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Traces of language contact: The Flores-Lembata languages in eastern Indonesia

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CHAPTER 11

Discussion and conclusions

11.1 Overview

The Flores-Lembata languages are an innovation-defined subgroup and the Flores-Lembata phonology traces back to Proto-Malayo-Polynesian (PMP) with regular sound correspondences in consonants and vowels (cf. Chapter 5). The closest relatives of the Flores-Lembata languages are the Austronesian languages of central and western Flores, Sumba, Sawu and Bima. These languages form together the innovation-defined Bima-Lembata subgroup, as I have shown in §5.5.

While in lexicon and phonology they group together, morpho-syntactically, the Flores-Lembata languages diverge considerably from their western relatives, as I have shown in Part III of this dissertation. A number of their grammatical features are shared with both the Austronesian languages of Timor and with the non-Austronesian Timor-Alor-Pantar languages that are spoken towards the east of the Flores-Lembata family. These features are innovations in the Flores-Lembata languages and they are atypical for Austronesian languages in general. I argue that these aberrant features in the Flores-Lembata languages are the result of contact with non-Austronesian languages in the area. Together with the non-Austronesian vocabulary pre-

sented in Chapter 6, these features are part of a non-Austronesian substrate in the Flores-Lembata languages. However, not all Flores-Lembata languages are influenced to the same extent by this substrate. The Flores-Lembata languages in the geographical centre of the family, the Lamaholot subgroups, have more substrate features than those at the edges.

In §11.2, I summarise and analyse the lexical and structural substrate features in more detail and relate them to Proto-Flores-Lembata or individual subgroups of Flores-Lembata. §11.3, I propose a scenario that could have led to the contact-induced innovations attested. In §11.4, I draw final conclusions and in §11.5, I provide general implications and suggestions for further research.

11.2 Non-Austronesian substrate features

Table 11.1 provides an overview of the contact-induced innovations in the Flores-Lembata languages that were discussed in this dissertation. The table is arranged by the level at which the innovation occurred. Some of the innovations are reconstructible to Proto-Flores-Lembata (PFL) but most are not, thus they must have occurred in lower-level subgroups. Some innovations can only be traced to the level of individual languages.

I divide the features into four types concerning their level of occurrence. First, there are features that trace back to PFL. These features are attested in all five subgroups of Flores-Lembata and within these subgroups, all documented varieties have these features. Second, there are features that are found in more than one subgroup of Flores-Lembata but not in all. These features are attested in all documented varieties of these subgroups. For the purpose of this comparison, I have grouped the three Lamaholot subgroups together into one category. Lamaholot here means that the feature is attested in all three Lamaholot subgroups. However, for the shared lexical items, the occurrence in at least two of the three subgroups was regarded as sufficient. For the feature of alienability, no data on Eastern Lamaholot is available. Thus, here the categorisation as Lamaholot is only based on data from Western Lamaholot (WL) and Central Lamaholot (CL).

Table 11.1: Contact-induced innovations in the Flores-Lembata languages

Level	Feature	Domain	Section
Reconstructible innovations for PFL			
PFL (or higher?)	39 PFL forms	Lexicon	§6.2.3
PFL	Poss-N	Syntax	§9.2
	N-Loc	Syntax	§9.3
	N-Num	Syntax	§9.4
	Property nouns	Morpho-Syntax	§8.3
	Clause-final DMV 'come' and 'go'	Syntax; lexicon	§10.2
Innovations shared among subgroups			
Lamaholot-Sika	42 shared lexical innovations	Lexicon	§6.3.3
Lamaholot-Kedang	75 shared lexical innovations	Lexicon	§6.3.2
	Clause-final DMV 'come.up/down' and 'go.up/down'	Syntax; lexicon	§10.2
	Traces of non-decimal counting systems	Semantics	§9.4.4
Lamaholot	74 shared lexical innovations	Lexicon	§6.3.4
	Negation with clause-final negator	Syntax; lexicon	§10.3
	Alienability distinction	Morpho-syntax; semantics	§8.2
Reconstructible innovations for individual subgroups			
Kedang	Plural word for animates	Semantics	§8.4.2.3
Central Lamaholot	Plural suffix	Morpho-syntax; semantics	§8.4.2.1
Innovations in individual languages			
SK-Hewa	Plural word for animates	Semantics	§8.4.2.3
	Double negation with clause-final negator	Syntax; lexicon	§10.3
CL-Central Lembata	Additional clause-final verbs	Syntax	§3.7.2.2
WL-Lewoingu	Plural suffix for animates	Morpho-syntax; semantics	§8.4.2.2
WL-Alorese	Plural word	Semantics	§8.4.2.2

