCE in no way hinders Dwayne from writing in SE.

Dwayne was born in Virginia on March 14, 1984, turning eight years of age during the course of the study. Dwayne's father is Afro-American/Hawaiian and his mother is Hawaiian. After Dwayne's father completed his military service, the family returned to Hawaii when Dwayne was three years old. He is an only child. Dwayne speaks Hawaii Creole English as his primary dialect, but codeshifts easily between HCE and standard English. Like most other children I observed in the classroom, Dwayne's usage of HCE increased when he spoke at length. Dwayne is slightly built, with dark skin and short curly hair. He usually wore colorful shorts, a t-shirt and rubber slippers to school. Ellen often remarked that Dwayne was the most polite child in the classroom. He got along well with the other students, who sought him out to participate in their games at recess. Dwayne was hesitant to speak in all-class discussions, unless he was called upon. However, he was an eager conversationalist in one-on-one situations.

Dwayne was one of the less able writers in the classroom. He had some difficulty relating letters to
sounds and often could not read back what he wrote in invented spelling. For example, Dwayne wrote the following in his notebook (11-22-92):

yesthe day my dad and my unlc Mones was orking no my dads car. They pot hi ghrs. no. the car.

(Yesterday my dad and my uncle Monis was working on my dad’s car. They put hydraulics on the car.)

This was one of the few entrees in Dwayne’s notebook that he was able to read back. Dwayne’s ability to write basic sight vocabulary was limited and it was difficult for him to sound out words, but he liked to spend his time drawing during writing workshop. Ellen sometimes acted as a scribe for Dwayne to help him get his writing going and then she would leave him on his own to continue with the writing.

Beginnings: Talk-Story and Drawings

Dwayne’s skateboarding book originated during the all-class “talk-story” mini-lesson (3/10/92) discussed in chapter 4. Ellen brought up the topic of skateboarding for class discussion because she wanted to give her students an opportunity to talk about what they knew well and were interested in. She did this by putting herself in the role of a learner and letting the children support each other through “talk-story.” During the thirteen minute skateboarding discussion, Dwayne’s only contribution, other than some all-class answers, was in response to Ellen’s inquiry—“Has anybody ever gotten hurt (riding a skateboard)?” Dwayne responded, “When I was da kine, when I

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was ** I did. I just wen fly off." Ellen ended the discussion with an open invitation to the students to write about skateboarding:

Ellen: Well, if you ever get into writing about skateboarding, keep in mind that there are some of us who don't know a lot of these terms [on the web] and can't feel the thrill that you have when you skateboard.

After the mini-lesson, Dwayne was one of three children in the classroom who began a piece of writing or drawing about skateboarding that day. Although Dwayne worked for two class periods on a series of four illustrations in his notebook, he did not write a text to go with the illustrations. Ellen put no pressure upon Dwayne "to get to the writing" as she believed in the importance of drawing during writing workshop, a view that is supported by current research:

Drawing is not just for children who can't yet write fluently, and creating pictures is not just part of rehearsal for real writing. Images at any age are part of the serious business of making meaning--partners with words for communicating our inner designs (Hubbard 1989, 157).

The day after Ellen conducted the skateboarding discussion, she asked Lincoln, who was so prominent in the last chapter, to share as part of the mini-lesson the skateboarding piece he had written the day before:

On Sunday I went to my grandmas house. And I went to ask my brother to ride his skateboard. And I made a ramp. But I thought I couldn't jump the ramp but I did.
Dan the thred time I put a bike under and I jume the ramp when my cisban came out. I when fly oif the skateboard.

[On Sunday I went to my grandma’s house. And I went to ask my brother to ride his skateboard. And I made a ramp. But I thought I couldn’t jump the ramp but I did. Then the third time I put a bike under and I jump the ramp when my cousin came out. I went flying off the skateboard.]

In the discussion following Lincoln’s sharing of his draft, several children ask Lincoln to elaborate:

Joshua: How did you make da ramp?

Lincoln: With woods.

Ellen: Can you tell us more about it?

Raoul: How did you get da woods?

Lincoln: On da side from my gramma’s house and den I never have nail for nail 'om and den I just wen put da woods and den when we went home, I wen nail 'om. I wen jump some more.

Ellen: So you found these pieces of lumber [emphasis] next to your grandma’s house.

Lincoln: Yeah!

Ellen: And then you brought them out and kinda laid them side by side and you didn’t have any nails so you just kept it like that, and later on you took all these lumbers, pieces of wood, home and then nailed them.

[Lincoln nods his head yes.]

Roylynn: Why did you jump off da skateboard?

Lincoln: Cause da boy was--da ramp was little bit on da side and I never see 'om and den I wen try jump and den I wen fly off.

Ellen [looking at Lincoln’s text]: Oh, OK right over here at the end. She asked you why did you jump--fly off the skateboard. So you thought you were going to miss?
Roylynn: No, he didn’t. He said da ramp was da kine--
Lincoln: Leaning on one side and da ting was little bit up and da wheels got stuck right der and I wen fly off.

By asking Lincoln to share his skateboarding draft, Ellen reinforces the discussion from the day before and lets the children hear and respond to a piece of writing that originated from that discussion. Note how Ellen paraphrases in standard English Lincoln’s HCE description of how he made the ramp. She also substitutes "pieces of lumber" for "woods," which was consistent with Ellen’s way of gently substituting new vocabulary words for her students without making them feel uncomfortable or detracting from the flow of the conversation. Unlike Ginger in chapter 5, Lincoln feels comfortable fielding his classmates’ questions and being in the spotlight. This is one of the reasons Ellen asked Lincoln to share with the class.

At the end of this discussion, Ellen mentions that Tuafili has also started a drawing about skateboarding and then asks the class if anyone else was writing about skateboarding.

Ellen: Anybody else thinks they might write about skateboarding?
Class [several different responses]: Not me! Not me!
Ellen: Just Tuafili.
Tim [pointing to Dwayne]: He was drawing a picture about it.
Ellen: Oh, you were too, Dwayne. OK, what are you going to--
Napua: Him and Tuafili.
Dwayne: Me and all my friends was riding skateboard.
Ellen: So it's about you folks just having fun riding skateboard.
Dwayne: Yes.
Ellen: Are you gonna talk about a ramp too or just riding up and down the street?
Dwayne: Ramp.
Ellen: A ramp too, OK.

