

# HOW FO TALK PLACE IN HAWAIIAN CREOLE ENGLISH



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## GOAL OF STUDY / 'TO'

- Articulate the distribution of null & overt 'to' in Hawaiian Creole English (HCE)
- HCE exhibits both null and overt 'to'
- As far as we know, this pattern has not been described in detail

# HCE COMPOSITION

- English is the **lexifier**
  - Provides most of a pidgin/creole's vocab
- **Substrate langs** are Portuguese, Hawaiian, Cantonese, others
- Resulted from intense & rapid multilingual contact on plantations

## STATS ON HCE

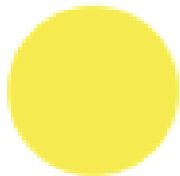
- > 1,000,000 speakers in Hawai‘i & on U.S. Mainland
- Ranked 5/“developing” on EGIDS scale of language endangerment (*Ethnologue*)
- Mixed attitudes
  - Accepted as an important part of local culture
  - Looked down upon by others (the “pidgin problem”)

## RESEARCH PROBLEM: NULL PREPOSITION 'TO'

- In HCE, null preposition 'to' is attested:

(1) *He go [∅] da land dey call "Da Homeless Land" fo live ova dea.*

‘He went to the land they call Nod to live there.’



[REDACTED]  
leri alle 15:33 · 🗣️



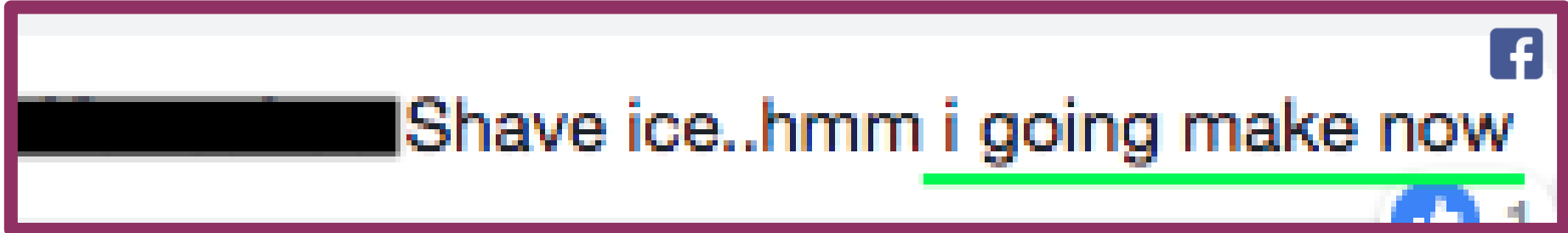
I hope it stays sunny I wanna go beach and do a bon fire tonight 🙏🙏🙏

## RESEARCH PROBLEM: NULL INFINITIVAL 'TO'

- Null infinitival 'to' is also frequently attested:

(2) *Da peopo all ova da world, dey ony like [∅] bus up each odda.*

‘People all over the world, they only **want to beat** each other **up**.’



Shave ice..hmm i going make now

## RESEARCH PROBLEM: OVERT 'TO'

- However, **overt** preposition 'to' also exists:

(3) *Had guys jalike gods dat wen check out da daughtas dat born to da peopo.*

'There were men like gods who saw the daughters who were born to the people.'

## RESEARCH PROBLEM: 'FO'

- Furthermore, sometimes when we expect 'to', we see 'fo(r)':
- (4) *She like how da tree look, an da fruits **look good fo eat.***  
'She likes how the tree looks, and the fruits **look good to eat.**'



A screenshot of a Facebook post. The post is from a user with a yellow profile picture and a redacted name, identified as 'Kauai Rants and Raves'. The post is 8 hours old and has a public privacy setting. The main content of the post is a large grey rectangular area where the image has been redacted. Below the redacted area, the text of the post is visible: 'So if you see any chronics trying for sell Wailua shave ice stuff at the Coin star machine down foodland lmk. 🙏'.



## REVIEW OF LIT: NULL PREPOSITIONS IN HCE

- Sakoda & Siegel (2013); Vellupilai (2003)
  - HCE's omission of English preps “pervasive or obligatory”
    - Example: [laki ju liv ø həwaɪʔi] ‘Lucky you live in Hawai’i.’

## BACKGROUND ON 'FO'

- **Complementizer**—used to turn a clause into the subject or object of a sentence
  - cf. English complementizer 'to'—introduces infinitival clauses
- 'To' in HCE realized as 'fo'
  - Reminder example:

(5) *You birds too, I like you fo do da same ting!*  
'You clowns too, I want you to do the same thing!'



# Present Study

## PART I: CORPUS ANALYSIS: SOURCE

- *Da Jesus Book*, translation project by Dr. Joseph Grimes (2000)
  - New Testament, with some Old Testament, translated from English into HCE
  - 27 native HCE informants
- Glosses
  - ‘Heritage fluency’

## METHODS

- Procedure: went through line by line and pulled relevant utterances (count = 298)
  - ‘to’ (preposition & infinitival marker)
  - ‘fo’
  - null ‘to’/‘fo’ environments
- Ignored ‘fo’ in MAE ‘for’ environments

## ANALYSIS: PRELIMINARY RESULTS

- 55/298 **prepositional** constructions (null & overt)
  - Overt seems default (only 14/55 are null)
- 243/298 **infinitival** constructions (null & overt)
  - Null seems default (130/243 are null)
  - All infinitival markers are either 'fo' or null
    - (no infinitival 'to' in the set!)

