

## **The Influence of Static and Mobile Language Contact on an Emerging Pacific English**

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In this paper I discuss the use of pragmatic variable like to demonstrate influence of language contact via mobility and social media on an emerging Pacific English. Kosrae experiences few Anglophone media forms, and though few long-stay native English speakers spend time on the island, evidence of American English still surface.

Kosrae is one of four island states which constitute the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM). The country gained independence in 1986, following a complex colonial past, having withstood Spain, Germany and Japan as previous colonisers. National autonomy was gained by FSM within a Compact of Free Association (COFA) with the US, combining economic assistance and a freedom of movement deal for the islanders. Education grants to visit the US were awarded to Micronesians, and by the 80s the COFA freedom of movement agreement lent even more value to the English language. English is now an official language in FSM, and Kose is now spoken by over half of the islanders.

Here, I analyse tokens of pragmatic marker like in terms of frequency, place, and function, to exhibit how language contact is the main factor that determines its use, and in turn AE features. The tokens are extracted from a corpus of 96 sociolinguistic interviews obtained during a 3 month long field trip in Summer 2015. Speakers vary in gender, age, mobility, and language contact profiles. Contact arises from two main sources: 1) mobile islanders who have returned and are more frequently carrying out daily conversation in English, and 2) social media whereby sedentary islanders communicate with family and friends abroad via Facebook and Skype. Here I show through ethnographic and statistical linguistic analyses how like is a dialect transfer item resulting from static and mobile contact with US English.