**Dwayne Shares His Drawings With The Class**

Following the mini-lesson, Dwayne spent his second writing workshop period drawing pictures in his notebook about skateboarding. This day Dwayne drew pictures of large skateboarding ramps, possibly an outgrowth of Lincoln telling the class how he made a ramp and Ellen’s question, "Are you gonna talk about the ramp...?". During the two class periods (3/10-11/92), Ellen did not confer with Dwayne about his illustrations nor did Dwayne contribute much to the class discussions. However, the next day (3/12/93) for her mini-lesson Ellen asked Dwayne to talk to the class about his skateboarding drawings. He had not yet written any text. Dwayne and Ellen are sitting in front of the class.

Ellen: Dwayne drew pictures first and this is good. It’s gonna help him when he does his writing. You wanna tell us about your pictures.

Dwayne [referring to drawing #1 and #2]: That we wen da kine--me and my friend Bulla and dis boy Henry--we wen

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set up one big ramp from my Aunty Nani, she was trowing woods and den we wen ask for da woods and den we took 'om and den we wen ask her for woods and I wen get my dad's hammer and I wen pound 'om togeder.

Ellen: To make a--

Dwayne: Ramp.

Ellen: A ramp, OK. And then--

Dwayne [referring to drawing #3]: And after I got my two skateboards out and I wen let my friend ride my o'der skateboard.

Ellen: Um-hum, and?

Dwayne [referring to drawing #4]: And den we wen find a little bit more woods and we wen set 'om up more bigger.

Ellen: Oh, you made a bigger ramp, OK, and are you gonna continue and tell us what happened?

[Dwayne nods his head yes.]

Ellen’s open-ended request for information (You wanna tell us about the pictures) results in Dwayne talking about his skateboarding experiences through his drawings. He is not at all hesitant to share when he is in the spotlight. Dwayne uses his HCE dialect to explain his drawings with no hesitancy, as in Dwayne’s longest exchange when he explains that he and his friends got some wood from his Aunty Nani, who was throwing it away, and used his dad’s hammer to "pound 'om together." Ellen does not correct his speech, but simply gives him cues that she wants him to continue ("and then"); "um-hum, and"). As you have seen, Ellen often used the "cueing" strategy with the children and it is particularly effective here with Dwayne who is not having
any difficulty talking.

Although Dwayne has not yet written a text, his drawings and his sharing with the class show that he has a definite story in mind, based upon building a ramp. Ellen in no way makes Dwayne feel inferior as a writer, but, in fact, reinforces his drawings ("Dwayne drew pictures first and this is good. It's gonna help him when he does his writing.").

The discussion continues as Dwayne describes how he fell off his skateboard and got some "cuts." Ellen then asks the class to define the word "gribble," a term she is not familiar with but has heard in reference to skateboarding.

Ellen: Is that what you call grable?
Several students: Gribble! Gribble!
Ellen: Gribble, OK—when you fall off and when you get hurt and get cuts.
Several students: Yeah!
Ellen: Where did you learn that term from?
Tuafili: I learned 'em from my friend.
Several students: Me too!
Ellen: So it can happen when you’re bicycling, when you’re skateboarding—
Raoul: When you’re skating.
Ellen: Anytime you hit the ground and get cuts.
Tuafili: Hit da wall.
Ellen: OK. I’ve never heard that term before (this year).
[The transcript continues as the children "talk-story" to explain the different ways a person can "gribble."]

Here Ellen seizes an opportunity for a spirited exchange by bringing up the word "gribble," a term that has been used in reference to skateboarding but can be extended to other usages of "falling down and getting hurt." Ellen mentions that when she was a little girl she would say, "Mom, I fell down and I hurt myself. I never said--Mom, I gribble." This interchange shows how Ellen was sensitive to the students' language by taking the time to raise this issue and subtly pointing out to the class how language can change. Ellen next reads to the class the short book My Skateboard, but mentions that it doesn't have the word "gribble" in it.

Thus Ellen's three mini-lessons (skateboarding discussion; sharing of Lincoln's draft; sharing of Dwayne's illustrations) have all capitalized on the children's interest in skateboarding, which was originally triggered by Ellen's conversation during lunch with Carlton. All three mini-lessons were lively discussions giving the children opportunities to share with each other about skateboarding. During the skateboarding discussion and the explanation of the word "gribble," the children used "talk-story" as the participation structure which allowed them to talk in a way that was congruent with their Hawaiian culture.

As the transcripts have shown, the children used both
HCE and SE for these class discussions as Ellen asked them to elaborate, explain or clarify their responses. If they had been expected to speak only in SE, they would have been closed off from participating. Although only some of the children started a piece of writing about skateboarding, the fact that this topic was discussed by the class validated to everyone that their experiences were important and were possible topics for writing.

**Ellen Helps Dwayne Begin His Writing**

When Ellen approached Dwayne during writing workshop that day, he had not yet started on his writing, although he had earlier shared his illustrations with the class. Notice how Ellen uses Dwayne’s drawing as a means to help him write a text.

Ellen: How you doing?
Dwayne: Good.
Ellen: You started writing?
Dwayne: No.
Ellen: You wanna get started with the writing?
Dwayne: I going.
Ellen: Umm, you want some help?
Dwayne [nods yes]: Mmmm.
Ellen: You want help? OK, let me help you get started with this. [Turning to the first page of the skateboarding story in the notebook.] Let’s go back to your first page, right here.
Dwayne: Yup.
Ellen: All right, this is the beginning of your piece. Tell me about this picture.

Dwayne: Dis one, I wen go get some more wood and I was happy because I got. I had to carry da skateboards and my friend had to carry da ramp. We was making all kine ramps. We's had plenty woods. My Aunty Nani gave us da woods.

Ellen: OK, so Aunty Nani gave you wood so that you could make a ramp.

Dwayne: Yeah, I wen ask her for 'om. She was going trow 'om away, dat's why.

Ellen: You want to start with that? Aunty Nani gave us wood so we could make a ramp for skateboarding.

[Dwayne nods yes.]

Ellen [reading and writing]: AUNTY NANI GAVE ME WOOD SO I COULD MAKE A RAMP FOR SKATEBOARDING. All right, and you put the wood together?

