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

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1

General Introduction

This chapter presents general information regarding the Dhao language and its speakers. Information about the geography of Ndao Island and information about its people, including their history and culture, is presented in §1.1. It is followed by an overview of the language and its typology in §1.2. The sociolinguistic situation, which briefly delves into language contact and language vitality, is given in §1.3. Previous works regarding the Dhao language and culture are presented in §1.4. Furthermore, the aims and theoretical framework as well as the methodology and corpus used in the present study are described in §1.5 and §1.6 respectively. Finally, this chapter closes with the organization of this book in §1.7.

1.1. The island of Ndao and its people

1.1.1. Geography and population

Ndao Island is a tiny island westwards of Rote Island in the East Nusa Tenggara Province, Indonesia. Ndao Island is one of seven islands in the Lesser Sunda area, which is called the "outer arc" (Fox, 1968: 1). Together with a smaller island in the northeast, which is called Nuse, and another unpopulated island at its footstep, called Do'o, these islands form a subdistrict administration or *kecamatan.* This particular subdistrict is called *kecamatan* Ndao-Nuse, of which Ndao is the main island. The subdistrict is one of the 10 subdistricts of the Rote-Ndao Regency. The Rote-Ndao Regency has been autonomous since March 11, 2002[1], with the city of Ba'a as its capital city, while kecamatan Ndao-Nuse has been granted autonomy since December 14, 2011.

[1] From 1958 until 2001, Rote-Ndao was part of the Kupang Regency.

Ndao Island is 5.8 kilometers long and 2.5 kilometers wide at low tide. Based on the Ndao-Nuse subdistrict statistical data of 2016, the population of Ndao Island counts 3,473 people. The population of the Ndao-Nuse subdistrict across four years is presented in Table 1.1 below. With an area of 11,54 km^2, the population density of the Ndao-Nuse subdistrict is 300 people per km^2. This is one of the reasons the migration rate to neighboring islands, especially to Rote and Timor, is high. Roughly 200 people from Ndao live in a coastal area that is called Namo Ndao in Ba'a, Rote. The name *Namo Ndao* itself is Rotenese, meaning 'Ndao beach'. It is believed that more than 500 Ndaonese spread across the whole of Rote Island.

Table 1.1: Population of the Ndao-Nuse subdistrict

Village names	Area	Population			
		2016	2015	2014	2013
Ndao Nuse	4,42 km^2	1,465	1,407	1,353	1,327
Mbali Lendeiki	2,41 km^2	664	811	612	699
Mbiu Lombo	2,17 km^2	844	637	779	511
Anarae	2,54 km^2	500	481	462	717
Nuse	4,65 km^2	490	471	452	734
TOTAL	14,19 km^2	3,963	3,807	3,658	3,988

Source: BPS (2015, 2016, 2017)

Almost all of the Ndaonese people living on Rote Island still are administratively listed as inhabitants of Ndao. Only few of them, of whom most are women, became Rotenese due to intermarriage. About 25% of the Ndaonese people can be found on Timor Island, including the provincial capital city of Kupang. In Kupang, there are more than 100 households, or 400 people. Unlike on Rote Island and on the rest of Timor, there is no specific community of Ndaonese people in Kupang. In the Mollo Utara subdistrict of Timor Ndaonese people settled in Tunua village, which also includes Hu'e, where there are about 80 households, or about 300 people. Ormeling (1952) reported that Ndaonese people already settled in a village called Netpala in Mollo on Timor Island a long time ago, and that they even have their own village chief. Ndaonese people also live in Kefa and Belu in the eastern part of West Timor. Only very few people live on other islands such as Alor, Flores, Sumba, and Sawu.

1.1.2. History and culture

The best-known name of the island as well as the language is "Ndao". However, it has been confirmed that the name given has been mispronounced and uses the spelling of the dominant neighboring language, Rote (Grimes, 2010: 253). The

consonant cluster or pre-nasal /nd/ never occurs in any syllable position in the language (see §2.3). Speakers always pronounce the name without nasal, and with slightly retroflex and affricated pronunciation of the sound [d]. Therefore, Grimes (2010) simply represented the sound phonemically as /ḍ/ and orthographically as *dh*. The name is thus pronounced as *Dhao*. In previous works, the name of the island has acquired several variants: *Dauw* (Lynden, 1851), *Dao* (Jonker, 1903), *Ndau* (Ormeling, 1952), and *Dhau* (Grimes, 2009). Since the name *Ndao* has been registered in official administrations, I will use *Ndao* to refer to the island and the community, and will use *Dhao* to refer to the language.

Based on legend, the people of Ndao believe that the first settlers of Ndao Island are three persons: Rika, Jote, and Pesa Kèli. Pesa Kèli was the one who had come from the island of Sawu and brought the Indigo plant *dhau* (*indigofera tinctoria*), from which is the origin of the name of the island. According to a Sawunese variant of the legend, the ancestors of Ndao descended from a Sawunese man named Jua Dida (the son of Dida Miha), who originally inhabited the island of Raijua and moved to Ndao Island later on (Kana, 1983). Regardless of the historical relation between the two legends, the cultural relationship between Sawu and Ndao is apparently imminent (Fox, 1987).

The island of Ndao also is figuratively called *rai kahore* (*rai* 'land' and *kahore* 'round'), which literally means 'round land'. Besides the name *Dhao*, people identify themselves as *dhèu kahore* and the language as *lii kahore*. Especially young people identify themselves as *ana kahore*. The word *kahore* refers to the shared understanding of the small round shape island. Lynden (1851), Jonker (1903), and Fox (1968) asserted that the people of Ndao are believed to come from Sumba. Other sources claimed that the people of Ndao are descendants of Sawunese. There also was an assumption that the Ndaonese are mixed Rotenese-Sawunese, although some still assume that they are Rotenese. Fox (1968) argues that the importance of Ndaonese in the study of the anthropology of Rote is inevitably due to the journey of Ndaonese men throughout Rote as gold- and silversmiths and their hiring in rice or maize farming. While sociologically Sawu maintains a system of nonlocalized matrilineal moieties and some small localized patrilineages, Ndao applies only a patrilineal system (Fox, 1968).

Until today, no historical record has been found regarding the emigration of Ndaonese people from Sawu. The European archival records, supported by Rotenese historical tradition, point to a distinct Ndaonese population before the beginning of the 18th century. In the 1720-s, Ndao was treated as one of the semi-autonomous political domains of Rote (Fox, 2014). Ndao was recognized by the Dutch East Indian Company as an autonomous domain with its own lord (*dhèu aae*) and secondary lord (*fetor*) in 1756. The Dutch defined this domain as a self-ruling 'state' of the island of Rote (Fox, 1987). All descent groups are divided between the moiety

of the lord, *Loasana*, and of the *fetor Aplugi*. Traditionally, Rote has assimilated the surplus population of Ndao (Fox, 1972).

