# A grammar of Dhao: An endangered Austronesian language in Eastern Indonesia
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Cover Page



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A Grammar of Dhao

# A Grammar of Dhao

## An Endangered Austronesian Language in Eastern Indonesia

This book presents a grammar description of Dhao, an endangered Austronesian language spoken by about 3000 people on Ndao Island in Eastern Indonesia. It is a member of the Sumba-Hawu subgroup in the Austronesian family and displays an intensive contact with nearby Kupang Malay and the Rote dialects, which also influences the grammar of the language. This grammar has six chapters which mainly describe the phonology, morphology, and syntax of Dhao.
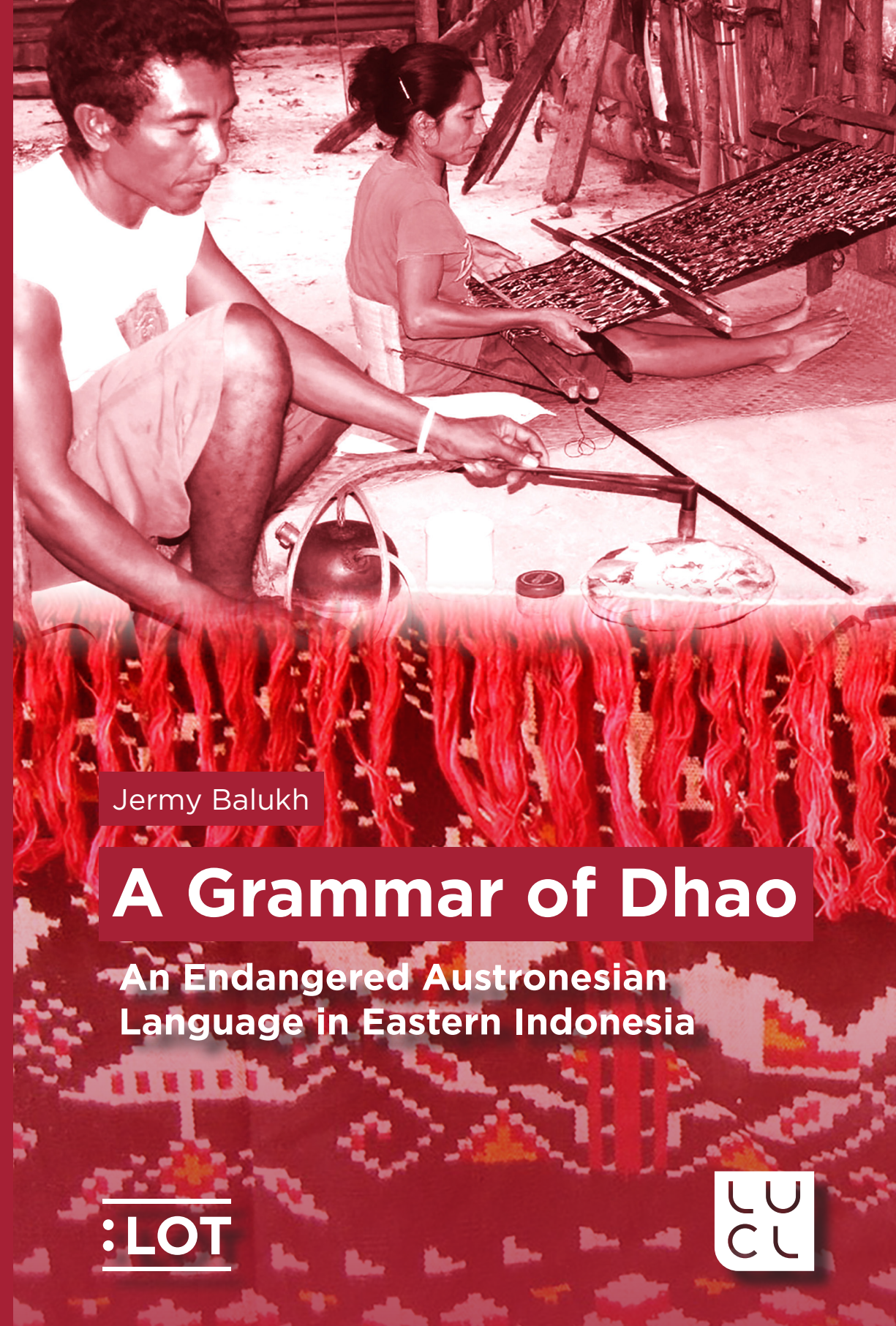
Phonologically, Dhao has 23 native consonants and six vowels. It has an open syllabic system. Lack of morphological operations in the language makes the analysis of syntactic categories challenging. Word classes are defined only through constructions. The only derivational prefix *pa-* bears a variety of meanings and interacts with other morphological processes. (C)*a-* partial reduplication applies to both nominal and verbal categories. Furthermore, verbs and adjectives are only distinguishable through serial verb constructions (SVCs).

Syntactically, Dhao has an SVO order. In order to indicate grammatical relations, only co-indexing system applies. Due to mismatch between verb valencies and constructions, valency and transitivity are treated as two disctinct terms in this grammar; valency is semantic and transitivity is syntactic. Clause combining does not always have an overt marking; therefore, intonation is used to identify the conjoined units. SVCs include at most three verbs whose types are based on the semantics of the verbs. This grammar provides an innovative contribution to the tradition of language research and description in Eastern Indonesia and specifically in the Timor Region.

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