Dwayne: And den I wen get my dad--and den I wen ask her for--if she get some nails and den she said yes and den she gave us nails and den I wen grab my dad's hammer and den I wen pound 'om togeder and den I wen put my dad's hammer away cause my dad get plenty hammers.

Ellen [reading the text]: OK, so Aunty Nani gave me wood so I could make a ramp for skateboarding. I put the ramp together. [Reading and writing] I PUT THE BOARDS TOGETHER.

Ellen does not make Dwayne feel incapable as a writer and puts no pressure on him to begin writing, but instead uses the conversation as a way of beginning a written text for his illustrations. Her request for information (Tell me about this picture) is met with Dwayne's long explanation of where he got "da woods." Ellen is sensitive to Dwayne's oral language and is selective in how much text she writes for him. Ellen paraphrases Dwayne's own words ("my Aunty
Nani gave us da woods") and condenses Dwayne’s explanation of how he made the ramp to formulate the text, which reads:

Aunty Nani gave me wood so I could make a ramp for skateboarding. I put the boards together. Ellen then asks Dwayne about his second illustration.

Ellen: Then what happens here?

Dwayne: And den after dat, I wen, after I wen da kine--I wen da kine, sit up because I fall off da ramp and den my friend ask me if he could ride my skateboard and den I said no because my skateboard, he wen broke my oder skateboard that my uncle gave to me.

Ellen: Oh, so you kinda didn’t trust him with it, huh?

Dwayne: My Uncle Abraham.

Ellen: That’s fine because you gotta take care of your things, make sure when somebody gives you a skateboard, you need to take care. So what’s happening here? [Pointing to the drawing of a person.] This is you?

Dwayne: Yup.

Ellen: And this is your--

Dwayne [pointing to the other figure]: No, dis me.

Ellen: And that’s your friend asking--

Dwayne: And dis my friend.

Ellen: OK, so first you went up the ramp, but what happened?

Dwayne: And den I wen fall right off and I wen land--

Ellen [pointing to the lines of the notebook]: So why don’t you tell us here then--I went up the ramp but I fell off the skateboard.

Dwayne: Um-hum.

Ellen: Why don’t you tell us that there.

In this last episode Ellen gives Dwayne an opportunity
to explain his drawing to her, which he does with considerable detail. Dwayne’s drawing helps him to take his skateboarding experience and represent it in art form, which he then talks about. Ellen rightfully focuses the conference on the drawing as the talk acts as oral rehearsal for the writing that will follow. Dwayne tells Ellen much more than he can possibly write so Ellen suggests a text for Dwayne paraphrasing his HCE words (I wen fall right off and I wen land) into standard English ("So why don’t you tell us here then--I went up the ramp but I fell off the skateboard") and leaves Dwayne to write on his own. Dwayne then writes the following text for his second illustration:

I wat up The RIap and I fID dron The RIap (I went up the ramp and I falled down the ramp). Even though Ellen suggested this text to Dwayne and it only represents a small amount of what he shared with Ellen, Dwayne is able to write the text on his own and does not request help from her or other students near him.

Dwayne Explains Why He Couldn’t "Ollie"

The next day when the class has writing workshop (3/16/93), Dwayne eagerly continued writing on his own a text for his third illustration, sounding out the words that he couldn’t spell.

I cID to alleyae But I Kat allyae wat my FRIENDS boa.

[I tried to ollie but I couldn’t ollie with my friend’s board.]
When Ellen confers with Dwayne that day, she first asks him to read his three page draft to her.

Page 1--Aunty Lei gave me wood so I could make a ramp for skateboarding. I put the boards together.

Page 2--I went up the ramp and I falled down the ramp.

Page 3--I tried to ollie but I couldn’t ollie with my friend’s board.

Ellen [referring to page 3]: What happened?

Dwayne: I was trying to ollie with my friend’s board but I couldn’t. I was keeping falling cause his board junk. His wheels stuck.

Ellen: He doesn’t have the--

Dwayne: No, not like mines.

Ellen: So do you ollie?

Dwayne: Only with my board.

Ellen: Only with your board and this time you were using your friend’s.

Dwayne: Um-hum.

Ellen: OK.

Dwayne: Cause when I went up da ramp I was trying to ollie.

Ellen [reading his text]: OK, I tried to ollie but I couldn’t ollie with my friend’s board. His is junk, huh?

Dwayne: Yeah, dat’s why he wanted to try mines.

Ellen: Oh, so you had exchanged, I see, OK. [Ellen turns to the next illustration.] And then what’s happening here?

Here Dwayne’s text for his third illustration, which he wrote on his own, leads into an explanation of why Dwayne couldn’t ollie with his friend’s board. Although Dwayne
shares specific reasons why he couldn’t ollie, Ellen doesn’t ask him to add them to his text.

Notice that Dwayne moves back and forth between HCE and standard English. For example, after reading his draft, he replies to Ellen’s inquiry, “What happened?”

Dwayne: I was trying to ollie with my friend’s but I couldn’t. I was keeping falling cause his board junk. His wheels stuck.

Dwayne first paraphrases his written text—*I was trying to ollie with my friend’s board but I couldn’t*. Then he continues to talk using some awkwardness (I was keeping falling) and some features of HCE (his board junk—the absence of a copula). In whatever way Dwayne speaks in conversation with Ellen, he still writes in standard English as his written text for page three attests.

**Dwayne Tells Ellen Why He’s Making A Bigger Ramp**

Again Ellen asks Dwayne to explain his next illustration.

Ellen: And then what’s happening here?

Dwayne: And den dis one we wen bust down da ramp again and build ‘om more bigger. We tried.

Ellen: You tried to make a bigger ramp? So how did you try to make that?

Dwayne: We wen ask my Aunty Nani for some more wood and she gave us—when she was trying to make hers fence.

Ellen: Oh, this is left over from her fence?

Dwayne: Um-hum.

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Ellen: A bigger one. And you went on it again?

Dwayne: But we make 'om on top of da garage.

Ellen [confused]: What?

Dwayne: On top of da garage--get one veranda underneath where you park your cars and on top where you park your cars, but you can not park up der now.

[The transcript continues as Ellen thinks Dwayne is referring to the top of his garage, but he is referring to the third floor of the parking structure at the apartment complex where he lives.]

Ellen: Oh, behind the drugstore, that big--oh, I see.

Dwayne: Yeah, we wen ask da security guards.