Furthermore, Fox maintains that, although the people of Ndao claimed to have a language and culture similar to Sawu, they have been influenced by the culture of their neighboring island Rote for a long time. Kinship terminology is a good case in point. Traditional practices in Ndao also are unique. The gold unit to calculate the dowry was called *èèma*. One *èèma* equaled eight grams. In their traditional marriage system, the dowry is five *èèma*. Nowadays, instead of gold Indonesian rupiahs are used. Regarding culture, Ndao has adopted Rotenese culture since the past two generations. Ikat weaving designs and the traditionally plaited hat are good examples.

1.1.3. Economy, Transportation, and Education

On Ndao, the land is bare and the soil is poor. Consequently, it lacks agricultural resources on which people can rely. The land can only support a very limited amount of house garden agriculture (Fox, 1977a). For example, the statistics record of *Kecamatan* Ndao-Nuse of the year 2015 reports that the maize harvest in 2012 reached 127.6 ton, but declined to only 73.8 ton in 2013 and increased again to 200.20 ton in 2014. Meanwhile, the harvest of peanuts increased from 13 ton in 2012 to 248.4 ton in 2013. Like on Rote and Sawu, some Ndaonese also utilize lontar-palms as a source of living, although it is not that productive. Compared to the production of the whole regency, the subdistrict produced only 4.21 or 0.44 ton palm sugar in 2013. Coconut palms also have become one of their economic sources. Based on the Rote-Ndao statistical record of 2014, *kecamatan* Ndao-Nuse had a coconut production of 26.91 ton, the least in the whole regency. Besides that, almost all of the people also work as fishermen. Unlike Rote and Sawu, Ndao has no rice fields; therefore, they supply rice from Rote.

The most important skill for Ndaonese men used to be gold- and silversmithing. For women the most important skill used to be traditional ikat weaving. Thousands of jewels and ikats are produced each year, and are sent for trading purposes to neighboring islands. The men tend to leave the island during the dry season to sell jewelry and other products of handwork smithing and the ikat weaving products made by the women. Unlike ikat weaving, only very few men living on Ndao still are doing such smithing work nowadays. Many of them moved to Rote or Timor. Most of the Ndaonese men shifted to fishing and local business activities. Women still are productive in ikat weaving up until these days. They also leave their home to sell their products, to seek orders for new weavings, or to collect debts from their customers. To promote ikat weaving products, a Ndaonese person established an art shop, named *CV. Ina Ndao*, in Kupang, the provincial capital city for exhibition and trading.

Most domesticated livestock in Ndao are cows, goats, and chickens. In 2014, k*ecamatan* Ndao-Nuse had 348 cows, 827 goats, and 714 domestic chickens. Nevertheless, that number is considered the lowest in the whole regency. Compared to other subdistricts in the regency, Ndao is the most productive in fishery, especially in the catching of squid. While other districts produced up to 3 tons of squid in 2014, Ndao produced up to 9 tons. In addition to that, the production of seaweed also is quite high: 2,170 tons in 2014.

Ndao does not have any public land transportation. Only two or three people have pick-up cars that can be rented for a variety of purposes. Some people also have motorbikes that can be offered for rent. To reach neighboring islands, people use small wooden motor boats that may transport people to Rote and Kupang twice a week. Ndao has two sea harbors: one built more than ten years ago for passenger ships, and one for ferry boats, the latter which has been operating since mid-2015. Passenger ships visit Ndao at least once a month, whereas travel by ferry boats depends on demand. During severe weather conditions, oftentimes between December and March, or June and August, sea transportation ceases. The distance from Ndao to Nemberala, the west coast of Rote, is 16.2 kilometers, which can be reached by motor boat within an hour. From Namo Ndao in Ba'a, the distance is 41.3 kilometers, which can be reached within 3 hours by motor boat.

Ndao has three elementary schools, one junior high school, and one senior high school. Ndao children tend to leave the island to proceed to high school after they finish elementary schooling. Only a few of them stay on Ndao. Many of them move on to continue their study at university level, either on Rote or in Kupang. However, they often stay on Rote or in Kupang to get permanent jobs. Very few of them return to Ndao. They often become school teachers or civil servants at the subdistrict office.

1.2. The Language

1.2.1. Genetic affiliation

The Dhao language (ISO 639-3: nfa) is genetically classified into the Sumba-Hawu subgroup, within Central Malayo-Polynesian (CMP) of the Austronesian language family, and as such resembles the languages of Sumba and Sawu (Donohue and Grimes, 2008); (Blust, 2008); (Blust, 2013). Both Donohue & Grimes and Blust conclude that Dhao and Hawu uncontroversially are a genetical unit with the languages of Sumba. There is substantial evidence for an exclusive Sumba-Hawu subgroup, and limited evidence for the larger subgroup that includes languages of western and central Flores (Blust, 2008). Blust (2008:89) also provided lexicostatistic evidence that Sumba-Hawu has more cognates (35%) than Bima-Sumba (28%). The lower level Sumba-Hawu branching is presented in Figure 1.1,

and the similarities of words between Hawu and Dhao are demonstrated in Table 1.2 below.

Figure 1.1. Sumba-Hawu Branching

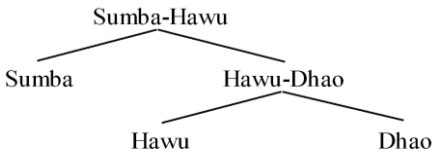

Table 1.2: Similarities between Hawu and Dhao (Grimes, 2010)

Hawu	**Dhao**	**Gloss**
/aʃa/	/aʃa/	'teach'
/aʃu/	/aʃu/	'wood, tree'
/ama/	/ama/	'father'
/are/	/are/	'paddy'
/aru/	/aru/	'eight'
/dara/	/dara/	'inside'
/bəhi/	/bəsi/	'iron'
/due/	/dua/	'two'
/jii/	/jiʔi/	'1PL.ex'

The internal subgrouping at the higher level, that is, between Central Malayo-Polynesian (CMP), Central Eastern Malayo-Polynesian (CEMP) and West Malayo-Polynesian (WMP) is problematic. The genetic classification within the CMP subgroup is considered problematic because of incomplete innovations within its languages, though language contact in that area has been evident for decades (Blust, 2008; Klamer, 2002:365). Donohue and Grimes (2008) argue that some languages of Sulawesi rather share features with languages in the CMP area than with languages in the WMP area. Such complexity makes the status of CMP and CEMP vague. By doing "bottom-up" subgroupings, Donohue and Grimes propose two separate classifications for WMP and three for CMP, leaving Eastern Malayo-Polynesian (EMP) as a different subgroup (Donohue and Grimes, 2008). CEMP is not considered the mother node for CMP and EMP in the standard Malayo-Polynesian tree (Donohue and Grimes, 2008). Later on, Blust (2009) provides some other alternatives while supporting the evidence for the "standard theory" of Malayo-Polynesian branching. While Donohue and Grimes found little support for CEMP, Blust claims to have considerable evidence. The academic dispute regarding

the genetic classification of the languages in Eastern Indonesia gives evidence that that area lodges a "complex" and "enormous and structurally diverse language family" (Blust, 2009).

