"For the Interest of the Hawaiians Themselves": Reclaiming the Benefits of Hawaiian-Medium Education

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Those who overthrew the Hawaiian monarchy understood that banning Hawaiian as the language of public and private schooling would exterminate the language. They also believed that replacing Hawaiian with English was "for the interest of the Hawaiians themselves." This article challenges that belief by presenting five areas of importance in academics and core values where Hawaiian-medium education, in fact, demonstrates significant advantages over English-medium education. The information presented here should be useful in spreading autochthonous language medium education in Hawai'i to the extent seen in New Zealand, Wales, and other areas. A major obstacle to overcome in spreading the model is the continued exclusion of Hawaiian-medium education from the state's private schools, including Kamehameha Schools.

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Hūlili: Multidisciplinary Research on Hawaiian Well-Being Vol.3 No.1 (2006)

"The gradual extinction of a Polynesian dialect may be regretted for sentimental reasons, but it is certainly for the interest of the Hawaiians themselves."

Thus read the first biennial report of the Bureau of Public Instruction of the Republic of Hawai'i (1895) established by those who overthrew the Hawaiian monarchy. By the next report, the use of Hawaiian as a medium of education had been outlawed in both private and public schools. And by 1983, there were fewer than 50 children under the age of 18 who spoke Hawaiian fluently (Wilson, Kamanā, & Rawlins, 2006). That year, a small group of Hawaiian-speaking educators established the 'Aha Pūnana Leo to reestablish Hawaiian language medium education and save Hawaiian from extinction.

In 1986, after a three-year lobbying campaign by the 'Aha Pūnana Leo, the state removed the ban on schooling through Hawaiian. The founding of the 'Aha Pūnana Leo and the expansion of its programming through high school is the local reflection of an international autochthonous language medium education movement. There has been great progress toward making this form of education the norm for students in New Zealand, Wales, Greenland, and northern Spain (Baker & Jones, 1998). A distinctive factor stalling and even threatening the continued existence of autochthonous language medium education in Hawai'i is the fact that private schools have allowed the ban on Hawaiian-medium education to remain on their own campuses.

Descriptions of physical and psychological punishment for speaking Hawaiian in public schools and in the Supreme Court–controlled private Kamehameha Schools are commonly found in oral histories of the early territorial period (Eyre, 2004). The forced loss of the Hawaiian language is widely denounced, yet there is a reluctance to embrace the language, even in Hawaiian institutions. This reluctance suggests that misrepresentations regarding the Hawaiian language promulgated by those who overthrew the Hawaiian monarchy remain widespread and continue to have a negative impact.

This article provides evidence that it was not, and still is not, in the interest of Hawaiians to be educated through English rather than Hawaiian. As a result of replacing Hawaiian-medium education with English-medium education, Hawaiians and Hawai'i as a whole have lost a number of benefits that could be reclaimed by further development of contemporary Hawaiian-medium education. We focus on five such benefits as evidence against the claim that policies replacing Hawaiian-medium education with English-medium education are "for the interests of the Hawaiians themselves." The evidence of the superiority of Hawaiian-medium education over English-medium education discussed in this article includes (a) assuring personal cultural connections, (b) maintaining the identity of Hawaiians as a distinct people, (c) supporting academic achievement, (d) supporting acquisition of standard English, and (e) supporting third-language study.

Personal Cultural Connections

The Republic of Hawai'i predicted that banning Hawaiian in the schools would result in the extinction of Hawaiian. Hawaiian is now clearly extinct as the first language for the vast majority of contemporary Hawaiians. Before the overthrow of the Hawaiian monarchy, all Hawaiians and many locally raised non-Hawaiians grew up speaking Hawaiian. It was the normal language of the home, of the peer group, of participation in government, of church, and of daily basic economic activity. Today, there are fewer than 200 Hawaiian-speaking *kūpuna* (elders) remaining, and were it not for the children in Hawaiian-medium education from the Pūnana Leo through high school, there would likely be no fluent Hawaiian speakers in a few years (Wilson & Kamanā, 2001).

Historically, Hawaiian language loss occurred earliest among students educated in boarding programs such as the Kamehameha Schools where use of Hawaiian could be prohibited and monitored 24 hours a day (Eyre, 2004).[1] Within little more than a generation of English-only education, the last children to use Hawaiian as their normal language of peer interaction had been born in all communities except Ni'ihau. Hawai'i Creole English then became the language of peer group identification for most Hawaiian children in the public schools and other children who joined them there.[2]

The first generation of Hawaiian adults experiencing the ban on Hawaiian in the schools did not simply acquiesce to loss of the language. There was considerable effort to maintain Hawaiian. In calling for a multifaceted effort to support the survival of Hawaiian, a January 26, 1917 editorial in the newspaper *Ka Pu'uhonua* noted:

> *I keia la, ke hepa mai nei ka oleloia ana o ka kakou olelo makuahine. Aole keiki o ka 15 makahiki e hiki ke kamailio pololei i ka olelo makuahine o keia aina. A no keaha ke kumu i hiki ole ai? No ka mea, aole a'o ia i ka olelo pololei. A i ka hala ana o na la pokole wale no o ka pau no ia...*
>
> We now find that our mother tongue is being spoken in a broken manner. There are no children under the age of 15 who can speak the mother tongue of this land properly. And why is this the case? Because, the proper use of the language is not taught (in the schools). And in a very short period we will find that the language is gone.