Third, there are features that are only attested in one subgroup and reconstructible to its proto-language. These features are attested in all known varieties of the subgroup. Fourth, there are features that are only found in one language or variety within a subgroup. In addition to the level of occurrence, I indicate the linguistic domain for each feature and the section of this dissertation where the feature has been discussed.

The non-Austronesian substrate of PFL mainly affects the syntax of the noun phrase and the numeral phrase, which is part of the noun phrase in a wider sense. I have shown that the changes in the noun phrase, except for the change in the numeral phrase, all go back to the word order change of the possessive construction (§8.3.6.4; §9.5). Another syntactic change took place in PFL. Deictic motion verbs were moved to the end of the clause, while the basic word order of PFL was otherwise verb-medial. Based on current knowledge, the non-Austronesian component of the PFL lexicon is not particularly large with only about 20% of reconstructions not having a clear AN origin. In addition, one third of this non-AN vocabulary is found in other AN languages and thus possibly reconstructs to a higher level, meaning that it was not innovated in PFL.

After the split of PFL into five subgroups, these subgroups must have also been in contact with several substrate languages. The new features at the level of the subgroups not only concern the lexicon and the morphosyntax of the languages, but also the semantics, as new semantic categories, such as plural number and alienability, were grammaticalised.[1] The non-Austronesian features accumulate towards the centre of the Flores-Lembata language family with Central Lamaholot having most substrate features and also the highest amount of non-Austronesian vocabulary, followed closely by Western Lamaholot (cf. §6.5). By subgroup, the following features were added after the split of PFL.

[1] At the current stage, it remains unclear if the extension of clause-final deictic motion verbs to elevated forms, such as 'go.up' and 'go.down', also includes a semantic innovation or not. Verbs expressing upward or downward motion are attested in virtually all languages of the region. However, the differentiation of a 'come' or 'go' movement, thus a deictic element, may not always be part of the semantics of these verbs. A verb meaning 'ascend', thus expressing an upward movement, could mean 'go.up' as well as 'come.up'. This is still the case for some of the motion verbs in Kedang (cf. §10.2.3.3). As long as the exact semantics of the movement verbs are not known, it cannot be decided if the deictic component in the semantics of the elevated motion verbs is an innovation in Kedang and Lamaholot or has been inherited.

Sika did not gain any additional structural features. However, new lexical items (42 in my database) entered the Sika subgroup. The same lexical items are also attested in at least one Lamaholot subgroup and do not trace back to PFL.

Kedang developed a plural word for animates, non-decimal numerals for 'eight' and 'nine', and extended the clause-final position to other deictic motion verbs that encode elevation. Kedang also gained new lexical items (75 in my database) that are shared with at least one Lamaholot variety.

The Lamaholot subgroups have gained most new features, compared with Sika and Kedang. First, the Lamaholot subgroups show a large number of new lexical items that are partly shared with Sika (42 in my databse), partly with Kedang (75 in my database) and many of them only attested among the Lamaholot subgroups themselves (74 in my database). New structural features in the Lamaholot subgroups are an alienability distinction in the possessive construction, a non-decimal numeral for 'eight', clause-final deictic motion verbs that encode elevation and clause-final negators that are used exclusively in WL and in combination with a pre-predicate negator in CL and EL. In addition, Central Lamaholot has developed a plural suffix.