Ellen: You asked the security guards and they let you build it.

Dwayne: Mm-hmm.

Ellen: So now you've got a big, big ramp. Now that's interesting to know.

Dwayne: It took two days for build 'om cause I go in at six o'clock.

Ellen: So you're really working hard on this ramp?

Dwayne: Finished with 'om already.

Ellen: So this story is kinda more like--I'm building this ramp too. It took you two days and it's on top of the parking garage.

Dwayne: Cause I was lucky because my dad wen go buy nails cause he never have.

Ellen: All right. Maybe you should tell us that--that you're really building it and it's taking you two days. Give us more information about this ramp.

Dwayne: OK.

In this transcript Dwayne tells Ellen how he "wen bust down da ramp again and build 'om more bigger." Later he
volunteers "it took two days for build 'om cause I go in at six o'clock." Ellen takes Dwayne's information and suggests that he use it for his written text.

Ellen: All right. Maybe you should tell us that--that you're really building it and it's taking you two days. Give us more information about this ramp.

Dwayne then wrote the following text: at tok me two Days to make The ramp [It took me two days to make the ramp]. Dwayne codeshifts from oral HCE to written standard English with no difficulty or prompting from Ellen as shown below.

Oral language: It took two days for build 'om.
Written text: It took me two days to make the ramp.

Dwayne Writes His Own Text

For the next two days of writing workshop (3/18-19/92) Dwayne continued to work on his draft. During the two days Ellen did not confer with him, although she talked with several other children in the class about their writing. During this time Dwayne did not work on any more drawings, but focused only on his writing. He added three more pages to his text which are below.

Page 5--My FRIEND calld me out sID to play wat him. up on the grij.

[My friend called me outside to play with him up on the garage.]

Page 6--Then my Dad callD me In alcnn But I had To Tak a
biat.

[Then my dad called me in but I had to take a bath.] But when my Dad called me in I was mad.

Although Ellen had considerable input into three of Dwayne’s earlier pages, the writing here shows that Dwayne could elaborate the text on his own, without any drawings or prompting from Ellen. After Dwayne wrote these three pages he read his draft to a more capable writer in the classroom, Jarvis, who helped him make some minor revisions, mostly in spelling. Since I was not taping the students conferring with each other, I don’t know what was said, but I did make a copy of the changes the two boys made together. Jarvis helped Dwayne spell ramp, tried, board and side and take out the unnecessary word "alcn." Finally he helped him consolidate page seven of his draft into page six, which now read:

Page 6--Then my Dad called me in But I had to TaK a biat so I had to satly in the houses. And i was mad.

[Then my Dad called me in but I had to take a bath so I had to stay in the house. And I was mad.]

Dwayne’s Talk Goes Off-Tangent

The following day (3/20/92) Ellen had another conference with Dwayne. She paraphrased the first four pages of the text and then asked Dwayne to read to her the next two pages of the text that he wrote on his own.
Dwayne [reading page 6]: Then my dad called me in but I had to take a bath so I had to stay in the house and I was mad.

Ellen: Oh, so your friend called you to come jump ramp?

Dwayne: Ramp, but my dad wanted me for come in cause he was gonna pawn my tapes.

Ellen: You were gonna what?

Dwayne: Pawn tapes, my Nintendo tapes.

Ellen: You were gonna pawn it? Oh!

Dwayne: And den we was gonna get ‘om out this Wednesday coming up.

Ellen: Where did you go to pawn it?

Dwayne: Nanakuli.

[The conversation continues about how many tapes were pawned.]

Ellen: Oh, I’ve never been to a pawn shop. I know there’s one in Waipahu and there’s one in Pearl City.

Dwayne: I hate when my dad do too much cause my dad wen bust his stereo. Now we no more music--it’s junk!

Ellen: How did that happen?

Dwayne: Cause da tape never like come out.

Ellen: So he got mad with it and pounded it. Oh dear.

Dwayne: Da tape stuck inside now.

Ellen: Oh, I see.

Dwayne: My dad looking for anoder one--he gonna buy anoder one.

Dwayne tells Ellen that his father calls him in the house so they can go to pawn his Nintendo tapes. Instead of dismissing Dwayne’s comment as irrelevant, Ellen pursues this topic of conversation for several turns, sharing her
own experiences with Dwayne (Oh, I’ve never been to a pawn shop) and Dwayne tells Ellen how the stereo got broken. As discussed in chapter 5, Ellen did not have a rigid structure to any of her conferences: she simply had an inquiring attitude and a willingness to let the conversations lead to other areas of discussion. After some time, she would bring the conversation back to the matter at hand, as she does here with Dwayne.

Dwayne Tells Ellen How He Scrapered His Knee

Ellen: Anyway, let’s get back to here [the text].

Dwayne: OK.

Ellen: So you couldn’t go out to play with your friend because your dad said you were going to pawn--

Dwayne: Tapes.

Ellen: The Nintendo tapes. And this one, the last page?

Dwayne: I was gonna write about my sore, about my skateboard. When I was jumping ramp, I wen scrape my knee.

Ellen: On another day?

Dwayne: Yeah, here. [Dwayne shows Ellen his knee.]

Ellen: Oh, bad. So how did that happen?

Dwayne: When I was going up da ramp, my feet just wen slip and den when I came down I was scraping my leg and hard for stop da board.

Ellen: So you’re telling us sometimes skateboarding is dangerous cause you can scrape your knee as you’re jumping off the ramp.

Dwayne: Cause I never like put my pads on dat time.

Ellen: Oh, that’s right. You do have pads.
Dwayne: But sometimes I just no like put 'om on.

Ellen: So how you gonna start here? [Dwayne shrugs his shoulders.] You wanna tell us about skateboarding, how you get hurt?

Dwayne [enthusiastically]: Yeah!

Ellen: All right. So maybe you could start off by saying--Sometimes skateboarding is dangerous.

Dwayne: Yeah!

Ellen: Like one time. You want me to get you started?
[Dwayne nods his head yes.] [Ellen reads and writes the text.] SOMETIMES SKATEBOARDING IS DANGEROUS. And you can continue. ONE TIME and then tell us.

Dwayne: OK.

