

1 Introduction: new information filling old gaps in eastern Indonesia

CHARLES E. GRIMES

The papers in this volume are, in a very real sense, filling gaps in our knowledge of the languages of eastern Indonesia. While most papers can claim to fill a gap of some sort, very little has been published to date concerning the languages covered in this volume. The papers are arranged alphabetically by author. The regions covered by the papers in this volume (moving from west to east), Tukang Besi, Buru, Wetar, Selaru, Fordata, and Aru, are located in the map.

David Coward and Naomi Coward's 'A phonological sketch of the Selaru language', while providing a detailed phonological description of a complex language, also contributes to our understanding of natural classes in phonology by presenting a strong case for the need (in Selaru) to treat a class of glides (G) differently from the class of vowels (V) and consonants (C) on the basis of their unique distributional behaviour. These glides do not interact with the skeletal CV-tier until the morphemes of which they are a part are placed in the context of other morphemes in an utterance. Only then are they interpreted as a C or V.¹

While for some languages in the Timor-south-western Maluku region one could perhaps claim that certain combinations of subject prefixes with verb roots trigger segmental metathesis, this Coward and Coward paper demonstrates that for Selaru such a phenomenon is more appropriately characterised as a spreading of features in an autosegmental model. This brings reliable data and solid analysis into circulation which will be greatly welcomed by comparative linguists interested in the region who have had access only to Drabbe (1932a). The paper includes an introduction to the various pronominal systems, as well as the genitive and possessive systems. Like some Oceanic languages (see Pawley 1973), Selaru also has a special 'edible possession' construction. Because parts of these systems interact with the glides and morphophonemic processes, these subsystems are also

¹ AN	Austronesian	PANS	Proto Austronesian Stresemann (1927)
C	consonant	PCMP	Proto Central Malayo Polynesian
G	glides	V	vowel
OIN	Original Indonesian	VBG	Verhandelingsvan het Bataviaasch Genootschap
PAMS	Proto Ambonese Stresemann (1927)	WMP	Western Malayo Polynesian
PANS	Proto Austronesian Stresemann (1927)		

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introduced in this paper along with a wealth of data on reduplication. This phonology sketch foreshadows a fuller grammar of Selaru (D. Coward 1990).

Mark Donohue's 'Tukang Besi dialectology' explores the speech varieties found on the Tukang Besi island chain located off of South-east Sulawesi, east of Buton. Works as recent as Anceaux (1978) and van den Berg (1991) have noted the almost complete lack of information and lack of linguistic information from this chain of islands. Donohue documents a number of similarities and differences among the speech varieties, looking at lexical similarity, and lexical and phonological innovations from a historical and comparative perspective.

Charles Grimes' paper 'Defining speech communities on Buru Island: a look at both linguistic and non-linguistic factors' takes a multi-disciplinary look at speech varieties on Buru. Collins (1982:84) notes that "no dialect study [of Buru] has ever been undertaken". This paper aims to begin to remedy that situation. In the process it is demonstrated that no single method of looking at the speech varieties is sufficient to unravel the picture, but only by interweaving a variety of approaches do the anomalies begin to make sense. Discrepancies in the historical sound correspondences are explained by looking at the historical record and the contact situation in various parts of the island, particularly the role of a forcible resettling of part of the coastal population of Buru by the Dutch in the mid-1600s. Discrepancies between reported information, lexical similarity, and historical sound correspondences are partially accounted for by looking at a variety of taboo practices. Widespread lexical tabooing is found on the island, but of particular note is the special speech register known as *Li Garan* which is entirely driven by a motivation of taboo. Other languages are addressed, such as Kayeli and Hukumina, and well as immigrant languages and languages of wider communication. This paper is, in essence, a sociolinguistic case study.

Bryan Hinton's overview of 'The languages of Wetar: recent survey results and word lists, with notes on Tugun grammar' provides valuable data and discussion of this little known corner of the Austronesian world near the island of Timor. There has effectively been a gap in the literature on this island since the travelogue/report by Riedel (1886). So little is known of the languages of Wetar, that the island and its languages go unmentioned in Collins' (1982) survey of the region. In addition to word lists, this paper contains preliminary sketch material of the Tugun language, where Hinton did additional field work following the initial survey trip. Data in the word lists (such as the behaviour of reflexes of *maRi) provide counter-evidence to some of the preliminary claims made by Blust (1990) for subgrouping elsewhere in Maluku. The data in this paper also establish a direct link between the Talur language of Wetar and the Galoli on East Timor, something that has been suggested elsewhere, however, without demonstration.

Jock Hughes' 'The morphology of Dobel, Aru, with special reference to reduplication' provides a phonological sketch and a detailed introduction to the morphology and morphophonemics of Dobel, in the eastern part of the Aru islands. Collins (1982:127) comments that "Perhaps of all the areas in Indonesia, Aru is the least known". The data provide evidence for Dobel to be classified as a split-S language with the Actor proclitics attaching to active intransitive verbs and the Undergoer enclitics attaching to non-active intransitive verbs. The genitive and possessive constructions are explored, as are the functions of a valence decreaser *-r*, and similar derivational affixes. Dobel exhibits a number of forms and functions of reduplication that map functional contrast. Of particular

note is C-reduplication which results in the phonetic gemination of initial C, including initial glottals.