The editorial makes numerous suggestions to support the survival of Hawaiian, including sole use of Hawaiian in the home, in church, in Sunday school, and in Hawaiian organizations. These suggestions were carried out by the majority of the adult generation, but they proved futile in the face of English-only policies in territorial public and private schools. Once the children went to the English-medium schools, they stopped speaking Hawaiian with their peers and even answered their parents' Hawaiian with English.[3]

There is no question that the *Pu'uhonua* editorial was correct in stating that Hawaiians were about to lose their mother tongue. It was also correct in faulting the elimination of Hawaiian-medium education. The effect of maintaining a language as the medium of education can be seen throughout the world. Where a language has been maintained as the medium of education, it survives. Where it is banned or is just partially used for the first few grades, it disappears (Baker & Jones, 1998).

The inability to speak Hawaiian is considered a major personal cultural loss by many contemporary Hawaiians. Without Hawaiian, much of the wealth of unique knowledge and culture that is expressed and recorded in Hawaiian remains out of reach. Without the language, there is no creativity in traditional forms of poetry, oratory, and aspects of other arts. Also lost are more subtle features of Hawaiian thinking and worldview encoded in the grammar and vocabulary of Hawaiian.[4]

Being severed from Hawaiian has also severed Hawaiians from the family of Polynesian-language speakers. A fluent speaker of Hawaiian can understand basic conversation in Tahitian and Māori and can recognize many words and phrases of Samoan and Tongan. The high level of similarity among these languages provides a unique connection with these other Polynesian peoples. Among other Polynesians, Hawaiians have come to be known as a group of nonspeakers of their own language.[5]

The loss of Hawaiian as a first language affects not only the relationship of Hawaiians with other Polynesians but also their relationships with other peoples throughout the world. In Europe and Asia, attending school in one's own language while studying English and other languages to a high level of fluency is the norm. It may be difficult for Europeans and Asians to understand why Hawaiians cannot learn to speak at least two languages fluently. As the world grows smaller, Hawaiians' inability to speak Hawaiian will increasingly lead to questions regarding their personal and group identity.

Identity as a Distinct People

The claim of Hawaiians to be a distinctive contemporary group rather than simply descendants of such a group is at the heart of current discussions regarding the political status of Hawaiians. The claim of continued distinctiveness has been attacked by opponents of recognition of such a political status (Conklin, 2006). In many countries, group use of a unique language is the key factor in identifying indigenous peoples. Language use is also recognized as a major criterion for political recognition in the United States (Conklin, 2006). Ironically, the United States government long suppressed the same languages whose use it considers to be a criterion for political recognition. The Report of the Indian Peace

Commissioners of 1868 included the following statement: "Schools should be established, which children should be required to attend; their barbarous dialect should be blotted out and the English language substituted" (Reyhner, 1996, p. 7).

When anti–American Indian language campaigns were gaining strength in the United States, Americans in Hawai'i were urging that Hawaiian-medium schools be replaced with English-medium schools. Proposals relating to education had to be evaluated by Mataio Kekūanāo'a, head of the Kingdom's department of education.[6] In 1864, Kekūanāo'a issued a report strongly condemning attempts to eliminate Hawaiian-medium schools and even stated that the English-medium boarding schools turned students into individuals who were "no longer Hawaiian." The report also decried the class bias that developed with private English-medium education. It stated that English-medium students had been trained to think of themselves as a "superior caste, having nothing, not even a language, in common with the rest" (Reinecke, 1969, p. 46). That same year the *Kū'oko'a* newspaper (November 19, 1864) published an editorial opposing the elimination of Hawaiian-medium schooling. The editorial referred to the proposal as part of a scheme to eliminate the independent government of Hawai'i and closed with the following statement:

> *He lana ko makou manao e kipi pono ana, a e malama maikai ana lakou i keia pono nui o na kanaka kupa o ka aina, oia hoi ka oihana kula kamalii Hawaii. O ka naauao iloko o ka olelo Hawaii, oia ke Kilohana Pookela o ka Lahui Hawaii.*
>
> It is our hope that they [the Hawaiian Legislature] will appropriately and fully rebel against this [proposal to replace public Hawaiian-medium schools with English-medium schools] and take great care of this great "pono" [benefit, morality, righteousness] which is the Hawaiian language education system. Education through the Hawaiian language is the most excellent peak of achievement of the Hawaiian people.

The strong feelings that Hawaiians in the Kingdom had for maintaining Hawaiian-medium education impeded the efforts of foreigners to close Hawaiian-medium education outright. Foreigners subsequently took the approach of working to gradually eliminate financial and other support for Hawaiian-medium education. Most foreigners at the time simply assumed the superiority of English as part of a then-current racist thinking regarding things "native" (Reinecke, 1969). Even after the monarchy was overthrown and Hawaiian-medium schools were fully shut down by law, the Hawaiian press was very cognizant of the organized plan to obliterate Hawaiian and persisted in urging the community to resist. The 1917 editorial from *Ka Pu'uhonua*, from which an earlier quote is given above, began with the following statement:

> *I ikeia no ke kanaka no kekahi lahui ma kana olelo. Ina e nalowale ana ka olelo makuahine o kekahi lahui, e nalo hia aku ana no ia lahui.*
>
> A human being is recognized as belonging to a particular people by the language he or she uses. If a people loses its mother tongue, that people will disappear.