1.2.2. Language Variation

Dhao has no dialect variation. However, the people living in the villages of Mbiu, Lombo, and Mbali have different semantic variations of certain words. For example, the people of Ndao in generally understand that the phrase *kataki i'a* means 'to shoot fish with an arrow', but in the three villages mentioned above people use *cèla i'a* instead, which literally means 'to dive for fish'. The difference does not affect the grammar of the language. Some other differences are shown in the Table 1.3 below.

Table 1.3: Semantic Variation

Dhao in general	**Mbiu, Lombo, Mbali**
pa'iu 'chicken spur (especially with knife) *pahua* 'chicken spur (not with knife)	*pahua* 'chicken spur' (all context)
huki 'grub up' (things) *edo* 'grub up' (coconut)	*edo* 'grub up' (all context)
mad'ulu 'fishing (day time) *soro* 'fishing (at night)	*maleba* 'fishing (all time)
kataki 'arrow, shoot with arrow' *kasiro* 'gun, shoot'	*kasiro* 'gun, shoot, shoot with arrow'
cèla 'dive'	*cèla* 'dive, shoot fish with arrow'

Those small differences may cause misunderstandings between speakers of Dhao outside and inside these three villages. The latter basically understand all standard expressions of Dhao without distinguishing the specific semantic notions of those words. There is no prosodic difference between the two variations.

1.2.3. Registers

Lii Dhao is used as the everyday language on Ndao. Aside from *Lii Dhao*,Dhao also has two other registers: a secret language (*Lii Pacele*), and a ritual language (*Lii Hini*). The secret language is only used by adults to prevent younger people or outsiders with a basic knowledge of Dhao from understanding their conversations. Nevertheless, Dhao people claim that, nowadays, children at the ages of 17 and 18 have acquired *lii pacele* and are able to use it in daily conversation with adults. The most typical feature of the *Lii Pacele* is its symbolic or figurative use of terminology for material culture, animal species, plant names, and other words of which the literal meanings are unknown. For example, they might say *èu dènge sabha dhau*

ana tabebe si which literally means 'you are going with the big and small palm leaf containers' to refer to someone who brings all of his or her children or grandchildren walking to an event (party or ceremony). In such an expression, the kids are compared to palm leaf containers. It is because on Ndao, people use palm leaf containers to store palm sap and to bring it home. These palm leaf containers have different sizes and types depending on their functions. Dhao men tend to bring many different palm leaf containers when they go for palm tapping. In this case, the literal meaning (palm leaf containers) contrasts with the contextual meaning (children). However, such a comparison is understood by Dhao native speakers because of a mutual understanding of the culture of palm tapping. Another example comes from fishing equipments, *kalera-kanaca*. *Kalera* is a kind of basket to put in fish and *kanaca* is a small fishing trap. These two terms are combined as an expression to mean 'husband and wife, or a couple'. When people are going for fishing, they normally bring a *kanaca* and a *kalera*. They catch fish using the *kanaca* and then they put the fish into the *kalera*. These two equipments are inseparable in doing fishing. For the people of Ndao, a husband and a wife are an inseparable couple.

Lii hini is a ritual language that is used only in customary ceremonies or events. Since traditional ceremonies are no longer in practice nowadays, many expressions of the ritual language are already forgotten. A traditional dance called *pado'a*[2] has been revived, although only few old people are capable of leading the dance while chanting in the ritual language. The people of Ndao admit that the ritual language is very much influenced by Rote (cf. Fox, 1987: 197). The salient feature of ritual languages in the area is the parallel usage of words, called lexical parallelism (Fox, 2014). Following are some examples of lexical parallelism that people mostly use when praying. As seen in the examples, the parallel words (marked in the text by //) are *koa* 'pride' and *kio* 'praise' (1), *sasala* 'wrongness' and *sasigo* 'turning back' (2), and *babhelu* 'wickedness' and *katuba* 'evil' (3). The pairs in (1) and (2) are claimed to be loans from the Rotenese language.

(1)	*ji'i*	***koa //***	***kio***	*kolo*	*ngara*	*Ama*	*Lamatua*
	1PL.ex	pride //	praise	top	name	father	Lord
	'We praise the name of the Lord' [CY_Pray.006]						

(2)	*saku*	*eele*	***sa-sala //***	***sa-sigo***	*ji'i*
	sweep	away	DUP-wrong //	DUP-turn	1PL.ex
	'Forgive our sins' [elicited]				

[2] The other two traditional dances of Ndao are called *roge* and *ledho*.

(3) *ère ele ji'i ngèti dara* ***ba-bhelu // katuba***
pull lose 1PL.ex from inside DUP-wicked // evil
'Release us from evil' [elicited]

1.2.4. Typological Overview

The typological overview described in this section highlights the phonological, morphological, and syntactic characteristics of Dhao as described throughout this thesis. Furthermore, the grammatical characteristics of Dhao are put into the perspective of the areal typology of languages in Eastern Indonesia, as described in Klamer (2002; 2010).

Dhao has 23 native consonant segments in its inventory: /p, b, ɓ, b͡β, t, d, ɗ, d͡ʐ, c, ɟ, ʃ, k, g, ɠ, ʔ, s, h, m, n, ɲ, ŋ, r, l/ and three loan consonants: /w, f, j/. Like other languages within the same subfamily, Dhao has implosive and affricate sounds, as shown in the inventory in (§2.2.1). Unlike other languages in the same area, which mostly have two or three implosive stops, such as Kambera in Sumba (Klamer, 1998:10) and Rongga in Flores (Arka, 2016), Dhao (including Hawu) has four implosive stops: bilabial /ɓ/, alveolar /ɗ/, palatal /ʃ/, and velar /ɠ/ (see also Blust, 2013:88; Grimes, 2010; Walker, 1982). Dhao also has one bilabial affricate /b͡β/ and one alveolar affricate /d͡ʐ/, which is pronounced a bit retroflex. Dhao has a six-vowel system, which includes /i, ɛ, ə, a, ɔ, u/. Since the schwa /ə/ lacks syllable weight, the following consonant will be lengthened (see §2.3). Geminates are not common in Eastern Indonesia (Klamer, 2002:368). Whenever a schwa occurs in a syllable-final position, a high vowel, either /i/ or /u/ will follow, making it diphthongized (see §2.3.2). The syllable template of Dhao is CV, and the stress falls consistently on the penultimate position. Dhao is one of the languages in Lesser Sunda that permits only open final syllables, the same as Hawu and languages of Sumba, and different from Rote, the latter which allows consonants *–k* and *–s* (Blust, 2013). Therefore, for loanwords with final consonants, Dhao deploys an adaptation strategy to create open syllables by dropping the consonant. An epenthetic vowel in inter-consonantal position prevents CC clusters (§2.5).

