Documenting incipient obsolescence: a multi-pronged approach to Dhao, eastern Indonesia

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- 5.5 km long
- 2.3 km wide
- villages on northeast side
- ±7,000 speakers
- half elsewhere
How do I write this language?

### Dhao consonant inventory

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dhao consonant inventory</th>
<th>labial</th>
<th>apical</th>
<th>laminal</th>
<th>dorsal</th>
<th>glottal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>p</td>
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### Dhao vowel inventory

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<tr>
<td>ëmu</td>
<td>‘house’</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>ëpa</td>
<td>‘four’</td>
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<td>èci</td>
<td>‘one, a’</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>èdhi</td>
<td>‘we (inclusive)’</td>
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<tr>
<td>èu</td>
<td>‘you (2-singular pron)’</td>
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<tr>
<td>bhèni</td>
<td>‘female, woman’</td>
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<tr>
<td>bhèlu</td>
<td>‘forget’</td>
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<tr>
<td>rèu</td>
<td>‘leaf’</td>
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<td>rèhu</td>
<td>‘face’</td>
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<td>papèda</td>
<td>‘disease’</td>
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Multi-faceted interaction over time

- broader range of people than just normal informants
- broader range of situations
- test what people actually know
  - not what they are claimed to know
- see what people actually use
  - not what they claim to use
- minimizes language engineering

Natural Texts: video
Training to transcribe texts

- orthography issues
- resist temptation to edit at this stage
- file management
- need robust system: reduce room for error

Dictionaries

- Toolbox/MDF
- book form
- Lexique Pro
- work-in-progress
- on web at www.e-kamus2.org
- stand-alone CD
- digital photos

WeSay: for local input 2 Lex

Spelling guide

- 75 pages
- principles
- orthography issues
- grammar sketch
- simple dictionary
  - 1,500 entries
- w/Dept. of Ed.
- help local writers

Bilingual Ed. materials

- local authors
- local artists
- local editors
- local users
- local curriculum

Audio recordings

- local authors
- local artists
- local editors
- local users
- local curriculum
Radio broadcasts
- prerecorded
- live
- talk-back
- Suara Kasih, 89.3 FM
- Lizbeth, 98.4 FM
- scheduled vernacular programs

Bible translation
- 10 steps for each book w/native speakers
- Steps 6 & 8 involve the wider community
- clarity
- naturalness
- usage issues
- archaic, ritual, figurative
- not widely known
- cycled thru all steps for 17 books

Formal training
- Semantics Workshop, Melbourne (Ayub)
- Translation course, Darwin (Ayub)
- Bilingual Education, Kupang (Michael & Lazarus)
- UNESCO Bilingual Education, Sabah (Michael)
- Literacy Development, Jakarta (Michael)

Formal training-2
- Translation workshop-1, Kupang 2001 (all)
- Translation workshop-2, Kupang 2003 (all)
- OurWord computer program, Kupang 2004 (all)

Computer Training
- MS Publisher, Darwin (Helena)
- OurWord, Kupang (Margreth, Helena)
- Risograph operator, Kupang (Helena)
- WeSay, Kupang (Helena)
by Dhao speakers on Ndao

- bilingual education
- language endangerment issues
- spelling & writing Dhao
- reading competitions
- local language in church
- local language liturgies

Who knows what?

- young women know nautical terms
  - jib sail, tack into the wind, depth-sounding, etc.
- young women know many gold-smithing words
- many men know weaving terms, parts of loom, colors, names of patterns

below 35 not know (N & K)

- pakanucu 'confer, look for solution'
- udhu-rasa 'ethnic group' (use Ml suku)
- ag'o 'deceive' (use kapod’e-kabèli)
- patari 'begin' (use Ml mulai)
- toto 'genuine, original'
- piku 'stray, deviate' (1/2 not know)
- paga 'rank, status' (use Ml pangkat)
- roe-bhilu 'weak, worn out' (know roe)

not know collocations (N & K)

- monya miu mamadha iia-iia (+)
- monya miu mamadha mea-mea (-)
  'you-pl are naïve, too easily tricked'

not know one sense (N & K)

- pakabèl 1) open one’s hand
  2) disperse
  3) cancel an agreement
- udhi 1) part of blade in handle
  2) hold grudge
- maho’o 1) greet
  2) happy, glad (use karej’è)
may be shifting

- lee ‘scrutinize’
  [older gen-neutral, either + or -]
  [younger gen-only negative]

- dhara hake ‘waistband’ [older]
- dhari hake ‘waistband’ [younger]
- dhari ‘rope, cord’ [PAN *taliSi]

know on Ndao, not Kupang

- paj’ari ‘establish promise’
- ari ‘castrate animal’
- padai-delu ‘compare, contrast’
- hali ‘1) tasteless, 2) disheartened’
- to’a ‘feel helpless’
- mangojo ‘coax, persuade’ [other syn.]

know in Kupang, not Ndao (!!)

- abho ‘forgive’ (use MI ampun)
- hahuku ‘punishment’ (use MI hukuman)
- ènu ‘slave’ (use MI hamba)
- bara ‘help, assist’ (use MI bantu)
- even though don’t fit Dhao phonotactics

no agreement after years

- subha ‘curse? swear oath?’
- dhoo ‘curse? swear oath?’
- kapua aaj’u ‘tree, plant’
- ana aaj’u ‘tree, plant’
- deo ne’e ‘1) imm past, 2) today’
- doe ne’e ‘today’
- d’ara makae ‘feel ashamed’
- makae d’ara ‘feel ashamed’

Synergy

- Language & Culture Unit (UBB)
- Local teams working in 20+ languages
- They stimulate each other
- They consult with each other
- They compete with each other
- Dhao wouldn’t be where it is without this dynamic
- They know they are not alone!

Available (CD & USB)

- full paper (PDF)
- this Powerpoint (PPT)
- Video clip (AVI)
- Lexique Pro dictionaries
  (Dhao, Hawu, Kupang)
- fonts (Andika AuSIL, Gentium, Doulos SIL)
- IME keyboards
  (TimorLeste, IPA Timor, Yolngu)