The fear expressed by early territorial Hawaiian leaders that the loss of Hawaiian would result in the loss of a distinct Hawaiian people has been realized in a considerable part of the population over the past 100 years. Those who are biologically Hawaiian now often claim another ethnic identity as primary. In the 2000 U.S. Census, 38.8% of those in Hawai'i identifying themselves as Chinese also claimed to have Hawaiian blood (Kana'iaupuni, Malone, & Ishibashi, 2005).[7] In the late 1990s, Hilo High School surveyed students as to the ethnicity with which they most identified (Hawai'i State Department of Education, 1999) and also asked them to indicate whether they had any Hawaiian blood. Of the students, 26.1% listed Hawaiian/Part-Hawaiian as their ethnicity of identity, but 51% noted that they had Hawaiian blood. If after 100 years of English-medium education, half of all young people of Hawaiian ancestry consider their identity as primarily non-Hawaiian, what will remain of Hawaiian identity in the next 100 years, much less the next millennium?

While the widely acknowledged relationship between language and identity has not been closely studied in Hawai'i, evidence certainly exists that contemporary schooling through Hawaiian has a positive effect on identification as Hawaiian. The Hilo High School survey described above also found that 96% of Native Hawaiian students enrolled in its Hawaiian immersion program marked Hawaiian as the ethnicity with which they most identified. One might argue that families that chose immersion did so because they themselves already identified as Hawaiian. However, in support of the effect of the language on students are reports from non-Hawaiian students who feel that enrolling in the program developed in them a feeling of Hawaiian ethnic, albeit not racial, identity (T. I. Gionson, personal communication, September 2006). Such increased identification, or "reduction of psychological distance," with the group associated with a language used in immersion programming has been noted in studies in Canada (Baker & Hornberger, 2001, p. 101).

Advantages for Academic Achievement

Another facet of the systematic effort by foreigners to eliminate Hawaiian-medium education during the monarchy was promotion of the notion that Hawaiian was a primitive language that lacked the cultural understandings and linguistic features that would enable students to express the higher-order thinking necessary for an educated population. In response to this argument, Kekūanāo'a's earlier-referenced 1864 report stated that Hawaiian was full and comprehensive enough for teaching any subject. The 1864 editorial cited earlier from the *Kū'oko'a* rejected the claim that Hawaiian was inferior as a medium of education, noting that Hawaiian-language schools had produced the Hawaiian-speaking ministers, lawyers, judges, and publishers practicing at that time.

The *Kū'oko'a* editorial also noted that languages grow and adapt to their uses and stated that Hawaiian had adapted well to 19th-century innovations. English speakers who were claiming Hawaiian to be too primitive for use in schooling were ignoring the fact that English itself had at one time been claimed to be too primitive to be used as a vehicle of instruction in the schools of England by those who favored the "superior" French and Latin languages (McCrum, Cran, & MacNeil, 1993). The *Kū'oko'a* editorial further rejected educating all Hawaiian children through English by stating that it would actually result in a decrease in educational achievement:

> *Aole loa e hiki ke ao ia na kamalii Hawaii a pau ma ka olelo Enelani e lilo ai lakou i poe akamai ma loko o ia olelo. A ina e hoao ia kela manao, eia wale no ka hope, e naaupo ana ka hapa nui o na keiki Hawaii.*
>
> It would be absolutely impossible to teach all Hawaiian children through the language of England to the point of being highly skilled in that language. And if an effort were made to carry out that proposal, the only possible outcome would be that the majority of Hawaiian children would become uneducated and ignorant.

The Hawaiian press had reason to be proud of the academic achievement reached through the Hawaiian-medium school system. Almost every young Hawaiian older than age five could read. Upon annexation to the United States, Hawaiians had the highest literacy rate of any ethnic group in the Hawaiian Islands, as shown in Table 1.

TABLE 1 Percentage of Hawai'i's population ages 5 or older literate in 1896

Group	%
Hawaiian	84.0
Part-Hawaiian	91.2
Portuguese	27.8
Other Caucasian (primarily Anglo-American)	85.7
Chinese	48.5
Japanese	53.6

Note: From *Hawai'i's People*, by A. Lind, 1980, p. 94.

Second to the Hawaiian/Part-Hawaiian literacy rate was "Other Caucasian." This group, primarily Americans and British, was disproportionately composed of merchants, professionals, and managers at that time in Hawai'i's history. By way of contrast, the Hawaiian/Part-Hawaiian categories included people from all walks of life and social classes. Furthermore, in 1896, Hawaiian as a written language had been in existence less than 75 years. Many older pure Hawaiians living at the time had reached maturity before the establishment of the compulsory public school system. Others, also primarily pure Hawaiians, lived in isolated areas where it was difficult to provide formal schooling.

Unique features of the Hawaiian language facilitated early and rapid acquisition of literacy among 19th-century Hawaiians in Hawaiian-medium schools. The Hawaiian writing system is very regular in making the connection between written symbol and phoneme. The English spelling system is much less regular and therefore more difficult to acquire, delaying the initial acquisition of literacy by children and making it more difficult to become a proficient reader. That learning to read in Hawaiian is easier than learning to read in English is confirmed in a number of missionary accounts, such as the following from Dibble (cited in Schütz, 1994):

> Every one who can combine two letters in a syllable, and put two syllables together, can both read and spell with readiness. The art of reading, therefore, is very easily acquired. I think I am safe in saying, that the children of Hawaii learn to read their language in a much shorter time than our children do the English. (p. 173)

As indicated in the above quotation, 19th-century Hawaiian-medium schools had another advantage over English-medium schools: the use of a syllabic method of teaching literacy. Compulsory education initially began at age 4 in Hawai'i but was changed to age 6 after English-medium education became more common (Alexander & Atkinson, 1888). This difference in initial age of compulsory education is consistent with what psycholinguistic experiments have found to be the normal cognitive development of children. Shortly after reaching age 4, most children can divide words syllabically, the minimum cognitive skill necessary to begin fluent reading of Hawaiian. However, the minimum cognitive skill necessary to begin fluent reading in English is the ability to divide words into phonemes. This does not normally occur until age 6 (O'Grady, Archibald, Aronoff, & Rees-Miller, 2005). Thus, due to differences in the linguistic structure of their languages, Hawaiian-speaking children can generally learn to read two years earlier than English speakers.