Dhao has only one derivational affix; that is the prefix is *pa-*. It is used to derive verbs from nouns and adjectives, as well as change the valence of verbs. Semantically, the prefix *pa-* expresses causative, reciprocal, intensity, and other meanings (see §4.3). As such, the prefix *pa-* may not only increase, but also decrease and even maintain the valence of verbs. Dhao has inflectional affixes that co-index with the clausal subjects indicated by either personal pronouns or full NPs (see §4.2). These co-index affixes are confined to nine verbs; eight verbs require prefixes, whereas one requires suffixes: the verb *la-* 'go'. As such, the coreferent NPs in these constructions are optional, and the affixes feature verbal arguments.

This is a typical feature in Eastern Indonesia, which is termed "pronominal argument" by Klamer (2002). These affixes in Dhao have been regarded as a grammaticalization from Rotenese personal pronouns (Jonker, 1903). There is no strict morpho-syntactic difference between word categories such as nouns and verbs, and between verbs and adjectives. While (C)*a-* reduplication features nominal categories, it may also be used for verbs (see §3.2.1.1). The prefix *pa-* is productively used for verbs, but it can also be used to mark adverbs (see §3.3.2). As such, the prefix *pa-* is determinant in the scale of verbs and adjectives occurring in predicate positions (see §4.3.1.1). There is no morphological marking on alienable/inalienable nouns. Possession can only be expressed syntactically in an NP construction (§3.2.1.1) or a predicative construction (§5.2.3). Another important morphological characteristic of Dhao is the /a-e/ vowel change that marks object agreement, verb valence change, and other semantic/pragmatic-specific features. Although this feature is not productive in Dhao, it still is retained in the structure of the language. Except for Hawu, which has a similar feature as productive object agreement (Grimes, 2010; Walker, 1982), no other languages listed in Klamer (2002) have a similar feature. The morphological features of Dhao discussed throughout this thesis have shown that Dhao combines isolation and concatenation, that is, some morphemes stand independently as individual words, and some morphemes (prefix *pa-* and co-index affixes) are attached to their hosts but still are segmentable. However, the (C)*a-* reduplication signals a feature that falls between concatenation and non-linear process (Velupillai, 2012) in which the fusion may form a base for the prefix *pa-*, too (see §4.3.3).

Dhao is an SV(O) language. Like other languages in Eastern Indonesia, Dhao has serial verb constructions (SVC). In the noun phrase construction, the modifier follows the head noun. This rule also applies to modification by relative clause marked with *dhu* REL (see §6.3.3). Dhao has demonstrative pronouns that distinguish number: singular and plural, and distinguish distance: proximal, distal, and remote (see §3.2.2.2). The predicate slot can be filled with both verbal and non-verbal categories without any linking marker. This feature is typologically common for languages in the Austronesian family. Like other languages in Eastern Indonesia, Dhao does not have passive constructions. The negation in Dhao is not specifically highlighted in this thesis; however, throughout this thesis, it can be seen that negation is post-verbal or clause-final, similar to Hawu. This is different from other languages in Eastern Indonesia that have pre-verbal negation, such as Rote, Tetun, Bima, and Sumba. Generally, post-verbal or clause-final negation is found in Papuan languages (Klamer, 2002:375), although some Austronesian languages in the Moluccas have postverbal-negation, such as Buru, Alune, and Taba.

1.3. Sociolinguistic Situation

1.3.1. Language contact

Ndao is contemporarily characterized by multilingualism, where people can speak more than two languages. They may speak at least Dhao, Kupang Malay, Indonesian, and Rote. Consequently, lexical and grammatical calquing is to be expected. In a Dhao corpus consisting of 82 natural texts and 2.911 lexical items, approximately 24% of the words are borrowed from Kupang Malay/Indonesian. These borrowings are mostly nouns and verbs. Regarding the frequency of appearance, function words and nouns are more frequent in texts than verbs and other categories. Certain low frequent loan words, nevertheless, have a high influence on Dhao constructions. Once loan words are deleted or moved, the whole construction will be judged as ill-formed, even when corresponding native words are used to replace them.

The people of Ndao have intense contact with the people on neighboring islands due to economic and educational reasons besides the social and political reasons as explained previously. Such intense contact also results in linguistic contact between languages. While Dhao is genetically similar to Hawu, it has no direct contact with Hawu because of geographical location and official administration. Due to the proximity with Rote, Dhao always has had contact with Rote in terms of administration, economy, social, education, and language. As mentioned previously, Dhao has limited educational resources; therefore, children tend to leave their home village when going to high school or university. For economic reasons, many people also tend to live on the main islands of Rote or Timor for certain periods of time, sometimes returning to Ndao only for a temporary stay.

The language of wider communication used by people of Ndao is Kupang Malay, which has become the lingua franca of the regency, after which follows Rote. The people of Ndao tend to acquire Kupang Malay since birth, as parents speak Kupang Malay with their children. As result, they are able to speak Kupang Malay natively. Many people can also speak Uab Meto since they have been living on Timor Island for a long time as well. Only a few of them can speak any of the languages of Flores. People are able to speak Rote more than they are able to converse in Hawu, despite the genetic relationship between Dhao and Hawu. Only about 5%, or 60 people, are considered as less bilingual. These people in particular have less interaction with people from outside Ndao Island, and are less able to speak Kupang Malay even though they understand it quite well. In general, these people only finished elementary school or *folk school*. They all are in their 70-s. Although children still speak their native language, they easily shift to other languages of wider communication, such as Kupang Malay. In addition, most people speak Indonesian in formal situations, such as during religious services wedding

ceremonies, local meetings, in classes, etc., even though in certain cases they also still speak Dhao during customary meetings or *adat*.

Some of the people of Ndao admit that their language is similar to Hawu in some cases, and similar to Rote in some other cases. However, many words are claimed to be very similar to Rote instead of Hawu. From a sociocultural perspective, people of Ndao also admit that their culture is similar to both Hawu and Rote. For example, the *pado'a* dance is a Hawu-like tradition, while their marriage ceremony is like the marriage ceremony of Rote. Fox (1977b) asserts that, since many centuries ago, the people of Ndao have developed their tradition in close proximity to Rote. Fox claims that Ndao can be considered to be the sharing point between Rote and Sawu in terms of language and culture. Although the population of Ndao itself is believed to be descendant of Sawu, its language and culture have been increasingly influenced by Rote (Fox, 1987: 196). Jonker (1903) noted several words that are believed to be borrowings from Rote, as shown in Table 1.4 below. Those words include all semantic domains of the lexicon: kin terms, subordinator, manner adverb, verbs, and animals. As mentioned previously, Dhao also has intense contact with Kupang Malay as the *lingua franca*, and standard Indonesian, which is the national language of Indonesia as well as the language of education.

Table 1.5 below illustrates loan words from Kupang Malay/Indonesian. §2.5 describes that the loan words are adapted to the Dhao phonological system, especially the syllabic system.