Craig Marshall's 'A phonological description of Fordata' provides a modern phonological description of what is, relatively speaking, one of the better documented languages of Maluku. The language is best known from Drabbe's grammar (1926) and dictionary (1932b). The elaboration of dialect information in Marshall's phonology provides a laboratory for seeing patterns of phonological change at a glance. The detailed phonology argues for certain consonants to be considered ambisyllabic as a clean way to account for otherwise complex shifts in syllable membership. The paper also includes a discussion of the phoneme-driven reduplication found in Fordata.

The classification of the languages described in this volume

With the exception of *Tukang Besi*, all the languages in this volume fall broadly under the label of the so-called Central Malayo-Polynesian (CMP) languages (Blust 1978, 1990).

Under the framework presented in Blust (1978) *Tukang Besi* is assumed to group with the Western Malayo-Polynesian languages. However, what languages *Tukang Besi* links up with is unclear and is still under study (Mark Donohue, pers. comm.). It does not link easily with other nearby language groups of South and South-east Sulawesi, nor with Moluccan languages to the east, nor with languages of the Lesser Sundas to the south.

There is on-going debate about the status of CMP as a subgroup (Blust 1990, Grimes 1991, Pawley and Ross 1993, Ross, 1995). It appears that if CMP is a subgroup of some sort, then it is not of the sort that had a parent language of which all daughter languages share common innovations. We do not yet know what is diagnostic of a CMP language and how this compares and contrasts with other subgroups. Furthermore, if there is such a subgroup, there is little consensus in the literature as to the internal relationships among the languages within the purported scope of CMP. In other words, we do not yet have even a general consensus of how *Selaru*, *Fordata*, *Dobel*, the *Wetar* languages, and *Buru* are related to each other, even though there is a common assumption that they are related in some way under the broader umbrella of Malayo-Polynesian.

While the notion of a major grouping of Austronesian (AN) languages in eastern Indonesia seems to have gained widespread and long-standing acceptance in scholarly circles, as recently as March 1990, Robert Blust (1990:3) observed that "to date no published argument in support of the Central Malayo-Polynesian (CMP) hypothesis exists".

Very little has been known about the CMP languages. Clark (1987) said there may be 40–50 languages in the group. Blust (1990) estimates '90-odd' languages. Grimes, Grimes, Ross, Grimes and Tryon (1995) list 150 CMP languages by name with additional information on location, number of speakers, etc.²

The languages of eastern Indonesia have long been the subject of debate as to how they fit into the larger Austronesian picture. The debate has tended to be marginal to the discussion of AN as a whole, however, and based on very little data.

² This puts CMP numerically on a par with the Philippines which has around 160 languages. The latter is relatively well studied while the former is almost untouched.

The justification for talking about the AN languages of eastern Indonesia as a grouping within AN is based primarily on a series of independent observations and assumptions going back at least as far as Brandes (1884), Jonker (1908, 1913), Friederici (1913), Esser (1938), (many referring to each other) that the languages of Nusa Tenggara (the Lesser Sundas) and Maluku are somehow different from those to the east and west. For the most part, however, the arguments have been by declaration rather than by demonstration.

The 'reverse genitive' was noted by Van Hoëvell (1877) for languages of Ambon-Lease. Brandes (1884) used word order of the genitive construction as a basis for dividing Austronesian languages into west and east (drawing a line between Sulawesi and Maluku, and through Flores known as the 'Brandes line'). Kern (1906) suggested languages of eastern Indonesia might be transitional between east and west (noted in Collins 1983:27). Friederici (1913) supported the classificatory relevance of the reversed genitive. Jonker (1914) rejected Brandes' and Friederici's use of word order as a basis for subgrouping. Cowan (1951–52) and Capell (1976) continued to refer to it. The reverse genitive is likely to be the result of contact-induced change, and thus represents a typological shift that has no bearing on genetic relationships and is thus irrelevant for subgrouping (Grimes 1991b:290–292).

Stresemann, an ornithologist-linguist who wrote a grammar of Paulohi on south-central Seram (1918) with additional comparative notes on Seram and Buru, returned to Germany and worked side-by-side with Jonker and Otto Dempwolff where he produced a volume (1927) of comparative Austronesian reconstructions arguing for 'Ur-Ambon' as a distinct subgroup within it (i.e. Seram & Buru, excluding Sula, and excluding Geser). Collins (1983:4) notes this was "one of the earliest systematic attempts at subgrouping in the (AN) family". Stresemann's (1927) phonological and morphological claims of innovations for Ur-Ambon are summarised in Collins (1983:12) and evaluated in C. Grimes (1991b:498–502). Several claims can now be discounted, but they are impressive nevertheless.³

Capell (1943–44/13:194) supported the notion of a closer connection between the languages of Timor with the languages of Melanesia to the east than with the languages to the west.

These [Timor] languages belong to the 'eastern' section of the Indonesian group which is practically Melanesian in structure. It will be remembered that it was from eastern Indonesia that Friederici drew the Melanesians, though his final theory has not justified itself to students of linguistics.