Also affecting the rapid reading acquisition among Hawaiian speakers is the exact identity between Hawaiian phonemes and letters that young Hawaiian readers access after first developing reading through two-phoneme syllables. Research on the transfer of reading skills from languages with a highly regular alphabet writing system (like that of Hawaiian) to reading the highly irregular English writing system has shown that those who read first in such a language can often read English words faster than native speakers of English (Sasaki, 2005). Further support for the existence of unique reading strengths of children who learn to read Hawaiian first is the common observation in Hawaiian-medium schools of children beginning to read English on their own before formal instruction in English is introduced.

The predictions of the *Kū'oko'a* and Kekūanāo'a that replacement of Hawaiian-medium education with English-medium education would reduce academic achievement proved true. During the 20th century, huge advances were made in terms of communications, travel, and economic resourcing for Hawai'i's English-medium public and private schools. One would think that these advantages would further increase the already high academic performance of Hawaiian students. In actual fact, as the English public and private schools exterminated the Hawaiian language, literacy decreased among Hawaiians. Statistics collected in 1986 show that Hawaiians have become one of the least literate ethnic groups in Hawai'i with only 70% functionally literate (Berg, 1989).

By way of contrast, considerable academic successes are presently being realized at Nāwahīokalani'ōpu'u, the P–12 Hawaiian-medium laboratory school affiliated with Hilo High School and the state's Hawaiian language college. This academic success is evidence of the potential of contemporary Hawaiian-medium education to reestablish high academic performance among Hawaiians. Since the first graduating class in 1999, there has been a 100% graduation rate and an 80% college attendance rate. Nāwahī graduates attend local institutions of higher education, as well as prominent out-of-state universities such as Stanford and Loyola Marymount. One former student earned an MA at Oxford and is now in a PhD program there. In 2003, Nāwahī students made up less than 2% of the Hilo High School senior class but accounted for 16% of its summa cum laude graduates (Wilson, 2003).[8]

A likely factor strengthening academic achievement at Nāwahī is the cognitive effect of high bilingualism. Research on highly bilingual students has shown them to have higher levels of conceptual development and stronger metalinguistic skills than monolingual students (Baker & Hornberger, 2001; Baker & Jones, 1998; Khleif, 1980). Researchers have cautioned that such cognitive advantages are generally found among children who are truly able to communicate fully in two languages, that is, those children who have reached what is termed the "threshold of balanced bilingual competence" (Baker & Jones, 1998).

The reality for autochthonous language minority education is that it is much more difficult to develop high fluency in the autochthonous minority language than in the socially dominant language. High-level fluency in both languages is required to reach the "threshold" necessary to obtain cognitive advantages. In the Basque region of Spain where all students study both Spanish and the endangered Basque language, there has been extensive testing of thousands of children comparing three models of education: (a) Spanish medium with Basque taught as a foreign language at all grades, (a) half-day Spanish and half-day Basque medium, and (c) full-day Basque medium with Spanish taught as a foreign language. In all three models children perform at about the same high level in Spanish, but the full-day Basque program produces much superior results in Basque (Gardner, 2000). The trend is an increase in full Basque-medium schools.

The Basque programs exemplify a developmental process also observable in Hawai'i. Establishment of full immersion inspires increased language teaching through other methods. English-medium Hawaiian charter schools and Kamehameha Schools are moving to implement required study of Hawaiian—the beginnings of Basque model A described above. Kamehameha Schools has long had the state's largest enrollments in Hawaiian language courses and will soon offer the option of six years of Hawaiian. Partial immersion—Basque model B—is an option at several public intermediate and high schools. Kamehameha Schools has moved toward partial immersion by offering the option of two courses and home room through Hawaiian. Full immersion—Basque model C—is found in all Pūnana Leo preschools and most of the public elementary streams that developed from Pūnana Leo. Full immersion through high school, as is standard in the Basque region, is the least widespread but also the most promising in producing full bilitteracy in Hawaiian and English.

Advantages in Acquiring Standard English

Twenty years ago, predictions were made that if Hawaiian-medium education was reestablished, the enrolled children would fail to speak English. Not a single graduate from Hawaiian-medium education has been unable to speak, read, and write English. There is no detectable accent in their English that differentiates them from others in their communities. There is standardized test evidence that students from Hawaiian language medium schools have the potential to exceed peers from other schools in English achievement (Wilson & Kamanā, 2001).

Scientific research corroborates the Hawaiian data. Programs using nondominant languages as media of education have been shown effective in developing high-level mastery of the dominant language (McCarty, 2003).

Careful scientific studies in Canada of Anglophone children in French immersion have shown that those who completed French immersion not only reached the same level of English proficiency as their peers in English-medium schools but often exceeded it. These studies showed that a gap initially existed during the period before any English was taught in the French immersion programs and persisted for a while after English was introduced. The ultimate outcome, however, was equal, and frequently, higher English achievement (Genesee, Holobow, Lambert, & Chartrand, 1989).

Mere exposure to two languages does not explain the phenomenon of high English achievement in Canadian French immersion programs for Anglophones. All Anglophone schools teach French as a subject from the earliest grades. Indeed, the reason for establishing French immersion in Canada was that French achievement in Canadian Anglophone schools was quite low despite years of second-language course study. Francophones, however, as speakers of the smaller official language of Canada, found it relatively easy to develop fluency in English because of the many opportunities Francophone students have to use English outside school. With increased legal support of both Canadian official languages—French and English—Anglophones were losing jobs to Francophones with better balanced fluency in French and English.