In the preceding transcript, Dwayne speaks at length telling Ellen how he once got hurt riding his skateboard, even showing her the scars on his knee. Notice that Dwayne needs very little prompting from Ellen who simply asks, "And this one, the last page." After Ellen asks Dwayne what he wants to write and he shrugs his shoulders, she then suggests and writes a text for him (Sometimes skateboarding is dangerous. One time...). Ellen then leaves Dwayne to complete the writing on his own (see below).

I FID dron on The ramp. and I chap my nee.
[I felled down on the ramp and I scrape my knee.]

Dwayne Codeshifts from HCE to SE

When you compare Dwayne’s oral language to his written text, you can see how easily he codeshifts from HCE to SE.
Dwayne’s Oral Language: When I was going up da ramp, my feet just wen slip and den when I came down I was scraping my leg and hard for stop da board.

Dwayne’s Written Text: I felled down on the ramp and I scrape my knee.

Dwayne’s oral language has features of HCE (wen slip; hard for stop da board) and SE (when I was going up; when I came down). Like Lincoln in the previous chapter, his written text is in SE, except for the misuse of the past tense of the verbs (felled for "fell" and scrape for "scraped"). This is not surprising as he normally uses wen plus the regular form of the verb to indicate past tense in HCE. In fact, the transcripts and written texts show Dwayne uses four different ways to indicate the past tense of the verb "to fall."

1. Oral language--I wen da kine, sit up because I fall off da ramp.
2. Oral language--And den I wen fall right off and I wen land.
3. Written text--I went up the ramp and I falled down the ramp.
4. Written text--I felled down the ramp and I scrape my knee.

When Dwayne speaks, he uses fall and wen fall to indicate the past tense of "fall," yet when he writes he now uses falled and felled. This shows his knowledge of the "ed" marker for forming the past tense of regular verbs in SE.
Ellen Helps Dwayne Fine Tune His Text

After a one week spring break, Ellen had an all-class share session at the beginning of writing workshop. Dwayne told the class about his trip to Kaneohe to visit his cousins and wrote about that during writing time (3/30/92). By the following day Ellen had read Dwayne’s skateboarding piece and asked him if he would like to publish it. During the conference, Ellen suggested several minor changes to Dwayne’s text, which helped bring coherence to it. These changes were done in collaboration with Dwayne as shown in the following sequences:

Ellen [reading Dwayne’s text]: Then my dad called me in but I had to take a bath.

Dwayne: When I went in, my dad told me for jump in da shower.

Ellen: OK, so this word (BUT) doesn’t fit. Then my dad called me in to take a bath, so can we cross this out?

Dwayne: Um-hmm.

[Ellen crosses out "but I had."]

Ellen: Then you just go right here. [Reading the text] Then my dad called me in to take a bath so I had to stay in the house and I was mad.

Dwayne: Ev’rytime I get mad I go up in my room.

Ellen: Well, this time you couldn’t--you had to take a bath.

Dwayne: Um-hmm.

Ellen: So that ends your skateboarding story? Oh no, you had one more. [Reading the text.] Sometimes skateboarding is dangerous. One time I fell down on the ramp and I cut [Ellen misreads “scrape” for “cut”] my knee.

Dwayne: Um-hmm.
Ellen: Maybe this one. Since over here you're talking about you couldn't go out and then all of a sudden you start talking about skateboarding again. It's kinda--

Dwayne: Cause dat was the next day, when I came out.

Ellen: Oh, the next day. OK. Well, instead of one time then maybe you could say--then the next day I fell down on the ramp and I cut my knee. [Dwayne nods his head yes. Ellen reads and writes.] THEN THE NEXT DAY I fell down on the ramp and I cut my knee. How did this happen?

Dwayne: Cause when I jumping up da ramp with my friend, den I just wen' fall. I lost my balance cause my board slippery.

Ellen [reading]: I fell down on the ramp--because my board was slippery.

Dwayne: Um-humm.

Ellen [reading and writing]: BECAUSE MY BOARD WAS SLIPPERY and I cut my knee.

Thus in collaboration with Dwayne, Ellen makes some editorial changes to his text. As shown in the previous transcript, Ellen deletes the words "but I had" in the sentence Then my dad called me in but I had to take a bath and she changes "one time" to "then the next day." Yet as Ellen is making these editorial changes, Dwayne is volunteering more information which Ellen then utilizes in the final text (because my board was slippery). Although Ellen is trying to review the text for final publication, she is also willing to listen to Dwayne expand his "story" and help him incorporate his ideas into the final text.

Dwayne's Classmates Share Their Knowledge of PRO Skateboards

As the transcript continues, Tuafili and Joshua
interject their comments into the discussion, sharing their knowledge of what constitutes a "PRO" skateboard.

Dwayne: Dat's why my friends always like ride my skateboard cause my skateboard is dangerous. Sometimes when I leave 'om by my board, dey just grab 'om and ride 'om.

Ellen: Without your permission.

Dwayne: Um-hmm.

Ellen: Because it's dangerous?

Dwayne: Um-hmm.

Ellen: What do you mean by that?

Dwayne [very animated]: Because ev'rytime dey like ride 'om because da ting go f-a-s-t [drawn out].

Ellen: Oh, you have a fast skateboard.

Tuafili: Pro.

Ellen: It's a what?

Tuafili: Pro.

Ellen: What do you mean?

Joshua: A pro kine skateboard. Da ting go fast.

Ellen: What makes it able to--

Joshua: Da wheels.

Tuafili: Da wheels. It's a pro skateboard.

Ellen: Tell me some more. I don't understand.

Joshua: Get da white kine wheels, no more like da orange kine like rubber kine.

Ellen: Oh, it's light, kinda plastic looking.

Joshua: Yeah, like dat.

Ellen: Oh, OK, the other skateboards have the heavy rubber.

Joshua: Yeah!
Tuafili: Get generic.

Ellen [laughing]: Generic. I don't like that word--generic. My sons always use that word--generic--everything is generic. So the pro is real good--

Dwayne: I get da Ninja Turtle one.

Ellen: Because it has these plastic wheels underneath and what about the shape?

Joshua: Da ting get like two sides. Da ting go down.

Tuafili: Down and up.

Joshua [gesturing]: Da ting no go like dat.

Tuafili [gesturing]: It no go like dat.

Ellen: Oh, so it's curved at both ends.

Joshua: Yeah, like dat.

Ellen [to Dwayne]: So do you have this pro board?