Table 1.4: Loans from Rote

Dhao	**Rote**	**Gloss**
baka	*baka*	'each'
baki	*ba'i*	'grandfather'
bèi	*bei*	'grandmother'
dano	*dano*	'lake'
de	*de*	'so'
ho (Jonker: *fo*)	*fo*	'so that'
lai-lai	*lai-lai*	'quickly'
manubhui	*manupui*	'bird'
na	*na*	PART
goa-dano	*nggua-dano*	'turtle'
sasadhu	*sasandu*	k.o.music instrument
te	*te*	'but'
teto	*te'o*	'auntie'
to'o	*to'o*	'uncle'

Table 1.5: Loans from Kupang Malay/Indonesian

Dhao	**Kupang/ Indonesian**	**Gloss**
saraka	*serahkan*	'to hand over'
sakola	*sakola/sekolah*	'school'
pulu	*pulau*	'ísland'
poko	*pokok*	'capital'
pidha	*pindah*	'to move'
miri	*miring*	'slant'
kalua	*keluar*	'to exit'
gareta	*kereta*	'cart, wagon'
kapatei	*kapten*	'captain'
papa	*papa/bapak*	'father'
mama	*mama*	'mother'
to	*to*	'tag'

Dhao does not only borrow lexicons but also morphosyntactic constructions from Kupang Malay/Indonesia and Rote. An example from Kupang Malay is the verb *pake* 'to use, to wear' presented in (4) through (7) below. The word *pake* 'to use, to wear' itself has phonological correspondence with the Indonesian word *pakai*. Like Kupang Malay/Indonesian, the verb *pake* is used in Dhao as a predicate or to introduce instruments. Dhao has the native words *pasaluu* and *silu* which mean 'to wear', and *nèu* 'to dress up', which carry corresponding meaning to *pake*, but are less frequently used nowadays. The current corpus shows, for example, that the verb *pake* has 95 occurrences, whereas *nèu* only has four occurrences. Examples (4) and (5) show that the two words *pake* and *pasaluu* can occur in the same syntactic function -- the predicate. The verb *pake*, like in Kupang Malay, can be used to introduce instruments, such as in (6)[3]. It should be noted that Dhao originally does not have any verbal forms to express instruments (see §6.4.3.8). In this regard, instruments are construed as locational entities in Dhao. As such, prepositional constructions are applied. Take example (7), where the preposition *ma* 'toward' is used, followed by the location noun *dara* 'inside'. This complex prepositional construction expresses the use of the instrument *sabha* 'palm.container' to drink palm wine. In such a construction, the verb *nèu* 'to wear' is impossible. Different prepositions are employed according to the event (more examples are presented in §6.4.3.8). Since construction borrowing is covert, Dhao speakers are no longer aware of this phenomenon as a borrowing.

[3] Dhao has no native word with generic meaning corresponding to *pake*; therefore, no word has been found to replace *pake* in this case. The only way of expressing this construction without *pake* is by applying the *na*-complement (see §ch.6).

(4) *ja'a* ***pake*** *kodho*
1SG to.use shirt
'I wear a shirt' [Verb_Elicited.00333]

(5) *ana ne'e* ***pasaluu*** *mèdha èèna*
child PROX.SG to.wear goods DIST.SG
'The child wears that thing (shirt)'

(6) *èdhi lolo* ***pake*** *kaba lolo èci do kaba lolo dua*
1PL to.roll to.use shell to.roll one or shell to.roll two
'We roll using one or two rolling shell' [SF_Tao_Hengu.039]

(7) *t-inu dhua* ***ma*** ***dara*** *sabha*
1PL.in-to.drink palmwine toward inside palm.container
'We could drink palm juice using the palm container' [Eta_Dhua.058]

Another borrowing from Malay/Indonesian is illustrated by two adverbs; *biasanya* 'usually' and *kusus* 'special' from Indonesian *khusus* in (8). While *biasanya* 'usually' can be deleted easily without violating the construction as in (8)b, *kusus* 'special' cannot, as in (8)c. The native Dhao construction should be as in (8)d. This suggests that Malay loanwords play a significant role in the Dhao construction.

(8) a. ***biasanya*** *mèdha èèna pake* ***kusus*** *dhèu bhèni*
usually goods DIST.SG to.use special person woman
'Generally, that thing is only used by women' [EL_Dhari.132]

b. *mèdha èèna pake* ***kusus*** *dhèu bhèni*
goods DIST.SG to.use special person woman
'That thing is only used by women'

c. **mèdha èèna pake dhèu bhèni*
goods DIST.SG to.use person woman

d. *mèdha èèna dhoka dhèu bhèni*
goods DIST.SG only person woman

di dhu pasaluu
just REL to.wear
'That thing only women can wear it'

1.3.2. Context of use and language choice

The languages the people of Ndao mostly speak in their everyday lives include Dhao itself, Kupang Malay, and Indonesian. In addition to those three languages, most people are also able to speak Rote and Uab Meto because they have had intense contact with Rote and Timor for a long time, due to economic and socio-political reasons. Table 1.6 below shows the language choice options.

The people of Ndao are highly mobile. They abandon the island for long stretches of time and live on the neighboring islands to work. Some of them become civil servants and school teachers on Rote or in Kupang. Some of them continue their traditional metal- or silversmithing and weaving on Rote and Timor. They return to their home island only on holidays, such as Christmas or Easter. Other people moved to Rote or Kupang merely because they wanted to pursue higher education, and found found jobs there later on. Women from Ndao especially moved to other places because of marriage or due to being dependent on their husbands, who would move away.

Table 1.6: Language Choice

Language	**Domain**
Dhao	1) Everyday language in Ndao 2) Language used in *adat* ceremonies 3) Rarely used in formal situations, such as in church and official meetings
Kupang Malay	1) Everyday language 2) Informal meetings 3) Used as *lingua franca* for wider communication with people from other places.
Indonesian	1) Official language at school, church, and official meetings. 2) used in formal speech and marriage ceremonies
Rote	1) used in chanting, such as *pado'a*. 2) *adat* meetings with Rotenese
Other languages: Uab Meto, Sumba, Hawu, etc	Used when they meet people from the region

Standard Indonesian is used in formal situations, such as in church, in government offices, at schools, and at other formal meetings. Meanwhile, Kupang Malay is used in everyday life. People still use Dhao in contexts such as *adat*

meetings, household services, and announcements. Both Kupang Malay and standard Indonesian have encroached on the use of Dhao (Grimes, 1999: 2). The sentence constructions in Dhao are affected by the grammar of Kupang Malay as already shown above, instead of maintaining the native Dhao grammar. Consequently, sentences may have Dhao words, while the grammar or semantics of those words may be derived from Kupang Malay or Indonesian (Balukh, 2013).

1.3.3. Language vitality

The language contact situation depicted in §1.3.1 above indicates that other languages, like Kupang Malay, Indonesian, and Rote, have begun to invade a variety of domains in which Dhao used to be the main language., The community's cultural knowledge stored in lexicon and grammar has been in serious declination. Although Dhao still is used at home, the language shift is obvious, as asserted in Grimes (2009) below:

> "Walking around the villages, one hears people of all ages using Dhao fairly vigorously in most walks of life - with the key word being "most". There are speech domains in which Malay (both Standard Indonesian and Kupang Malay) is encroaching on the use of Dhao. And modern life brings new domains that are often primarily associated with the outside world, and hence with outside languages".