In Hawai'i in the 1980s, the status of Hawaiian in the community had deteriorated to near extinction. Hawai'i's history had shown that after-school programs, such as those developed by the Japanese in the early 1900s, and in-school bilingual programs, such as those developed to serve more recent Filipino immigrants, are insufficiently strong to maintain non-English languages with younger generations in Hawai'i. The strong Hawaiian language medium school model of the Hawaiian monarchy was needed if Hawaiian was to survive extinction. The contemporary Hawaiian-medium model was developed by combining knowledge gained from the historical Hawaiian model with information gained from Canadian French immersion and even stronger autochthonous language medium models from

New Zealand and elsewhere. The model calls for a standard English language arts course beginning in Grade 5 and third and fourth languages to be taught as resources are available.

The Pūnana Leo movement has sought to reestablish Hawaiian as the first language of participating families and includes parent training as children attend the schools it has pioneered. As a result of this education, the number of families speaking Hawaiian in the home has increased. The program has come full circle, with some of its earliest graduates becoming parents who are raising their own children through Hawaiian. This development shows that it is possible to revive Hawaiian intergenerationally, as was done with the Hebrew language, especially if more Hawaiians participate in Hawaiian-medium education.[9]

The goal of reestablishing Hawaiian as a first language in Hawai'i does not mean rejection of high standards of English for Hawaiian-speaking children. The fact is that developing high skills in English has been an important goal, both in contemporary Hawaiian-medium education and in the educational system of the Hawaiian monarchy. For both periods the target has been high fluency and literacy in both languages, but with English as a language to be used with outsiders rather than with fellow Hawaiians. The weak position of Hawaiian in the community means that most children in Hawaiian-mediums schools speak English frequently at home. Even those who speak only Hawaiian at home live in neighborhoods where English is dominant, have English-speaking extended families, and use the English media. The model of teaching English supported by the 'Aha Pūnana Leo includes eight full years of English language arts courses through high school graduation. Those eight years exceed the research-indicated five to six years of English study to develop full English biliteracy for language minority children (McCarty, 2003).

During the monarchy, foreigners in the government who favored the elimination of Hawaiian-medium education used the interest of Hawaiians in learning English to gradually reduce support for Hawaiian-medium education. In fact, those who have claimed that Hawaiians themselves exterminated Hawaiian (Conklin, 2006) have included enrollment figures for Kingdom Hawaiian-medium schools that taught English as a course with those of total English-medium schools (Reinecke, 1969).[10] Counting "English schools" in this way gives a highly distorted picture.

Under such a system, a country such as Denmark would likely not have a single Danish-medium school. All Danish schools teach English. Certainly, all contemporary Hawaiian-medium schools would be classified as English schools under this method of classification.

The editorials from Hawaiian newspapers provided in this article all expressed a desire to maintain Hawaiian-medium schooling. Support for the continuation of Hawaiian-medium education continued in the face of negative political forces. These included the reduction of the salaries of those teaching through Hawaiian, the closing of Lahainaluna as a Hawaiian-medium teacher training center, and the elimination of funding for Hawaiian-medium books.[11]

An effective method used during the monarchy for maintaining Hawaiian while pursuing English as a strong foreign language was to conduct elementary education in Hawaiian with enrollment of selected older students for a limited period in an English immersion school. One such school was Ke Kula O Kehehena, the public school that grew out of the missionaries' Royal School. With the reestablishment of Hawaiian-medium education, there are now some students receiving elementary education through Hawaiian with high school education through English at Kamehameha Schools. Indeed, there may be a higher percentage of students from Hawaiian-medium schools being accepted into Kamehameha Schools than from English-medium public schools.[12]

For a number of years now, there has been a concern that Hawaiian-medium education enrollments not be affected negatively through the high acceptance rate of Hawaiian-medium students at the Kamehameha Schools. Unlike students during the monarchy, contemporary Hawaiian-medium school students come primarily from English-speaking homes. Attending a private English-medium school does not provide children with language-learning benefits and has even reduced the use of Hawaiian, contrary to the Kamehameha Schools' Strategic Plan (Kamehameha Schools, 2000). Under current conditions, a more productive strategy for developing strong fluency and literacy in both Hawaiian and English would be to provide incentives to keep students in Hawaiian-medium schools and carefully coordinate these with the initiation of new immersion streams on Kamehameha campuses.

Hawaiian students learning English during the monarchy typically experienced learning English in the same way students in non-English speaking countries learn English: as a carefully studied second language. Hawaiians learning English in the 1800s focused on the most correct English grammar, pronunciation, and vocabulary possible. While there were still Hawaiians who spoke no English or very little when the Hawaiian monarchy was overthrown, those who spoke English fluently adhered to a high standard in English. After the initiation of the ban on Hawaiian in schools, Hawaiian adults were not only sounding the alarm over the effect of the English schools on the use of Hawaiian but also noting a decrease in the standard of English spoken by Hawaiians, as shown in the following quotation from an editorial in *Ka Na'i Aupuni*, of January 4, 1906:

> *a ua ku maoli no hoi i ka hilahila ke hoolohe aku i na opio e hoao ana e olelo i ka olelo kulaiwi me ka hemahema. O ka oi loa aku, ke hoolohe aku oe ia lakou, na opio e hoao ana e olelo Beretania, aole no i hemo pono loa ka hoopuka ana i ka olelo Beretania, a he hooku'iku'i no ka manao, aole he mohala pono.*
>
> It's extremely embarrassing to hear our young people trying to speak Hawaiian so ineptly. Even more embarrassing is to hear our young people trying to speak English. They are not pronouncing English correctly and the meanings contradict each other and are poorly developed.