## PRELIMINARY RESULTS: COMPLEMENTIZER 'FO'

- Infinitival environment typically null
  - Construction: [**verb  $\emptyset$  infinitive**]
- (6) *Da nex day, Moses go  $\emptyset$  see his ohana peopo again.*  
'The next day, Moses **went to see** his family again.'

## INFINITIVALS MARKED WITH 'FO'

- In infinitival construction, 'fo' triggered by presence of words between [verb + infinitive]
- (8) *Eryting dat need air fo live, dey all mahke.*  
'Everything that needed air to live, they all died.'



## A FEW EXCEPTIONS

- Sometimes, 'fo' was overt even in the uninterrupted construction [verb + infinitive]

(10) Den God say, "I like light fo shine!" an da light **start fo shine.**

'Then God said, "I want light to shine!" and the light **started to shine.**'

- 'Fo' thus seems optional here, but overwhelmingly null

## AN EXCEPTION WITH PREDICATE 'LIKE'

- 'like' = MAE 'want' or 'would like'
- Follows pattern: 'fo' almost always null after verb 'like'

- But: even when construction is interrupted:

(11) *So, I like you  $\emptyset$  get plenny bebes, an fill up da ocean wit um.*

'So, I want **you** to have lots of babies, and fill up the ocean with them.'

- Alternation/optional

## RESULTS: PREPOSITION 'TO'

- Small rate of null prep 'to' (25.45%)
  - Overt 'to' seems to be default
- Null 'to' exclusively occurred in locative constructions

(12) You, take dis bebe [∅] yoa house.  
'You, take this baby to your house.'
- (This alternates: some locatives have overt 'to')

(13) *You goin go back to da dirt/ Cuz I wen make you outa da dirt.*  
'You're going to go back to the dirt/ Because I made you out of the dirt.'

## RESULTS: PREPOSITION 'TO'

- Prep 'to' is overt in all other constructions, such as:

(14) *He give watta to da sheeps an goats.*

'He gave water to the sheep and goats.'

- Additional conclusions:
  - Alternation is not uncommon
  - MAE also alternates
    - I expect him to go / I expect *for* him to go

# EXAMPLES (FOUND AFTER ANALYSIS) FROM *PIDGIN: VOICES OF HAWAI'I* DOCUMENTARY (2014)



Overt *fo* with modifier before  
infinitive

Null *fo* after *like* ('want')

- Speaks to accuracy of *Da Jesus Book* intuitions

## PROPOSED STUDY 2

- Spontaneous spoken HCE
  - IRB pending
  - Remote collection via SNAP software
    - No MAE speaker
  - Ask for (1) stories (2) grammaticality judgments of alternations
  - Same analysis as Study 1

## BROADER IMPACTS

- New corpus (from Study 2)
- Stigmatized creole documentation and preservation

TANKS, EH! (THANK YOU!)



Grant #1659607





[EXTRA SLIDES]

## PRELIMINARY RESULTS: COMPLEMENTIZER 'FO'

	<b>count</b>	<b>rate</b>
'fo'	113	46.50%
null 'fo'	130	53.50%
<b>total</b>	<b>243</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

## PRELIMINARY RESULTS: PREPOSITION 'TO'

	<b>count</b>	<b>rate</b>
null 'to'	14	25.45%
overt 'to'	41	74.55%
<b>total</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

## 'FO': EXAMPLES FROM DRAGER (2012)

- Drager (2012): 'fo' also introduces **realized** verbal complements in addition to **unrealized** ones
  - Substrate influence: Portuguese complementizer *para*
- Example—**unrealized**:

*I gon wait fo my fada to come home.*

'I'm going to wait for my father to come home.'

- Example—**realized** (unattested in MAE):

*I wen go downtown yestaday fo eat lunch.*

'I went downtown yesterday to eat lunch.'

## PRELIMINARY RESULTS: COMPLEMENTIZER 'FO'

- Infinitival environment typically null
  - Construction: [**verb  $\emptyset$  infinitive**]
- (6) *Da nex day, Moses **go  $\emptyset$  see** his ohana peopo again.*  
'The next day, Moses **went to see** his family again.'
- (7) *Dat was da day wen he pau make eryting an no **need  $\emptyset$  do** moa.*  
'That was the day when he finished making everything and didn't **need to do** any more.'

## INFINITIVALS MARKED WITH 'FO'

- In infinitival construction, 'fo' triggered by presence of words between [verb + infinitive]
- (8) *Eryting dat need air fo live, dey all mahke.*  
'Everything that needed air to live, they all died.'
- (9) *Moses older sista go mo down fo watch wat goin happen wit da bebe.*  
'Moses' older sister went downriver to watch what would happen with the baby.'
- 'Need' has direct object 'air', 'go' has adv. phrase 'mo down'

## PROPOSED STUDY 2: SPOKEN DATA

- Not unlike MAE, which also alternates
  - example
- Study 2
  - IRB
  - Study Design
- Broader Impacts
  - New corpus
  - Stigmatized creole documentation and preservation
- “include NSF