

IN MEMORIAM

On January 18, 1996, Dr. Charlene J. Sato, Associate Professor in the Department of English as a Second Language and Chair of the Ph.D. program in Second Language Acquisition at the University of Hawai'i at Manoa, died peacefully in her Honolulu home.

I remember the wave of shock that went through our department when Charlie was first diagnosed with ovarian cancer in May 1995, and the shifting moods of hope and fear that followed. Charlie approached her illness as she did all important tasks in her life, with a clear, analytic mind, determination, and courage. She continued to teach, administer the Ph.D. program, and participate in the department's social events as long as her physical condition would allow. Even throughout this most difficult period of her short life, she remained a model for all of us who had the privilege to know her as a teacher, colleague, and friend.

Charlie was local to the islands of Hawai'i. Born in Lahaina, Maui, in 1951, she grew up in Wahiawa, on O'ahu. A bilingual speaker of Hawai'i Creole English (HCE) and Standard English, she experienced linguistic diversity and inequality from early on. These issues became the foci of her professional life. Charlie received a B.A. in linguistics from UC Berkeley (1973), two M.A. degrees from the University of Hawai'i (ESL, 1977, and linguistics, 1978), and a Ph.D. in applied linguistics from UCLA (1985). After returning to Hawai'i, she taught in the ESL Department at the University of Hawai'i for 14 years.

In her scholarly work, Charlie contributed to three main areas of applied linguistics: the functional analysis of second language acquisition (esp. her monograph *The Syntax of Conversation in Interlanguage Development*, 1990), pidgin and creole studies (e.g., "Language Change in a Creole Continuum: Decreolization?," in Hyltenstam & Viberg, 1994), and language policies (e.g., "A Non-standard Approach to Standard English," *TESOL Quarterly*, 1989). But in her research and lecturing those areas were closely interconnected. This synthesis was no mere intellectual exercise. It happened because Charlie was a scholar who took sides—with those whose linguistic, social, and educational rights were at risk. In her professional life, being a sociolinguist thus involved two interrelated aspects: studying language as a social phenomenon and bringing sociolinguistic theory and research to bear on specific societal problems—whether such problems concerned the debate in the international ELT community about standard and non-standard dialects in ESL curricula and classrooms or local issues such as accent discrimination against speakers of HCE and the standard-only policy advocated by the Department of Education in the State of Hawai'i in the late 1980s.

Charlie did more than study and teach the diversity of human experience: She embodied it. A fast and brilliant thinker, she was funny, sociable, an attentive hostess, creative cook, and trained hula dancer from her childhood days, a political activist and tireless advocate for human rights, a confident, beautiful woman, and always a dependable, committed colleague and teacher.

Charlie's multiple selves co-existed harmoniously: She was the living proof that you can be a bright, inquisitive Japanese-American girl from Wahiawa with a sparkle in your eyes and a brilliant international scholar, one supporting the other. For generations of students in Hawai'i and the many other places in the world where Charlie taught, she was a practical encouragement of what they might be in their own lives. For all of us who knew her and miss her, she will remain in our memories as a wise and gracious guide.

A commemorative volume, *Creole Genesis, Sociohistory, and Aesthetics: A Celebration of Charlene J. Sato*, is currently under preparation, edited by John Rickford and Suzanne Romaine. Two special funds have been set up with her approval and for purposes specified by her. The first will help support students doing work on any aspect of Hawai'i Creole English. The second will help support women members' participation in the Industrial Workers of the World. Donations can be made in the following ways. For the former, checks should be made payable to "UH Foundation" (mentioning the Charlene Sato Memorial Fund) and sent to the University of Hawai'i Foundation, P.O. Box 11270, Honolulu, HI 96828. For the latter, checks should be made payable to "IWW" (mentioning the Charlie Sato Memorial Fund) and sent to the Industrial Workers of the World, 103 West Michigan Avenue, Ypsilante, MI 48197-5438.

Gabriele Kasper