English in Paradise?
Emergent Varieties in Micronesia
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**Introduction**
Micronesia and its colonial background:
- Diverse colonizers (Spain, Germany, Japan, Britain, Australia, US)
- Colonized at different points in time (16th Century – mid 19th Century)
- Different types of colonization (trade vs exploitation vs settlement) and intensities of contact

Micronesia today:
- Different political statuses (territory vs commonwealth vs independence)
- Different degrees of global integration (high rates of tourism, immigration, mobility vs isolation)

English in Micronesia:
- Official language
- Prominent as a language of administration, education, etc.
- Previously unresearched varieties (exception: Palauan English)

> This project investigates five English varieties in Micronesia (Guam, Saipan, Nauru, Kosrae, Kiribati) and examines their status, usage, and historical and current influences.

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### Linguistic Situation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language</th>
<th>Features</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>Used more or as equally as often as other languages: 59%</td>
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<td>Philippine languages and Chinese (40%)</td>
<td>English as the language of media, politics, education</td>
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<td>Fear of loss of indigenous languages</td>
<td>English predominantly in formal contexts (politics, education, media) and writing</td>
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<td>Code-switching and English borrowings in Nauruan</td>
<td>Virtually no tourism</td>
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</tbody>
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### Socio-linguistic Influences

| Educational and political language policies | High level of Asian immigration (Filipino and Chinese immigrant workers) |
| Language attitudes | Tourism from China, Japan and Russia |
| Close political, educational and social connection to the United States | High degree of mobility (going to the US mainland for education and work) |
| Traditional vs Western culture | English almost exclusively in private domains and workplace |

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### Emergent Varieties in Micronesia

- **Guam**
  - Unincorporated and organized unincorporated of the United States
  - 544 km²
  - 161,785 inhabitants
  - English, Chamorro
  - English as the language of government, education, business and media
  - Efforts to revitalize the indigenous language (Chamorro)

- **Saipan**
  - Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
  - 14 islands, 3 inhabited
  - 115.4 km², 48,220 inhabitants
  - Indigenous ethnicities: Chamorro (22%)
  - Multicultural community

- **Nauru**
  - Independent republic since 1968
  - 21.1 km²
  - 9,945 inhabitants
  - 632 foreign residents
  - Approx. 700 asylum seekers
  - Virtually no tourism

- **Kosrae**
  - Member of Federated States of Micronesia (1607 islands, 4 states: Kosrae, Pohnpei, Chuuk, Yap)
  - 111.3 km²
  - 6,816 Kosraean inhabitants
  - Free movement to US and back (currently)

- **Kiribati**
  - Independent republic
  - Under British administration until 1979
  - 33 islands, 21 inhabited
  - 103,958 inhabitants
  - Virtually no tourism

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### Shared Features

- Phonology:
  - Shifts and monophthongization of vowels
  - TH-stopping: /θ/ → [t]/[d]
  - /w/ vs. /u:/
  - Non-standard voice onset times (VOT): p/l/k/ sound unaspirated

- Prosody:
  - Questions are non-inverted, intonated: You are tired?
  - Syllable-timing (vowels are non-reduced)

- Morphosyntax:
  - 3rd person –a omission / lack of third person singular concord: to me it don’t feel that long, he hit
  - Variable use of plural forms: maybe in uh two week I’m done; five weeks
  - Negative concord: I think my separation just made me care about anything no more
  - Double comparison: which would be more easier

- Irregular use of articles: on the island marriage is like death certificate
- Historical present: And I go to the beach (in a narrative = And I went to the beach)
- Interchangeable use of 3rd person gender pronouns: his house / her house

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