In sum, about 34% of the vocabulary of WL and CL has been added since PFL times. About 24% of the Kedang vocabulary and about 19% of the Sika vocabulary has been added since that time. WL and CL have each gained two new syntactic features (clause-final negation and elevated deictic motion verbs) and three new semantic features (alienability, plural marking and a non-decimal numeral), Kedang has gained one syntactic feature (clause-final elevated deictic motion verbs) and two semantic feature (plural marking for animates, and non-decimal numerals), while Sika has not gained any new structural features since PFL.[2]

Following from the summaries above, three main types of substrate effects that affect more than one subgroup can be differentiated. (i) The main substrate effect in the west is the addition of lexical items, and it affects Sika and Lamaholot. (ii) In the east, the substrate effect also had a large lexical component which is attested in Kedang and Lamaholot. Additionally, the extension of the clause-final deictic motion verbs to elevated motion verbs,

[2] I am not taking into account Eastern Lamaholot here because too little data is available for this subgroup to make the numbers comparable.

the development of the non-decimal numerals 'eight' and 'nine', and the development of a plural word in Kedang can be attributed to contact. (iii) In the centre of the Flores-Lembata area, the largest amounts of substrate effects are attested. In addition to an equally large amount of lexical items, the alienability distinction, clause-final negation in all Lamaholot subgroups and the plural marking in Central Lamaholot are substrate effects.

On the level of individual languages within the subgroups, further innovations are attested. However, it is not clear whether innovations in individual varieties can be attributed to contact with non-Austronesian substrate languages. SK-Hewa has gained a clause-final negator and a plural word for animates. WL-Lewoingu has developed a plural suffix for animates. CL-Central Lembata has added more intransitive clause-final verbs with locative phrases and WL-Alorese has developed a plural word. The history of the WL-Alorese plural word is well attested. The Alorese speakers developed this plural word due to contact with speakers of Alor-Pantar language during the past 500-600 years since they moved to the islands of Alor and Pantar (Moro 2018). The additional clause-final verbs in CL-Central Lembata may have been developed by analogy with the clause-final DMV that already existed. However, the developments of the clause-final negator in SK-Hewa and the plural markers in Sika-Hewa and WL-Lewoingu remain obscure.

11.3 Contact scenarios

Depending on the circumstances, contact-induced language change can affect any feature of a language (Thomason and Kaufman 1988:14). The social scenario in which the contact takes place plays an important role in determining constraints on contact-induced change for a particular contact situation (Muysken 2010). Analysing the outcome of languages contact, such as the innovated features of the Flores-Lembata languages discussed in this dissertation, a possible contact scenario can be reconstructed.

The contact outcomes in case of the Flores-Lembata languages are new vocabulary, morpho-syntactic changes and grammaticalisation of new semantic categories. As shown in §11.2, the subgroups of Flores-Lembata have been affected to different degrees by these innovations. Most affected is Central Lamaholot, followed by Western Lamaholot and then Kedang. Least affected is Sika. Contact-induced innovations that can be reconstructed to

PFL are morpho-syntactic changes and new vocabulary but not grammaticalisation of new semantic categories.