Dwayne: Yeah, cause can do doggie walk. Good fun doing doggie walk.

Ellen: The one you can go up and down.

Dwayne: When you go for it, you can * with da board.

Ellen: Oh, I haven't seen that. You need to put that information down that you've got a pro board and that's why you're able to do--where can you put that? I think it's important. [Turning to page 2 in the text.] Maybe you can add it here.

Even though Ellen is trying to bring Dwayne’s text to publication, she asks Dwayne to elaborate why his skateboard is “dangerous.” Dwayne gets very excited as he tells Ellen about his “fast” skateboard. Then Tuafili and Joshua, who are working on their own writing, explain to Ellen what makes Dwayne’s skateboard so fast. Here again is that part of the transcript.

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Ellen [to Dwayne]: Oh, you have a fast skateboard.
Tuafili: Pro.
Ellen: It's a what?
Tuafili: Pro.
Ellen: What do you mean?
Joshua: A pro kine skateboard. Da ting go fast.
Ellen: What makes it able to--
Joshua: Da wheels.
Tuafili: Da wheels. It's a pro skateboard.
Ellen: Tell me some more. I don't understand.
Joshua: Get da white kine wheels, no more like da orange kine like rubber.
Ellen: Oh, OK, the other skateboards have the heavy rubber.

Tuafili interjects just one word (pro) and when Ellen asks him to elaborate (What do you mean?), Joshua tells why the skateboard can go fast (da wheels), but Ellen still is unclear and asks for further explanation (Tell me some more. I don't understand). Joshua then gives a more complete explanation (Get da white kine wheels, not more like da orange kine like rubber kine.) Finally Ellen confirms what Joshua has told her (the other skateboards have the heavy rubber). This interchange, in the midst of a publishing conference, was typical of Ellen's conference style as the other students would interject their comments into the conference and Ellen would engage them in a discussion as Tuafili and Joshua do here. Ellen ends the conference by
pointing out to Dwayne where he could add the new information about his "pro" skateboard. Dwayne then writes by himself in standard English I have the fastest board in the neighborhood.

Ellen Helps Dwayne Edit His Text

The next time the class has writing workshop (4/3/92), Ellen feels that Dwayne's text is now complete and makes no further changes in the text. It is not until this conference that Ellen goes over Dwayne's mechanical errors pointing out some spelling mistakes and some misuse of upper and lower case letters. Ellen is sensitive to Dwayne's lack of spelling ability and uses the conference as an opportunity to help him decode words. Here she helps Dwayne spell the word "went" which he has spelled wat.

Ellen: Let's look at this word. Look at it. Say the word went [emphasizing N].

Dwayne: N.

Ellen: N--there's an N in there, yeah. Just write it above here.

Dwayne: OK.

Ellen: Just write the whole word. You have an A in there. A says AH. This says WEH--EH.

Dwayne: When.

Ellen: Elephant [emphasizing E], what does elephant begin with?

Dwayne: E.

Ellen: E, so it's W-E.
[Dwayne writes w-e-n-t.]

Ellen: Right, that's went. I went up the ramp.

Ellen continues to help Dwayne sound out words such as "with" and "bath," which Dwayne has spelled as *wat* and *biat*. In Dwayne's oral speech, he does not use the aspirated or unaspirated "th" sound so Dwayne spells these two words the way he says them. Ellen also points out that the word I should be capitalized when "you write about yourself." This final editing conference focuses on what Dwayne already knows and builds upon that. Finally, Ellen asks Dwayne what he would like to call his piece of writing and he replies *Skateboarding*. Ellen writes out the text for Dwayne and gives a copy to the KEEP (Kamehameha Elementary Education Program) personnel at the school to type for his hard cover book. Dwayne then begins to work on his illustrations to match the text, referring back to some of the illustrations that he drew while writing the draft. Here is the final published text:

Page 1--Aunty Nani gave me wood so I could make a ramp for skateboarding on the parking garage. I put the boards together.

Page 2--I went up the ramp and I fell down the ramp. I have the fastest board in the neighborhood. It's a pro board.

Page 3--I tried to ollie on my friend's board but I couldn't ollie. If I used my own, I could ollie better.

Page 4--I tried to make my ramp bigger. It took my two days to make the ramp.
Page 5--After I finished the ramp, my friend called me outside to play with him on the garage. Then my dad called me in to take a bath so I had to stay in the house. I was mad.

Page 6--Then the next day I fell down on the ramp because my board was slippery. I cut my knee. Sometimes skateboarding is dangerous.

How Talk Supports Writing

Dwayne worked on his skateboarding draft a total of nine different days spread out over three weeks due to spring break. Skateboarding was a topic which Dwayne had considerable personal experience of and felt comfortable talking about. Once he took Ellen's "invitation" to write about skateboarding, she supported him throughout the process--allowing him time to draw, asking him to share his drawings with the class, helping him to get the writing started, returning to him to keep the writing going and editing the draft with him. The conversations that Ellen had with Dwayne naturally supported the final written text, which, by itself, is fairly long for Dwayne's ability and the longest piece of writing this struggling writer produced throughout the year.

Dwayne spent two weeks doing the illustrations for his typed hardcover book, which was a "reward" for those children in the class whom Ellen felt put forth extra effort during writing workshop (Most published books the children copied over on their own and had a soft cover). Dwayne was justifiably proud of the book he made and the other children
in the class made many favorable comments about it when he shared it with the class. It was kept with the other published books on a multi-tiered book display.

The on-going conversations Ellen had with Dwayne not only served the purpose of supporting the writing; they also gave Dwayne the opportunity to talk with his teacher about a topic of which he had significant knowledge. The transcripts have shown that Dwayne was not a child to speak out in a large group situation, but, when spoken to, he would readily respond. Ellen used Dwayne’s drawings as entries for extended conversations about his topic which then led to a written text. Ellen was quite willing to follow Dwayne’s lead, asking questions when it was appropriate, letting the conversations go off-tangent, sharing her own knowledge of the topic and allowing the other students to chime in when they had something to add. Although Ellen wrote some of the text for Dwayne as a way of getting him going, she was also careful not to write too much for him or write a text that Dwayne couldn’t read. Dwayne, in turn, wrote much of the text on his own without Ellen’s input. As his editor, Ellen also needed to pull the text together for final publication as Dwayne was not just relating a single event of skateboarding but a series of episodes held together over time.