Children still learn Dhao since early childhood, but the interference of Kupang Malay has been undeniable for many years, as parents tend to speak Kupang Malay at home. From parents' perspective, Kupang Malay is considered to be a good basis for understanding Standard Indonesian and preparing children for pursuing higher education. Many Dhao children acquire Dhao not because of language use in the home domain, but because of external social interaction, especially amongst their peers. In many cases, however, children and young people are blamed for mistakes they make when speaking Dhao. This is a paradox in the language acquisition of Dhao. The viability of language is determined by its usage in the home domain (Crystal, 2000). The interaction between parents and their children concerning language use in home domain is very important. The reverse situation indicates a "symptom" of language endangerment (Himmelmann, 2010).

With 5,000 speakers, Blust (2013) places Dhao as one of the ten smallest Austronesian languages of the Lesser Sundas. Grimes (2010) stated that Dhao has around 7000 speakers. If this is true, then more than 60% of the speakers have abandoned the island nowadays as only 3000 or so people still live on the island (see Table 1.1). In addition to that, Ndaonese people who live on Rote and on Timor mostly speak the dominant language,the *lingua franca* Kupang Malay, instead of Dhao, indicating that about 40% of the people of Ndao can be considered as active native speakers. Although the number of speakers is not used as the only parameter in determining the vitality of a language, the ratio between the number members of

an ethnic group and the number of speakers amongst said ethnic group is regarded as a significant indicator. Members of an ethnic group would be influenced by the non-speaker community where they currently live. The more a language is not spoken, the more attrition in a variety of linguistic aspects would be evident.

As has been indicated in §1.3.2 above, language choice is determined by the domains of usage. It shows that Dhao still has no significant role in domains other than daily conversation. Although orthography has been developed in 1996 by the SIL Bible translation team at *Unit Bahasa dan Budaya* (UBB) Kupang (Grimes, 2009), not many people are able to read and write in their native language. At this stage, more materials are needed to trigger the people to familiarize themselves with reading and writing in Dhao. The passive response from both the local government to include Dhao in the educational curriculum of schools, and the passive response from local churches to use biblical materials published by UBB GMIT Kupang also shows that Dhao still has no significant role in formal situations. At the elementary school level, up to 2008, school children were not allowed to speak Dhao within school premises. Up until today, no teacher uses Dhao as the language of instruction. During my second fieldwork trip in 2014, I asked elementary school teachers to use Dhao in classes, and one teacher, *Paulus Lodoh*, was willing to take on this challenge. It resulted in many code-mixing constructions.

The decline of the Dhao language can be seen, for example, by the loss of cultural-specific words or terms. Some elders may still remember them, but those words or terms are no longer in use amongst younger generations. The traditional ceremonies to which these terms refer have been abandoned for many years. Some examples of terms related to traditional ceremonies are the terms of the months of a year. As Dhao has no lexical words to express the name of months, terms of traditional ceremonies and the cycle of nature are still in use. For example, *Kalela Holomanu originally* is an annual traditional ceremony. This ceremony was held as a thanksgiving for harvest or other blessings received during the previous year, and for asking for blessings in the year yet to come as well. Therefore, the traditional Dhao system counts the calendar from *nyale kole*, which corresponds to April in the modern calendar. The list of the months is presented in Table 1.7 below with an explanation of the metaphors. The unidentified glosses are marked with question marks (?).

Table 1.7: Traditional terms indicating months in a year

Term	**Gloss**	**Description**	**Meaning**
Nyale Kole	k.o.sea worm + post-harvest	The period after harvest. *Nyale* still comes, but people do not take it.	April
Holo Manu	advice + chicken	Post-harvest thanksgiving ceremony	May
Bhui Nidhu	watering + God	Family gathering and giving thanks to God	June
Marose	?	Period of famine	July
Isi Nèta	result + tasteless	Period of famine	August
Hadhu lai	stone + ?	Beginning of tapping lontar	September, Summer
Hadhu aae	stone + big	Peak season of tapping lontar	October
Matena	quit	No singing birds	November
Nyale Sèpu	k.o.sea worm + gild	Beginning of the rainy season and storms. *Nyale* comes to lay eggs. Beginning of planting.	December
Ari Nyale	younger sibling + k.o.sea worm	*Nyale*s come to fetch their kids	January
Nyale Edha	k.o.sea worm + Rote	*Nyale* appears only in Rote	February
Nyale Dhao	k.o.sea worm + Ndao	No more storms. *Nyale* comes to lay eggs again and can be taken by people.	March

Many other terms or words related to traditional practices, such as ikat weaving, silversmithing, fishing (nautical), and religious terms also are seriously endangered. For instance, a typical Ndaonese weaving design called *ana langi* is a design symbolizing small fish that used to be found in the shallow part of the sea near the beach line. Nowadays, ana langi is hardly found on ikat weaving products. Therefore, younger generations no longer know what it means. Another example: the traditional marriage proposal, called *bari*, has been abandoned since a long time already, therefore, this word is no longer in use unless the tradition is mentioned in storytelling. Traditional religious terms, *Horo parahi*, *Manadhu lai lodha* and *Muri manadhu* also are no longer in use. The terms *Lamatua* 'God' (similar to Rotenese, *Lamatuak*) and *Roh* 'spirit' (borrowed from Indonesian) are more popular nowadays. People below 35 years of age hardly remember traditional religious terms (Grimes, 2009).

(9) Endangered terms or words

ana langi	k.o. motif that features small fish
bari	asking the man before marriage proposal
Horo parahi	'God the creator'
Manadhu lai lodha	'Holy spirit'
Muri manadhu	'Savior'
pasiri a'ana	'quiz, riddle'
ringi	'thanksgiving feast'
udhu-rasa	'tribe'

The difference between older and younger generations also is evident in through their different ways of spelling the same words. For example, take the word 'exit'. Older people spell *bhodho*, whereas younger people spell *podho*. The word for 'scorpion' shows simplification; whereas older people use *karaka rai*, younger people use *kakarai*.

Table 1.8: Difference between ages

Old people	Young People	Gloss
bhodho	*podho*	'to exit'
hèla lai	*rèu lai, suu lai*	'tail'
karaka rai	*kakarai*	'scorpion'
kikidui	*kukudui*	'ants'
malaa-maloha	*malaa-malohu*	'senile'
ngèti	*nèti*	'from'
rèu dhilu	*ana dhilu*	'ears'
sangae	*sènge*	'that big'
kalaha'a ai	*kadhu ai*	'charcoal'
lamakera, baruku	*baruu*	'pants'

Names that refer to geographical locations either on Ndao Island itself or at neighboring places have followed Standard Indonesian orthography for years. However, native names still are brought into play by the people of Ndao in their everyday communication. For example, Rote Island is called *Edha*[4] and Nuse Island is *Nèsu*. For the adaptation of loan words, see the description in §2.5.