The loss of Hawaiian during the early territorial period did not result in English becoming the community language of Hawaiians. Instead, it resulted in the birth of a new language—Hawai'i Creole English. Parallels with Hawai'i Creole English can be found in African American English and American Indian English, which also grew up under forced use of English. These nonstandard dialects serve to maintain distinctive identities for peoples whose languages were subject to extermination. However, the very histories and contemporary uses of these dialects as means of displaying resistance may also negatively affect the acquisition of standard English. Support for this observation can be found on the Navajo Reservation where Indian English has now replaced Navajo among most children. Navajo language medium schooling has produced higher English (and overall

academic) achievement than English-medium schooling there (Johnson & Legatz, 2006). The Welsh, who also have a history of being suppressed, have demonstrated similar higher English (and overall academic) achievement for Welsh students from English-speaking homes through Welsh-medium schools (Khleif, 1980).

Within Hawaiian-medium schools, institutional use of Hawaiian highlights and strengthens Hawaiian identity. In such an environment, achievement in standard English language arts classes is less likely to be seen as threatening to Hawaiian identity. Certainly, in 19th-century Hawai'i, taking a course in English was not considered any more threatening to one's identity than taking a course in English is considered a threat to identity in the school systems of contemporary foreign countries.

In the contemporary world, it is the countries with profiles similar to that of 19th-century Hawai'i—small countries such as Scandinavia—that produce the best students of English. It is the experience at the University of Hawai'i–Hilo that students from Scandinavian countries who learn English as a foreign language in their own countries score higher on English placement tests than Hawaiian students who speak English natively (Karla Hayashi, personal communication, September 2006). The record of Hawaiian Kingdom's school system indicates that similarly strong standard English language results were produced in many schools here in Hawai'i. Many Hawaiians in the late monarchial period were literate in both Hawaiian and English, as shown in Table 2.

TABLE 2 Literacy in English among Hawaiians in 1896

Group	%
Pure Hawaiian females	29.6
Pure Hawaiian males	32.6
Part-Hawaiian males	74.4
Part-Hawaiian females	78.0

Note: From *Language and Dialect in Hawai'i: A Sociologuistic History to 1935*, by J. E. Reinecke, 1969, p. 37.

Interestingly, in 1896, when Hawaiian was still the dominant language of Hawaiians, and literacy—even in Hawaiian—was less than three generations old, the literacy rate in English among part-Hawaiians was above 70%. This is as high as the literacy rate of those of Hawaiian ancestry in 1986! Those of Hawaiian ancestry in 1986 likely had an overall smaller Hawaiian blood quantum than the part-Hawaiians of 1896, and certainly had much more daily access to standard English. That such a large portion of the population of Hawaiians in 1896 was not only literate but literate in two languages is no small accomplishment and has not been equaled in contemporary Hawai'i, even in the elite English-medium private schools. Testimony that it is possible for Hawai'i's young people to be fully fluent in two languages—again—is found today in the biliteracy in Hawaiian and English found among graduates of contemporary Hawaiian-medium schools.

Advantages for Third-Language Study

When the 'Aha Pūnana Leo began in the 1980s, many questioned the value of investing in teaching Hawaiian to preschool-age children. Suggestions were made that the invested time and effort would be better spent teaching children a "useful language" such as Japanese, French, or Chinese. The reality, however, is that far from rejecting the study of languages other than Hawaiian, Hawaiian-medium schools often embrace such study. Nāwahī laboratory school currently teaches all students four languages. In addition to Hawaiian and English, all elementary students study Japanese from Grade 1 to 6, and all 7th-, 8th-, and 9th-grade students study Latin. In addition, after-school courses are available in Mandarin Chinese and Japanese.

Research has shown that immersion students have advantages in learning third languages (Cenoz & Genesee, 1998). Further development of Hawaiian-medium education to include high-quality teaching of a third language could align Hawai'i more closely with European systems of education in which students typically study three languages before high school graduation.

The American English-medium school model used in Hawai'i's public and private schools teaches Hawaiian as a separate foreign language style course in competition with actual foreign languages. Unlike Hawaiian-medium school students, students in English-medium schools are required to choose between Hawaiian and foreign languages for their "foreign language" course. This competition with foreign languages is a major reason for low enrollments and even opposition by parents to Hawaiian language courses in English-medium private schools such as Kamehameha. Teaching Hawaiian as a foreign language is hindering revitalization of Hawaiian among Hawaiians themselves.

In Wales where the autochthonous Welsh language is being revived, more than 25% of all students attend Welsh-medium schools. Those students, primarily from families of indigenous Welsh origin, study English and French as additional languages. Those families who do not identify as strongly with Welsh enroll their children primarily in English-medium schools. In the English-medium system, students are required to take Welsh in foreign language style courses for a full 11 years of study (Welsh Language Board, 2000). As we saw earlier with Basque, study of an endangered autochthonous language like Welsh in a dominant language medium school has little effect in revitalizing a language for actual use. Test results show that Welsh-medium schools produce better results, not only in Welsh, but in English and French as well (Khleif, 1980). Similarly, the Hawaiian-medium education model can produce a higher-level fluency in foreign languages than study of foreign languages in lieu of Hawaiian. And the Hawaiian-medium model assures a level of Hawaiian fluency that actually affects the survival of the language, and thus of the culture, and ultimately, of the Hawaiian people themselves. Simply requiring foreign language style study of Hawaiian, even at every level of schooling, will not revitalize Hawaiian. Only Hawaiian-medium schools can revitalize Hawaiian—and even then it must be combined with use in the home and community.