Keep in mind that Ellen had to pick up the thread of these conversations over considerable time, having to recall
what was said during the last conference, where Dwayne was
with the piece of writing and keeping the writing going.
She also had to remember the other seventeen on-going
conversations that she had with the other students in the
classroom time as she moved their writing along too.

The text itself captures only a small amount of what
Dwayne shared about skateboarding to Ellen and his
classmates, but the sheer amount of talk supporting Dwayne
as he wrote his draft cannot be overlooked (over 30 pages of
transcripts during seven different episodes). Ellen was
especially responsive to this HCE speaking student, who had
a tremendous amount of knowledge about his topic. Because
Ellen believed that "oral language was important," she made
talk the cornerstone of her writing program, and knew that
the children's writing would improve over time. By allowing
Dwayne to speak in the way in which he felt most comfortable
and guiding him as he wrote his draft, Ellen drew out from
Dwayne what was important to him and confirmed the value of
his experiences. Although Dwayne's text was a collaborative
effort between teacher and student, it no way diminishes the
final outcome and the process that Dwayne went through to
produce his book.

Even though Dwayne uses HCE as his primary dialect,
Dwayne's draft shows no evidence of this. He has somehow
internalized an appropriate SE written code managing the
difficult task of talking in HCE yet writing in SE without
any prompting from Ellen or direct knowledge of codeshifting. In fact, when I interviewed Dwayne about codeshifting, he did not really understand the examples and was unsure what I was asking him. Even though Dwayne could not articulate his awareness of codeshifting, he had no difficulty doing it. Although the actual writing might not have been as rich as that of a SE speaker, it was remarkable in that it was written by a student who had to master the complexities of two codes, standard English and Hawaii Creole English, no minor achievement for this second grader.

At the end of second grade, Ellen asked the children "to pick something (from the writing) about themselves so the third grade teacher would learn about them." Dwayne chose the first page from his Skateboarding book and wrote this: I bak this pag because I like skateboarding o mos eve day I go skateboarding up on the parking garage [I pick this page because I like skateboarding. Almost every day I go skateboarding up on the parking garage].

The following year, I asked Dwayne if I could borrow his book to make a copy of it. When Dwayne brought it from home, he told me that he had shared it with his third grade class at the beginning of the year and his face lit up as he ran off to play with his friends. The book is type written, filled with careful drawings and beautifully bound, but to me the book itself somehow seemed meager in comparison to all the "talk" that went into creating it and how much of

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the "skateboarding story" was not included in the text. I recalled how animated Dwayne was as he shared his skateboarding experiences with his classmates and his teacher, how Ellen had drawn out from Dwayne the specifics of those experiences, how much Ellen enjoyed talking with Dwayne about it and how the process of writing the book allowed Ellen and me to learn so much about Dwayne. Even though I could duplicate the book, those encounters between Ellen and this young boy could never be duplicated.
CHAPTER 8

CONCLUSIONS

I have spent the majority of my teaching career working with low-income Hawaiian children. When I first came to Hawaii in 1969, I found these children very loving and honest with their emotions but difficult for me to teach. I did not understand the children's ways of communicating in the classroom and was unfamiliar with the native dialect. But over time I found that they would engage in discussions given the right set of circumstances and came to appreciate the fact that they were operating in two codes, Hawaii Creole English and standard English.

When I became the Writing Resource Teacher for the school, I was struck by how differently the teachers I worked with communicated with their students. Most teachers respected and built upon the linguistic competence of their students, while some teachers seemed to feel that the children's writing should improve without any direct help from them and a few teachers implied to their students that their oral language and writing skills were deficient and spent their time correcting their students' written errors.

My graduate studies reinforced my belief that teachers' attitudes toward their students can make the difference between successful and unsuccessful writing instruction.
(Perl & Wilson 1986). When I returned to Hawaii after my coursework, I was determined to conduct my research in the school where I had taught so long and with students who had some difficulties with learning so I sought out a teacher whom I knew was effective with her students.

Ellen Mino is one of the most effective teachers at Waianae Elementary School. Ellen is unique because as a youngster she attended the same school and spoke Hawaii Creole English. She also had the advantage of working with the KEEP program at our school, was familiar with the anthropological studies on Hawaiian children, used the "talk-story" participation structure with her reading groups, and built upon the children’s oral language.

I knew through experience that the energy level in Ellen’s classroom during writing workshop was high. The children stayed on task and Ellen spent the majority of her time engaging her students in talk. I was fortunate that Ellen was willing to let me tape her talking with her students so I could investigate the importance of oral language as it relates to Hawaiian students’ writing. Ellen was concerned with how she should talk to her students, but I assured her that she should talk with them the way she always had.

I collected data over a period of four months, every day that Ellen had writing workshop, which was typically five times a week. I taped Ellen in large groups and Ellen
taped herself in small groups or individual conferences with her students. I also mimeographed the writings of the students whom Ellen had a conference with on that particular day. Most of my time in the classroom I spent listening to Ellen and the students talk in order to aid me in my transcriptions.

Although all of the children codeshifted between Hawaii Creole English and standard English when they spoke in the classroom, I transcribed those tapes where the children spoke with many indicators of HCE, which was the majority of the class. Certain features of how Ellen talked with her students began to emerge as I analyzed the tapes, especially those features of Ellen's interactions with her students that complemented the Hawaiian culture.

I finally settled on a research question that would guide me as I analyzed data and wrote the dissertation: "How does Ellen respond orally during writing workshop to students who share her own bidialectical background?" The research question came from analyzing the data I was collecting rather than entering Ellen's classroom with a particular research question in mind (other than believing in the value of teacher-student talk).

The data shows that the children in Ellen's classroom were bidialectical and shifted between two codes. This was never made to be a problem in Ellen's classroom; she always respected the oral competence of her students. Also,
because Ellen was a native speaker of HCE herself, she could interpret what the children told her and verify what they said through questioning. Hawaii Creole English is not as specific as standard English and many of the HCE terms are used broadly, so it was necessary that Ellen did this. Ellen herself used HCE as a way to solidify the sense of community in the classroom and to help the children clarify their meanings. By mirroring back to the children what they said to her in HCE and then cueing them to tell her more, Ellen fostered oral communication.