[4] This name is historically taken from Rotenese language *Enda* which is the reduced form of *Laihenda* that means 'human or people'

1.4. Previous Works

Dhao received little attention in terms of linguistic and anthropological work. The first work on Dhao was published by Jonker (1903) in a five-page paper. He marked some words as loans from Rote and words that are considered to have Hawu origins in a short Dhao text. Jonker's paper also identified that the Dhao co-index affixes are grammaticalized from Rote personal pronouns. Jonker was the first to claim that Dhao is a dialect of Hawu.

A brief introduction to Ndao Island and its socio-economic situation was presented in Fox (1972). A comparative anthropological study on kinship terms of Sawu, Ndao, and Rote was presented in Fox (1987). He came to the conclusion that Ndao is linguistically and culturally between Sawu and Rote. While Dhao still maintains some Sawu-like kinship terms, Rotenese terms are also used.

Walker (1982) published a sketch called "Grammar of Sawu", in which he presented a sketch of Dhao grammar in comparison to Hawu. The sketch was based on two months of research in Kupang. He recruited two young people, one who was a school teacher and another who was a silver craftsman. Based on 30 minutes of eight narrated texts, as well as elicited materials, he presented a comparative description of Dhao and Hawu in terms of the phonological, morphological, and syntactic features. He argued that Dhao and Hawu are unique in that they are the only languages in Eastern Indonesia to have four implosive stops. Dhao has alveolar fricative /s/ and palatal plosive /c/, but Hawu does not have them. In contrast, Hawu does have bilabial approximant /w/, but Dhao does not. In terms of syntax, Walker identified Dhao as subject initial, which is different from Sawu, which has a verb initial pattern. By using a modified Swadesh 200-word list, Walker found that Dhao and Sawu have a cognacy of 75%. Because of the differing grammatical features of Dhao as compared to Hawu, Walker concluded that Dhao is a separate language despite a large common ground in both lexicon and phonology. Such a conclusion is also supported by Grimes (2010). An important claim by Grimes is that though both languages have a similar lexicon and phonology, their different semantics may influence inherent intelligibility between Dhao and Hawu.

Furthermore, Grimes (2009) reports the progress of documentation and the efforts of constructing a written form of Dhao from its original oral form. Grimes pointed out that, although all age groups still continue to use Dhao, it is clear that Dhao is on the decline.. The same paper also reports the work done on Bible translations in Kupang in the early 2000s. Some books from the Bible and the New Testament have been produced alongside several books, pictures, and CDs. As byproduct of the translation project, Grimes (2012) published a short reference grammar of Dhao in Indonesian. The grammar sketch helps the people of Ndao to learn how to write read in their language. In brief, he grammar sketch includes personal pronouns, demonstratives, prepositions, negations, adverbs, nominal

categories, and sentence structure. A short wordlist of Dhao is included in the sketch as well.

With a small grant from Endangered Language Fund (ELF) in 2008[5], I produced more or less eight hours of recordings of folktales and procedural texts in Dhao[6], which are mostly transcribed in ELAN[7] and interlinearized in Toolbox[8] program. Based on this "small" documentation, I argued that Dhao is to be considered an endangered language and therefore needs further documentation and description (Balukh, 2011).

1.5. Aims and Theoretical Framework

As mentioned previously, some literature presented a grammatical overview of Dhao. The grammar of Dhao, however, has not yet been comprehensively discussed at the time this thesis was written. Therefore, this grammar is the first attempt at providing a comprehensive description of grammatical properties of Dhao, which mainly includes its sound system (phonology) and its morphosyntactic characteristics. In terms of phonology, Dhao is unique in that it is one of the very few languages of Eastern Indonesia to have four implosive stop phonemes (see chapter II for details; cf. (Walker, 1982) and (Grimes, 2010). Another significant phonological feature is shown by the vowel change /a/ > /e/ of certain verbs. There is no exact grammatical rule that can be formulated for this change. In fact, it is considered a remnant of Hawu's object agreement (Walker, 1982). In this grammar, this genetic-historical factor is also briefly taken into account whenever it is deemed appropriate to do so. In the case of morphology, the prefix *pa-* apparently does not only characterize causative and reciprocal meaning, but also intensity and other specific meanings. The lack of morphosyntactic marking makes the distinction of word classes vague. More complex phenomena appear in serial verb constructions (SVC) and in valence versus transitivity. These grammatical characteristics have not yet been described comprehensively in previous works of literature. Therefore, this grammar attempts to disclose these unique characteristics of Dhao grammar.

The complexity of Dhao grammar is motivated by the fact that Dhao has been undergoing changes in different manners. Firstly, the majority of its native lexicon is retained still, whereas its phonology and grammar changed over the course of time and followed its neighboring languages due to intense contact. The decrease of implosive quality is an important case in point for its phonological change. Amongst other things, the co-index affixes, instrumental constructions, and

[5] http://www.endangeredlanguagefund.org/

[6] http://elar.soas.ac.uk/deposit/0142

[7] https://tla.mpi.nl/tools/tla-tools/elan/

[8] http://www-01.sil.org/computing/toolbox/downloads.htm

coordinations showcase where its syntactic system has changed due to language contact. This grammar may contribute to the debate on the subgrouping of Central Malayo-Polynesian (CMP) within Austronesian in Eastern Indonesia, as discussed by Donohue and Grimes (2008) and Blust (2008).

Since Ndao Island is geographically isolated and its language is less known amongst speakers of other, languages that are spoken more widely in the same area, language endangerment is inevitable. As mentioned previously, only about 40% of the Ndaonese people still actively speak Dhao. The problem of language transmission in addition to the imbalance of language education makes Dhao all the more of a threatened language. Therefore, this grammar, along with a collection of texts and a word list, may function as response to the deep concern for the language documentation and revitalization of Dhao.

The main aim of writing this grammar is to explain the nature of Dhao the way it is, without employing any formal framework and mathematical procedures (Dixon, 2010a). In this description, graphs, symbols, and notations are used as representation of the analysis in order to explain how the language functions, rather than an application of a specific type of theoretical rules. Basically, the description of Dhao grammar in this thesis follows the ideas of Haspelmath's (2010) in regards to his *framework-free* approach. An identical spirit also is adopted for the description of Dhao phonology (Mielke, 2008). Applying the insights of a descriptive approach, as has been exemplified by Bowern (2008), Chelliah (2011), and Thieberger (2012), I tried to be as neutral as possible with regards to theoretical orientation. Labels or terminologies employed in this grammar are considered as generally known and understood by those who are working on the study of language, or are otherwise introduced at the beginning of the given analysis, or are referred to a particular source. This grammar benefited from the insights and discussions on the descriptive approach found in Aikhenvald (2015), Dixon (2010a; 2010b; 2012), Payne (1997), Shopen (2007), and Velupillai (2012). However, this grammar also adopts insights from construction grammar (Goldberg, 1995, 2003; Croft, 2001). The latter approach was chosen in order to deal with the mismatch between syntax and semantics in the analysis of Dhao clause construction.