Moving Beyond Removal of the Ban

There is no longer a ban on Hawaiian-medium education in Hawai'i public schools. However, private schools—including all-Hawaiian Kamehameha—have in effect allowed the ban on Hawaiian-medium education to continue. We hope private schools in Hawai'i will remedy this situation soon.

If the private schools implement Hawaiian-medium education, the public and private school systems could work together to truly revitalize Hawaiian.[13] Initial efforts have been made to break down some of the barriers that formerly precluded Kamehameha from providing the same scholarship support to Pūnana Leo children that Kamehameha provided to those in English-medium preschools. And most recently, Kamehameha has provided financial support to Pūnana Leo programming to help cover part of a loss in federal funding. Punahou has also moved forward in support for the Hawaiian language, including inviting a trilingual Nāwahī student to join Punahou students in a cultural exchange to Japan. Further partnering with private schools would fit into a broader picture of cooperation on a national and international level in indigenous language medium education. There are cooperative efforts between the 'Aha Pūnana Leo and American Indian and Alaska Native groups currently under way.[14] And the 'Aha Pūnana Leo has long had a close relationship with the Kōhanga Reo Trust and Māori language revitalization.

The Hawai'i educational establishment has become increasingly interested in the gains made by the Māori in New Zealand. The Māori education movement is highly focused on language revitalization and centers around Māori-medium education beginning in Kōhanga Reo preschools. Differential funding support favors those programs that use the most Māori language in instruction. By 1998, 44% of all Māori preschool students were enrolled in Māori-medium preschools, and 17% of all Māori students enrolled in compulsory education were in Māori-medium programs (Te Puni Kōkiri, 2000). Emulating the successes of autochthonous language medium education in Wales, Greenland, and northern Spain, Māori entities continue systematic planning for even further spread of Māori-medium education (Te Puni Kōkiri, 2003).

Hawaiian-medium education has struggled with unstable preschool funding and ad hoc accommodations made within the public school system. Furthermore, the best-funded programs for Hawaiians in Hawai'i are in English-medium schools rather than in Hawaiian-medium schools. Enrollments in Hawaiian-medium

education are also much smaller than those of Māori-medium education. Less than 3% of all Native Hawaiian children of preschool age are enrolled in Hawaiian-medium Pūnana Leo. A similar percentage of students from kindergarten through Grade 12 are enrolled in Hawaiian-medium schools. (Kanaʻiaupuni et al., 2005; Nāmaka Rawlins, personal communication, September 2006.)

In spite of small numbers, Hawaiian-medium education has received international attention, including commendations from leaders of Māori-medium education. Some of the successes of total Hawaiian-medium education have been used to support further growth of Māori-medium education (Tīmoti Kāretu, former New Zealand government Māori Language Commissioner, personal communication, October 2006).

Hawaiians themselves are increasingly seeing the value of Hawaiian language revitalization. Although few may be aware of the academic benefits of a revitalized Hawaiian language, many Hawaiians realize the importance of Hawaiian language in maintaining the Hawaiian culture and traditional values key to holding families and communities together. A Hawaiian Community Survey taken by the Kamehameha Schools in 2003 showed that 78% of Hawaiians surveyed believed it to be fairly or very important to "live and practice" Hawaiian culture on a daily basis, and 80.3% believed that universal Hawaiian language instruction to *keiki* (children) would improve Native Hawaiian pride and self-respect (Kanaʻiaupuni et al., 2005).

In the 1980s and 1990s, assumptions that Hawaiian language was inferior and irrelevant for contemporary times—as well as upheavals in the Kamehameha Schools—hindered Hawaiians from reaching levels of autochthonous language medium education comparable with those found in New Zealand. False assumptions remain a major reason why contemporary Hawaiian-medium education encounters many of the same challenges of resources, structural support, and low socioeconomic class identification faced by Hawaiian-medium education when it was under major external attack at the end of the monarchy. While many Hawaiians want the Hawaiian language for their children, the long history of repression of Hawaiian has many worried about following the autochthonous language medium education model. Yet this is the very model that has shown the most success for indigenous peoples on a national and international level.

It is our sincere hope that the information collected here regarding the positive effects of Hawaiian-medium education will be useful in countering misinformation and pressures that have worked against Hawaiʻi's institutions fully committing to Hawaiian-medium education. We especially call on parents to use the information provided here to strengthen themselves to join families like ours in enrolling their children in Hawaiʻi's proud heritage of Hawaiian-medium education. As long as there are families who insist on enrolling their children in Hawaiian-medium schools, the following claim of the Republic of Hawaiʻi (1895) in its biennial report can never be made again:

> Schools taught in the Hawaiian language have virtually ceased to exist and will probably never appear again in a Government report. Hawaiian parents without exception prefer that their children should be educated in the English language. The gradual extinction of a Polynesian dialect may be regretted for sentimental reasons, but it is certainly for the interest of the Hawaiians themselves.

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Notes

1 Kamehameha Schools (2005) might strengthen its claims of being aligned with federal legislation by acknowledging its past role as an agent of the government in the suppression of Hawaiian and by adopting the Hawaiian language supportive policies of the Native Hawaiian Education Act of 1988 (see No Child Left Behind Act of 2001). These policies include access to Hawaiian-medium education in all schooling that the Act provides and priority support to education conducted through the language.