Later on in the study Capell is not so sure.

The languages of Timor are usually grouped as Indonesian. They depart, however, in many respects from the Indonesian type represented by Battak [sic], Javanese, and the types found in Borneo and Celebes, so much so that some authors have reckoned the beginning of Melanesia from this point. There is much to be said for this, but it will not be assumed here. (1943–44/14:311)

Some writers accept a more westerly line of demarcation between Indonesian and Melanesian languages. By Brandstetter and Dempwolff the line was placed along the western side of New Guinea; Friederici argued for one farther west, running between

³ For a glimpse of Stresemann's results for lexical reconstruction, see Wurm & Wilson (1975) PAMS and PANS.

Sumba and Timor, across Flores, and between Celebes and the Moluccas. This places Timor, then, in the Melanesian group. This seems the better course for the present writer also, but it does not affect the statement that Timor and certain of its ethnological dependencies still form a regional group or province within that area, be it labelled one or the other. (1944-45/15:20)

Capell was possibly the first to suggest that there might be a distinct *subgroup* whose scope included Timor and surrounding languages to the east and west, and those of central Maluku.

there are 'regional' linguistic types — a fact for which Dempwolff does not seem to the present writer to have made sufficient allowance. It will also be shown that the languages of Timor form one such regional subgroup, distinct not only in its peculiar phonetic laws, but also in certain common grammatical usages. This group includes not only the languages of Timor itself, but also those of Roti, Wetar, Leti and Kisar, and less intimately connected, those of Flores (Sikka) and Solor, and in the conjugation of the verb also showing kinship with Seran. The treatment of OIN [PMP] final consonants is the most outstanding characteristic of the western section of Timor group, including Roti. Curiously enough, Savu is very different. (1944-45/15:19)

Dyen (1965), Haudricourt (1965), and Dahl (1976) seem to include languages of Maluku (eastern Indonesia) with the languages of the west rather than with those of Melanesia.

Chlenov and Sirk (1973) argued for the merger of labials **p* and **b* for 'Ambonese' languages [a merger not supported by current data for Buru, Sula, Ambelau, or many of the Seram languages, nor for the languages of southern Maluku]. Chlenov (1969, 1976) are lexicostatistical reassessments of the area covered by Stresemann (1927).

Chlenov (1978, 1980) looking at 'cultural' vocabulary divides AN languages of Maluku into 1) South Halmahera, 2) Aru, and 3) Southern Maluku (i.e. Central and South, excluding Aru), but the basis for his divisions is elusive.

Dyen (1978a) looked at data from Kei and Kamarian in a wider discussion of languages in eastern Indonesia. Dyen (1978b) looks at implications of vowels of central Maluku languages for PAn subgrouping.

CMP (with that label) as a subgroup within Austronesian is based on Blust (1974, 1978, 1979, 1981, 1982). It is roughly equivalent to Esser's (1938) Ambon-Timor Group (followed by Salzner 1960). Dyen (1965) also proposed a 'Moluccan Linkage' (Sumba, Sawu, Sikkic (including Endeh), Fordatic, (including Jamden) Letic, Buru, Ambic, Bonfia, Soboyo, Kuiwai) on the basis of his lexicostatistic calculations encompassing approximately the same scope as CMP. Blust clearly groups CMP languages with the east under Central-Eastern Malayo-Polynesian (CEMP).

As late as 1982 Blust (Note 13) says, "The proposed Central Malayo-Polynesian subgroup has thus far been *assumed* without qualitative demonstration. Dyen (1978a) makes a similar assumption, presumably on the basis of his 1965 lexicostatistical results". [Emphasis mine CEG]. The basis of Blust (1982) is that the 'CMP' languages share reflexes of two lexical innovations (i.e. CEMP **kandoRa* 'cuscus' and **mansar* 'bandicoot') that are not found in the WMP languages.

Although Stresemann, Collins, Chlenov and others have looked at subgrouping within areas of Maluku (with varying degrees of credibility) nobody has looked at the over-all relationships of the languages of Nusa Tenggara and Timor with the languages of Maluku in a principled way. Thus, we have had no credible bird's-eye view of first-order divisions within CMP that withstands the scrutiny of additional data.

Blust's 1990 paper 'Central and Central-Eastern Malayo-Polynesian' brings the notion of CMP out of the realm of educated impressions and into the realm of scientific discussion, and is a substantial contribution to our understanding of the AN languages of eastern Indonesia. But in spite of impressions that would lead one to assume that CMP is a 'branch' of AN whose daughter languages all reflect the characteristics of a parent PCMP, a careful reading of Blust's paper supports only the weaker claim that there are innovations found in the region that are not found elsewhere.

Grimes (1991a), Pawley and Ross (1993) and Ross (1995), all conclude that the notion of CMP as a traditional subgroup within a family tree model should not yet be taken at face value. Thus, there remain significant questions yet unanswered regarding the macro- and micro- classification of the languages described in this volume. It is hoped that the data presented here will contribute positively to the discussion, and to a credible refinement of the linguistic picture of eastern Indonesia.

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