Convergence in word order and new morpho-syntactic categories based on semantic distinctions have been described as a result of prolonged bilingualism over several generations, involving all age groups in the society (Muysken 2010:272). The changes in the syntax of the noun phrase in PFL, as well as the position of deictic motion verbs and the new negators in some of the Flores-Lembata languages are results of this kind of convergence in word order. The development of the new grammatical categories plural number and alienability in possessive constructions are examples of the emergence of new morpho-syntactic categories. The phenomena observed in the Flores-Lembata languages fall under bilingual copying. According to Ross (2013:23), there are three stages of bilingual copying: (i) lexical calquing (loan translation), (ii) grammatical calquing and (iii) syntactic restructuring (=metatypy). As the source languages are not spoken any more, it is difficult to prove calquing in the Flores-Lembata languages. However, some of the new features could indeed be the result of calquing. The grammaticalisation of words meaning 'a little' in Central Lamaholot and 'wrong' in Western Lamaholot to negators could be a case of lexical calquing. It is possible that the source language also used a word meaning 'a little' or 'wrong' to express negation. Additionally, the Sika expression *alaŋ ʔrouŋ* for 'hair' literally meaning 'leaf of the head' is very likely an example of lexical calquing (cf. Donohue and Grimes 2008:147-148). Only bilingual speakers who are fluent in both languages are able to recognise such a connection and copy it.

The development of different constructions for alienable and inalienable possession could be the result of grammatical calquing which translates a construction morpheme by morpheme (Ross 2013:23). The grammaticalisation of the 3PL pronoun into a plural marker in Central Lamaholot could also be a case of lexical calquing that led to grammatical calquing. However, this grammaticalisation pathway is also universally attested. Therefore, the argument for calquing is less strong here. All other changes are cases of syntactic restructuring: The changes in the noun phrase, as well as the clause-final position of the deictic motion verbs. These changes do not reach the stage of metatypy where the whole syntax of the language is restructured. However, the noun phrase is affected considerably and some verbs are moved. Also the new negator in the Lamaholot varieties is placed clause-finally.

The proposed prolonged bilingual situation led to additional grammatical features in some of the Flores-Lembata languages. In PFL only syntactic changes are attested but no additional features. The same holds for Sika. In Kedang and the Lamaholot varieties, features were added and this means an increase in complexity (Ross 2013:32).

PFL and its descendants have all added new vocabulary. However, the increase of new lexical items in PFL and Sika is lower than in Kedang and the Lamaholot varieties. The large amount of new vocabulary could be a remnant of code-switching by highly proficient bilinguals. The new vocabulary is basic as well as special vocabulary. No specific semantic domain is favoured. A social situation that can lead to such an unsystematic mixing of vocabulary is a community where all speakers are bilinguals and where code-switching is the most common form of communication. This concern in particular congruent lexicalisation, a form of code-switching by fluent bilinguals where lexical items from two or more sources are randomly inserted into a common frame (Muysken 2008:364). The "fossilisation" of such type of code-switching can lead to a so-called bilingual mixed language (Thomason 2001:198,215).

The new structural features, as well as the additional vocabulary, point to bilingual communities with more than one contact scenario of a similar kind. PFL is most likely the result of bilingual mixing, as are Kedang and the Lamaholot subgroups.

For Sika, this is less clear. Possibly, Sika has a contact history which is different to the Lamaholot varieties and Kedang. There is some new vocabulary in Sika but no significant new structural features. In addition, the morphology of Sika appears to be much more simplified than in Kedang and Lamaholot. Only traces of person marking on verbs are left in Sika (Rosen 1986), while Lamaholot and Kedang have a much more elaborate system (cf. Samely 1991a; §3.4; §3.5). Therefore, the case of Sika points to simplification rather than complexification over time. This could be a sign of rapid language shift (Ross 2013:30,37). Only a short period of bilingualism with more adult learners than children may have preceded language shift. This situation did not allow for the addition of new features because additional grammatical features are usually the result of prolonged bilingualism involving children and adolescents as stated above.

A similar contact scenario to the one proposed for Sika could have affected Proto-Central Flores, as in the Central Flores languages virtually all

morphology is lost. In addition, these languages have a non-decimal counting system which has been attributed to non-Austronesian contact (cf. Elias 2018:119; §9.4.4). Also similar contact effects, namely morphological simplification, have been attested in Alorese (cf. Klamer 2012b). For this language, a large number of second language learners has been attested which most likely has caused the simplification (Moro 2019).