1.6. Methodology and Corpus

1.6.1. Fieldwork

This research deals with Dhao as is mainly spoken on Ndao Island. Although the research started in Mid-2012, I have had contact with Ndao Island since mid-2004. My first visit to Ndao Island was in August 2004 to build contacts with local people, and to obtain some preliminary linguistic information concerning the sociolinguistic situations. I also met some people of Ndao and collected some sociolinguistic information in Kupang. Such preliminary information was used to write seminar

papers, which were later published in linguistic journals in Indonesia (Balukh, 2011). The collection of natural language data was conducted in 2008-2009, when I won the small grant of the Bill Bright Awards funded by the Endangered Language Fund (ELF). This project produced about eight hours of recordings, which are mostly transcribed in ELAN software and annotated in Toolbox software. The documented recordings and the annotations are archived in ELAR, London, since 2012[9].

In mid-2013, I visited Ndao Island for two months in order to conduct my PhD research back in August and September, 2013. After collecting some recordings, I brought two native speakers of Dhao to Kupang, and we spent a few weeks on transcriptions and some elicitation, although some recordings were transcribed in the field, too. More transcriptions were done in Kupang due to electricity-related matters on Ndao Island at the time of being. Relying on a generator set for computer laptops did help, but the noise from the machine delimited our work in some cases, especially when having conversations during transcription or elicitation. After two month ofs fieldwork, I started analyzing the phonology of Dhao. My second visit for my PhD fieldwork was from March to July in 2014. During this visit, I recorded more naturalistic data and did more transcriptions. In addition, I collected data using questionnaires made available by the Max Planck Institute[10]. Like the previous field trip, I collected data on Ndao Island. During that time I transcribed some recordings with the help of native speaker field assistants. In the last month of the five-month field trip, three Dhao native speakers worked intensively on more transcriptions and annotations back in Kupang. Furthermore, some preliminary analyses of word categories and phrase structure was done during my stay in the field as well. Some recordings were also done with some native speakers in Kupang. Those speakers temporarily lived in the capital to sell their weaving and smithing products on Timor Island.

During my visit to Ndao Island, I lived with an elementary school teacher, Yan Fiah and his family: his wife Ata Fiah and his two daughters, Fenda and Getri. I did not speak Dhao when I first visited Ndao Island in 2004, although I am originally a Rotenese, and thus a neighbor of Ndao. After elicitation sessions, especially after focusing on common everyday words, I started learning some Dhao. I did not have much contact with Dhao after my first visit in 2004. When I started collecting folktales and procedural texts in 2008 and 2009, I began to become more familiar with the language due to intense contact with native speakers as well as through intense transcription and text writing. By that time, many Ndao people began talking to me in Dhao without checking whether I could speak Dhao or not.

[9] https://elar.soas.ac.uk/Collection/MPI135417

[10] http://fieldmanuals.mpi.nl/

During my stay on Ndao Island, I also attended local meetings, such as church services and village head meetings, as well as traditional ceremonies, such as marriage proposals, wedding ceremonies, funerals, and fundraising. Whenever allowed by the local people or those who were responsible for those ceremonies, I recorded speeches, talks, and conversations that took place during those meetings. These recordings were either audio or video recordings. Some videos have been made available to the community or to the families who held those meetings. All the audio recordings were done using digital audio recorders. I used two brands of audio recorders; a Zoom H2n and a Roland R-05. The videos were recorded using a Sony Camcorder.

1.6.2. Data

The data I used for the analyses in this grammar are based on a corpus obtained through various means. The recordings and texts used as the source material of this grammar are mostly naturalistic data, namely narrative stories, conversations, and speeches. In total, this research made use of more than 18 hours worth of recordings. Some additional data were collected through the use of questionnaires, whether in written form or oral. The latter data were obtained by either elicitation or recordings. As I mentioned previously, the recorded naturalistic data were transcribed and annotated; therefore, the original sources of examples presented in this thesis are indicated by a special notation between square brackets […]. No written sources were used, except for some written data from questionnaires. However, some written sources, such as sentence examples used in the previous works of Walker and Grimes, were also discussed and rechecked with native speakers as references. In addition, some books of the Bible, including the New Testament published by UBB, were also used as a reference for the Dhao writing system Dhao. The sample texts used in this thesis can be found in the attached appendix. The examples in this thesis are extracted from 82 texts in total, including elicited texts and field notes. The lexicon database includes 1,951 headwords, 272 phrases and compounds. Furthermore, the lexicon also includes 688 borrowings from Kupang Malay and Indonesian which were found throughout the recordings, as well as 33 purposive recorded items. Other untranscribed recordings were used as a reference for the cross-checking of the analysis.

1.7. Organization of the Grammar

This grammar has six chapters plus appendices. **Chapter 1** gives an overview of the location where the language is mainly spoken, the population, and the socio-economic situation (§1.1). The information about the Dhao language (§1.2) and its sociolinguistic situation (§1.3) is also presented in this chapter. Previous linguistic or anthropological works were also given in (§1.4). This chapter ends with two main

research issue: s the aims (§1.5) and the methodology of the research (§1.6). **Chapter 2** discusses the sound system of Dhao, touching on its segment inventory (§2.2), syllable structure (§2.3.1) and on stress assignment (§2.3.3). Loan words are also discussed in terms of the syllabic template of Dhao (§2.5). Some sounds and their spelling are highlighted in the orthography section (§2.6). **Chapter 3** is concerned with word classes. The formal properties of word classes and the classification of nominal and verbal categories are presented in (§3.2 and §3.3). The evidence for an adjective class in Dhao is presented in (§3.4). The classification of interrogative words is discussed in (§3.5). Other words that are classified as function words are described in (§3.6). **Chapter 4** concerns the morphological properties found in Dhao, which includes affixes, reduplication, and compounds. The affixes that are co-indexed with NP subjects are discussed in (§4.2) followed by the discussion of the only derivation prefix *pa-* in (§4.3). The meanings of pa- and other constructions types with *pa-* are also presented. The types and the meanings of reduplication are presented in (§4.4) and the compounding system can be found in (§4.5). Finally, the vowel change /a/ > /e/ and its constraints are highlighted in (§4.6). **Chapter 5** deals with the syntactic structure of simple clauses. The predicates of different types are discussed first in (§5.2) followed by the discussion on the syntactic functions of NPs - arguments and peripheries - in (§5.3). The notion of valency and transitivity including the mapping of the two in semantic and syntactic domains is presented in (§5.4). Finally, this chapter presents a discussion on the pragmatic variation of constructions: topic and focus. The grammar closes with the description of clause combining and serial verb constructions (SVC) in **Chapter 6**. This chapter mainly concerns the types of coordination and subordination of clauses (§6.2 and §6.3). The discussion of the SVCs touches on the morphosyntactic characteristics of the SVCs and their semantics in (§6.4). The grammar is supplemented with some glossed natural texts and a wordlist.