2 Hawaiian survived on Niʻihau into the 1990s because of isolation and a practice of using Hawaiian in Niʻihau school despite the government ban (Wilson, 1999). Hawaiʻi Creole English is now replacing Hawaiian as the peer group language of Niʻihau children (Haunani Seward, principal of Ke Kula Niʻihau O Kekaha, personal communication, January 2006). The language shift is primarily due to the migration of the Niʻihau population between Niʻihau and Kauaʻi and two generations of enrollment in English-medium schools on Kauaʻi.

3 Children leaving the Pūnana Leo preschools or early elementary Kula Kaiapuni Hawaiʻi for English-medium schools, including Kamahemaha Schools, also typically lose Hawaiian, even when urged by parents to keep speaking it.

4 To learn more about the role of the language—especially the Hawaiian language—in cultural continuity, see Kimura (1983), Kamanā (1987), ʻAha Pūnana Leo (in press), and Grenoble and Whaley (1998).

5 An example of the attitudes of traditional language speaking Polynesians toward non-Hawaiian speaking Hawaiians was a reprimand given in 1991 by a Rarotonga elder to Kamehameha Schools Concert Glee Club students. The elder said he did not consider the students Hawaiians because they did not use Hawaiian as their main informal language among themselves. This reprimand and a similar one the following year in Raʻiātea resulted in several Kamehameha students becoming active leaders in the Hawaiian-medium education movement (Marcus Kalaʻi Ontai and Hiapo Perreira, personal communication, September 2006).

6 The opinions of Kekūanāoʻa are of particular interest in considering future participation of the Kamehameha Schools in Hawaiian-medium education. Kekūanāoʻa was the *kahu hānai* (ritualized raising parent) of Ke Aliʻi Pauahi, and thus had as much influence on her thinking as her biological father. Kekūanāoʻa was also father of Kamehameha IV, Kamehameha V, and Ruth Keʻelikōlani. Keʻelikōlani, the source of the majority of Pauahi's lands, was a very strong advocate of sole use of Hawaiian by Hawaiians with other Hawaiians. She would surely have been distressed to know that within two decades of her death, funds from her lands were to be used to exterminate Hawaiian (Eyre, 2004). Kekūanāoʻa's (and arguably Pauahi's) goal of developing Hawaiians with high second-language fluency in English can only be reached today through strong support of Hawaiian-medium education.

7 It is likely that part-Hawaiians who identified as Chinese were primarily Chinese in blood and English in language. Ever-increasing numbers of Hawaiians are of racial mixtures in which non-Hawaiian elements predominate. Therefore the tendency of English-speaking part-Hawaiians to identify ethnically with other groups is likely to increase. In the United States, for English speakers, one's

predominant blood usually determines ethnic identity. For non-English speakers, however, blood is seen as less important than language. Note the census's new language-based—but race-neutral—category "Hispanic."

8 See Wilson and Kamanā (2001) and Wilson (2003) for more information on academic achievement. Nāwahī is participating in a national study of Native American language medium education to record its academic successes and determine appropriate methods of measuring student achievement in such programs before English literacy is fully developed. The project is led by Dr. William Demmert of Western Washington University and supported by, among others, Educational Testing Services of Princeton, the Rand Corporation, and the Center for Research on Education, Diversity and Excellence at the University of California–Berkeley.

9 For more information on the revitalization of Hebrew and language revitalization in general, see Baker and Jones (1998, pp. 186–203).

10 On his Web site, Conklin (2006) also made claims regarding the 1896 law banning Hawaiian that have no source of support in the historical record, for example, that "Many, perhaps, most Hawaiian parents went so far as to demand that their children speak only English at home as well as at school," and "It turns out that laws favoring English were probably targeted primarily to assimilate the American-born children (U.S. citizens) [*sic*] of Japanese Plantation workers." There is ample historical evidence that Hawaiian was the language most Hawaiian parents used with their children when the law was enacted. Furthermore, in 1896, Japanese children (then not U.S., but Hawaiian citizens) made up only 2.1% of enrollments in Hawai'i schools. Conklin also failed to acknowledge that the Republic of Hawai'i (1895) itself specifically noted the Hawaiian language was the language affected by its school language law.

11 Hawaiian-medium education continues to be attacked. Contrary to federal law, Hawaiian-medium programs are denied access to funds for non-English speaking students. In spite of specific recognition of a unique testing status in federal law, administrators have applied English-medium school testing rules to Hawaiian-medium schools with highly prejudicial results.

12 In 2006, students with Hawaiian immersion backgrounds were accepted into Grade 9 at Kamehameha's Kea'au campus at a level twice their representation in the population. Even more dramatic is the record on Moloka'i, where for two straight years, two-thirds of students accepted to Kamehameha came from the small Hawaiian immersion program there (Nāmaka Rawlins, personal communication, September 2006).

13 At the suggestion of anonymous reviewers, this article was modified to include a discussion of the potential role for the Kamehameha Schools in Hawaiian-medium education. Establishing Hawaiian-medium education at Kamehameha would be consistent with Kamehameha's claims in court (Kamehameha Schools, 2005, pp. 17–18) relative to its "mission of remedying the near destruction of Native Hawaiian culture and producing graduates who will carry on that remediation" and Kamehameha's assertion of the value to its graduates of "immersion in a Native Hawaiian culture education in grades K–12."

14 Hawai'i is the current leader in the United States in a rapidly growing Native American language medium movement (Hinton & Hale, 2001). Initiation of K–12 Hawaiian immersion within Kamehameha Schools in cooperation with existing Hawaiian-medium programs would move Hawaiian-medium education to a new level of international leadership. It would also be natural within the history of a movement led and coordinated in large part by Kamehameha graduates.