Nowadays no non-Austronesian languages are spoken anymore in the whole area of Flores-Lembata. Therefore, also the contact scenarios of Proto-Kedang, and the proto-languages of Lamaholot must have reached the stage of language shift towards the Austronesian languages at some point. When finally all speakers switched, the languages had already been heavily influenced by the non-Austronesian languages due to a long and intensive period of bilingualism. It may even be possible that, as the whole society became bilingual, speakers did not differentiate the languages any more but the mixed code became their new language. Nevertheless, the Kedang and Lamaholot languages remain overall more Austronesian than non-Austronesian in lexicon and grammar. Therefore, assuming a mixed code does not mean an equal mix that leads to doubts on the genealogical affiliation of these languages. However, the non-Austronesian component in lexicon and grammar is considerably large, going beyond some instances of borrowing. This amount of non-AN features suggest a language mixing based on long-term bilingualism with code-switching practices, at least up to a certain degree.

From the comparative study in Part III, it appears that the non-Austronesian substrate languages that influenced the Flores-Lembata languages must have been typologically very similar to the Timor-Alor-Pantar languages. This typological similarity alone is not enough evidence to conclude that these substrate languages belonged to the TAP family. There are a few clear cases of related lexical items between the non-Austronesian vocabulary of Flores-Lembata and the vocabulary of the TAP family, especially the Alor-Pantar (AP) branch, as I have indicated in Chapter 6. But some of them may also be borrowings from Flores-Lembata languages, especially from Alorese, into AP languages. In addition, I suggested in §10.2.5 that the deictic motion verbs #-ai 'go' in the Lamaholot subgroups and Sika and *dai* 'come up' in Western Lamaholot could have come from an AP language. However, the current lexical evidence is too weak to conclude that the non-Austronesian substrate languages were related to the AP languages. It is also possible that they were part of a different non-Austronesian family that was also in con-

tact with the AP languages.

Finally, I have argued that PFL as well as its subgroups were in contact with non-Austronesian languages that caused structural and lexical change. The time and place of these contact scenarios is a question that linguistics alone is probably not able to answer entirely. Nevertheless, there are a few indications about timing. It is known that the first speakers of Austronesian languages arrived in the area of East Nusa Tenggara and Timor-Leste about 3,500 years ago (Pawley 2005:17). As PFL descends from a proto-language also covering several Austronesian languages towards the west of PFL on the islands of Flores and Sumba, it might have been this proto-language, Proto-Bima-Lembata (PBL), whose speakers arrived around 3,500 years ago. The point in time when PFL was spoken must thus have been later than that, allowing enough time for PBL to diversify into several subgroups, one of them being PFL. PFL was then acquired by speakers of non-Austronesian languages with different syntactic patterns. It is unknown if these non-Austronesian languages were related to the ones which later influenced the descendants of PFL. After PFL broke up into five subgroups, these either remained in contact with the same non-Austronesian languages and/or underwent contact with other non-Austronesian languages. However, the intensity of contact differed. Given that Proto-Sika did not gain any new structural features after it split off from PFL, this indicates that the contact Sika experienced was less intense and most importantly did not involve much long-term and pre-adolescent bilingualism. Given that Proto-Kedang, PWL and PCL all gained more new features also after their split off from PFL, this indicates that these subgroups experienced more contact involving long-term bilingualism and children acquiring more than one language at the same time.

Concerning the question where the Flores-Lembata family originates, the "centre of gravity principle" can be taken as an indicator (Sapir 1916:79; Robbeets and Savelyev 2017:6-8). According to this principle, the place where the highest diversity of a language family is attested is likely to be the homeland of the language family, the point from where the proto-language dispersed. For the Flores-Lembata family, the diversity hotspot is clearly the island of Lembata, where four out of five subgroups are attested. Only Sika is not spoken on Lembata.As the island of Lembata appears to be the homeland of Proto-Flores-Lembata, as well as the present-day home of the subgroups that have most substrate features, this all points to the historic pres-

ence of non-Austronesian languages on the island of Lembata.