HCE uses terms such as "da kine," "da ting" and "da stuff" as fillers when the speakers can’t think of a particular word. When the children used these terms, Ellen had to interpret what the children were saying and sometimes needed to verify that the student and her were talking about the same thing. Ellen also subtly gave vocabulary to her students as she was talking with them because the terms in HCE are used so broadly, but she did so in a way not to interrupt the flow of the conversation.

Since the children’s native dialect (HCE) is an oral language, it is important that Ellen allowed her Hawaiian students to use it for their conversations with her. Denying them the use of HCE in the classroom would have shut them off from their experiences.

More important than the issue of dialect for classroom communication was the issue of culture—specifically, the
participation structures of the children. Ellen employed the use of "talk-story" in all-class discussions. This tended to enable the students to talk about topics they were familiar with in a culturally congruent manner. In mini-lessons Ellen often brought up topics for discussion that she knew the children were interested in and had considerable knowledge of so they could display this knowledge. She did this with the added expectation that some of the talk would lead to writing topics for the children. Their talk is an extension of their home and community so when the children were reliving their experiences, it was appropriate that they spoke their native dialect and shared their experiences in a participation structure that was similar to their home culture.

When children shared their writing with the class, Ellen had to curb the children's cultural tendency to contradict each other and acted as a buffer between the children. Because the children were sharing their writing, which can be threatening in the first place, Ellen sometimes fielded the children's questions herself and placed herself as the center of attention rather than the child. Coupled with this was the children's cultural feeling of "shame" or embarrassment at being in front of a group so Ellen would take the spotlight off of the child when she felt this was happening.

Ellen's conference style was conversational in nature,
which was compatible with the Hawaiian culture. When Ellen sat down next to the children at a cluster of desks, they viewed her less of an authority figure and more as an interested conversational partner. The children responded to this approach and were very willing to engage in some lively conversations with their teacher, who followed the lead of her students. Most of Ellen’s inquiries were not direct questions, but were indications of what the writer had to say. Her responses invited the children to tell her more. She truly wanted to know about her students’ HCE lives.

For the most part, the children wrote about their personal experiences and the conversations that Ellen had with her students revolved around this. Ellen used the conference with her students as an opportunity to explore, confirm, redirect and extend the children’s experiences. Ellen’s focus during the student-teacher conferences was on the writer and not so much on the writing. Furthermore, Ellen made little mention of the children’s written errors until she was helping the child bring the piece to publication.

The social context of the discussions, conversations and conferences made a difference on how the children responded. For some children, being “spotlighted” in the all-class share was not a comfortable situation and some children would respond minimally in this setting. Although
some children volunteered to share their drafts with the class, Ellen had to be careful who she asked to do this. The most successful setting for the children to share their writing was the individual student-teacher conference, rather than the all-class share. Some children responded very differently in the two settings as the data has shown.

The children were more likely to answer Ellen's direct questions in the teacher-student conference as compared to the all-class share. I believe this setting was the best place for this to occur because they viewed Ellen as an interested conversational partner, they were talking about their personal experiences, and Ellen's conference style was conversational rather than interrogational.

Ellen also shared her own experiences with the students during mini-lessons, small group meetings and individual conferences. This helped to reinforce the social interactions in the classroom, which fostered oral communication. The other children at a cluster of desks would also interject their personal comments into the conversations that Ellen had with individual students. These comments by Ellen and other students confirmed to the writers the worth of their topics. Often these comments would lead the discussion into other tangents, as in most conversations, and would bring up other topics that the children could write about.

Even though the children spoke with many features of
Hawaii Creole English, for the most part, they wrote in standard English. The children seemed to internalize what was the appropriate spoken code (HCE) and what was the appropriate written code (SE). When necessary, Ellen helped some children bridge their oral HCE dialect to written standard. On occasion, Ellen left written HCE in the children’s text when she felt it was appropriate or because she didn’t want to make the text too difficult for these struggling writers to read.

The case study shows the value of teacher-student talk over time for these bidialectical students. Dwayne relied heavily on his HCE dialect to converse with Ellen about his drawings, his experiences and his writing. The on-going conversations between Dwayne and Ellen kept the writing going as Ellen collaborated with Dwayne to write about his skateboarding adventures. The teacher-student talk during the numerous episodes was rich because the social interactions in the classroom encouraged it.

Through my study I came to further respect the role that teachers play in the writing development of their students. If teachers' understanding of the basic linguistic competence that their students come to school with is the number one criteria for successful writing instruction (Farr & Daniels 1986), then Ellen displayed that understanding and used it to help develop the writing abilities of her students. Ellen was knowledgeable about
her Hawaiian students' ways of communicating in the classroom through anthropological studies but also her own "gut feeling" of how to get her students to talk about their lives and their writing. The discussions, conversations and conferences that Ellen had with her Hawaiian students would have been exemplary in more mainstream cultures, but they were remarkable in that they took place with children who are known to be hesitant to answer adults' direct questions. I attribute this to Ellen's sensitivity to the children's Hawaiian culture and to the responsive nature of her conference style.

I also believe that Ellen was an exceptional teacher and that her teaching methods are applicable not only to Hawaiian children but across cultures. Certainly she was responsive to the children's culture, but, just as important, she was responsive to them as individuals. She cared about them, their experiences, their talk and their writing. The care that Ellen had for her students transcended the cultural differences enabling them to communicate in ways that were more mainstream and helped them to write.

I hope my study dispells the notion that children's native dialects should not be spoken in the classroom. On the contrary, children should be allowed and even encouraged to speak their dialects for the purposes of communication, without teachers worrying about upholding the norms of
standard English. The second grade children in Ellen's classroom knew what code was acceptable for oral communication (recall Raoul who said he spoke "pidgin" with his best friend Joshua because it "sounds better") and what code was acceptable for written English.

As a nation of great ethnic and cultural diversity, it would seem that we need to support a pluralist position where students are allowed to retain their native dialect, yet also need to become literate in standard English. This position will allow students to maintain their ethnic identity without having to make them feel that their speech is somehow inadequate, but also it acknowledges that students should be able to read and write in standard English.

Our challenge is to educate all students, whether they are Caucasians, African Americans, Latinos, Native Americans, Asians or Pacific Islanders. Now, more than ever, teachers need to be responsive to the social, economic and linguistic differences of all students, especially minorities.
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