PFL speakers came to this island, and were in contact with speakers of non-Austronesian languages. These languages co-existed further until after the break-up of PFL into subgroups. All the subgroups, except for Sika, gained more non-Austronesian features after the split. This suggests that Proto-Sika speakers left Lembata first as is also corroborated by the current location of the Sika varieties, which are located furthest away from Lembata on the island of Flores. There might have been contact between Sika and other non-Austronesian languages but if there was, it was much less intense than on the island of Lembata.

Proto-Kedang speakers moved to the eastern edge of Lembata island and Proto-Western Lamaholot speakers moved out towards the west as the Proto-Sika speakers did before them. But before that, they had gained more non-Austronesian features. It remains unknown until how recently the non-Austronesian languages on Lembata might have been spoken. However, it must have been at least several hundred years ago that they died out, as there are no known records of them in oral or written sources.

11.4 Summary of main conclusions

PFL and its subgroups have been in contact with non-Austronesian languages. This contact scenario was characterised by long-term bilingual communities with fluent bilinguals of all age groups. As a result of this language contact, PFL and its descendants gained new grammatical features and lexical items. These speakers either finally shifted to the Flores-Lembata languages or their bilingual code became the "new" language. Slightly different scenarios are assumed for PFL and the proto-languages of the lower-level subgroups. Possibly, Proto-Sika is the result of more rapid language shift, while subgroups with more non-Austronesian features, such as Central Lamaholot, may have had a longer period of bilingualism with the result of being a bilingual mixed language. The non-Austronesian contact languages were typologically similar to the neighbouring non-Austronesian Timor-Alor-Pantar languages that are still spoken today. But it remains unclear if the Flores-Lembata substrate languages were closely related to the TAP languages as there is no sufficient lexical evidence for such a connection.

11.5 Directions for further research

The internal structure of the Bima-Lembata group was not within the scope of this dissertation but is an important step in further revealing the history of the Austronesian languages of East Nusa Tenggara. Also the wider spread of the non-AN vocabulary in PFL needs to be addressed in more detail.

From a broader perspective, an interesting point for further research are the Austronesian languages of Timor which show a strikingly similar typological picture to the Flores-Lembata languages. In addition, the vocabulary of the AN Timor languages also appears to be mixed (Edwards in prep) and two layers of regular sound correspondences have been attested (Edwards 2016b; Edwards 2018b). As the results of this dissertation show, the Flores-Lembata languages and the Austronesian languages of Timor do not have a shared history. However, they appear to have undergone a similar history of contact with non-Austronesian languages.

For the Flores-Lembata languages in particular, more lexical and most importantly also structural data of Eastern Lamaholot varieties will allow a more fine-grained picture of the three Lamaholot subgroups. Further research should also investigate in more detail shared lexical items between the individual Lamaholot subgroups with Kedang and Sika. All possible combinations among the five Flores-Lembata subgroups need to be considered. For the lexical analysis of shared lexical innovations in Chapter 6, the Lamaholot subgroups had been considered as a unit. This was done because they are located in the centre of the family and they are lexically more similar to each other than to Sika and Kedang. Also the limited data on Eastern Lamaholot would have made it impossible to consider the three Lamaholot subgroups in a comparable way.

In general, this dissertation has shown that it is important to take all major parts of languages into account, the lexicon, the phonology and the morpho-syntax, to reveal their history. In particular, it has been proven to be of high relevance to investigate not only inherited features but also those that entered the languages at various stages of their history. For this, the genealogical affiliation of the languages needs to be known. Without knowing to which subgroup a language belongs, it is impossible to decide whether a feature is inherited or innovated. Once such an investigation is done, it enables us to reconstruct parts of the social histories of language contact in an-

cient times on the basis of languages as they are spoken today. In particular the Austronesian languages of eastern Indonesia, with virtually no records of their past, have proven to be fruitful ground for such investigations.