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Variation and change in Abui : the impact of Alor Malay on an indigenous language of Indonesia

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Chapter 2

The contact scenario: History and sociolinguistic profile

2.1 Introduction

In order to understand contact-induced variation and change in Abui, it is important to provide a historical discussion on the series of events that led to the current scenario of contact. In addition, having a clear picture of the current sociolinguistic profile is crucial in contextualizing the processes of language change taking place in the community.

This chapter seeks to answer the following questions: How did Malay gain prominence in Alor and more specifically in the Abui territories? What role did schools, governments, and the Church play in the spread of the language? How have these occurrences shaped the current sociolinguistic profile of Takalelang? More specifically, how do people today acquire the language and become socialized in the community? Which sociolinguistic variables are likely to play a role in predicting linguistic variation?

Drawing on historical sources, as well as interviews with school teachers, this chapter familiarizes the reader with the speech community under investigation by discussing key historical events with respect to politics, economics, religion, and education. Specifically, §2.2 presents some key sociopolitical highlights that took place on Alor during a 900-year period, with a focus on the last ∼200 years. Since schooling is a central theme in the pro-

cess of language shift, a separate section is devoted to discussing its history on Alor and the role it played in more detail, combining historical records with interviews with school principals and teachers (see §2.3).

The second part of this chapter discusses the current sociolinguistic structure of Takalelang (§2.4). In particular, §2.4.1 discusses the domains of use of the three varieties, §2.4.2 describes the language socialization process and delves into two key variables responsible for language variation in the community: age and gender. Furthermore, a discussion of language attitudes is provided in §2.4.3, followed by an assessment of the vitality of the Takalelang speech variety of Abui (§2.4.4).

2.2 Historical overview of Alor and the Abui land

Much of the written record pertaining to Alor comes from Dutch colonial sources from the 1850s-1950s. These sources make use of even earlier sources and discuss relations between the people of Alor, the Dutch, and Portuguese as well as between the people of Alor and other ethnic groups found in the Dutch East Indies (the name attributed to Indonesia in colonial times). While also providing useful documentation of place names, local attire, colonial administration, conflicts, and trading commodities, they were also littered with pejoratives about the savagery of the local population. As Wellfelt (2016, p. 11) remarks, "[they are] also an exposé of judgemental assessments, more revealing of ideals in the colonial administration than of the places and peoples described". In addition to these colonial sources, Alor is home to a rich oral history tradition, which has been kept alive and documented, most notably in Wellfelt (2016), Delpada (2016), Kratochvíl, Delpada, and Perono Cacciafoco (2016). These sources are also consulted. A final source includes data gathered from ethnographic interviews on socio-political events in the later half of the 1900s (see §3.3).

Where available, this section provides a historical account containing a variety of themes, which provide a background for the Abui community of Takalelang. These themes include: initial contact between Europeans and the people of Alor, socio-political developments, missionary activity, some highlights in the development of schooling, the sociolinguistic situation at the time, and the history of Takalelang.

2.2.1 1100-1500: Trading routes

The area of eastern Indonesia was at the heart of the hotly coveted spice trade, providing spices, aromatic woods, forest products, and slaves (Martínez & Vickers, 2012). Even before this trade fell into the hands of European colonial powers, the area was home to important trading networks established by major kingdoms such as the Srivijaya, Majapahit, and Gowa (Makassar) as well as smaller informal networks, such as the Sama-Bajau, Binongko, and Solorese (Kratochvíl, Delpada, & Perono Cacciafoco, 2016). It is likely that even as early as the 1100s, the small island of Alor was involved in these large and complex trading routes which stretched all the way to present-day Vietnam, northern India, and possibly China (Klamer, 2011). Today, this is visible in artifacts such as *moko* kettledrums, currently used as bride price payment and first thought to have originated from Vietnam (Higham, 1996; Kratochvíl, 2007).[1] Other artifacts include *falota*, cloths originating from India, and porcelain from China (Kratochvíl, Delpada, & Perono Cacciafoco, 2016). Alor was strategically located just north of Timor, the source of the in-demand sandalwood and was often used as a pit stop to replenish food and water for the trading ships (Baron van Lynden, 1851; Kratochvíl, Delpada, & Perono Cacciafoco, 2016).

The Majapahit empire, for example, had already included the island of Pantar (known as Galiyao in those days) as part of its dependencies in the 1300s (Holton, 2010). The 1300s also coincide with a major migration to Pantar, of an Austronesian group coming from eastern Flores, today known as the Alorese. The sea-faring and expert merchant Alorese people settled on Pantar, then moved to coastal Alor and had frequent trading exploits with the likes of the Makassarese, Buginese, and Solorese, who they also intermarried with and established marriage and trade alliances with (Anonymous, 1914; Gomang, 1993; Klamer, 2011).

By this period, a trade version of the Malay language must have already been used as a *lingua franca* in eastern Indonesia more generally (Paauw, 2008, p. 54) and it is highly likely that foreign trade with Alor was also conducted in Malay. Around 1460, Islam arrived in the Moluccan islands of Tidore and Ternate (both around 1050 km away) (Cribb, 2010). Then, in the

[1] The origin of the *moko* kettledrums is disputed. More recent work has suggested that, while kettledrums originated in South East Asia, *moko* drums in particular were manufactured in Java for export to the Solor-Alor region (Calò, 2009; Emilie Wellfelt p.c.).

late 1500s, oral traditions suggest that Ternate and Tidore sent four Islamic missionaries to Alor and Pantar (Gomang, 1993, p. 98).

2.2.2 1500-1900: Imports, exports, and colonial tug of war

The years 1500 to 1900 marked the beginning of colonial contact between the inhabitants of Alor, European navigators, and later colonialists. While some new trading opportunities were presented to all parties involved, contact was rather minimal. Yet, it was enough to cause some tension between the two colonial powers, the Dutch and the Portuguese, who later caused a split of allegiances on the island. It was in this period that the Dutch finally established control on the island, albeit minimally, and laid the foundations for heightened involvement in the 1900s.

The first contact Europeans had with Alor was when the famous Spanish armada, the Armada De Moluccas, docked on Alorese shores in January 1522. Under the command of Ferdinand Magellan and later Juan Sebastian del Cano, the Armada de Moluccas was the first expedition to complete the circumnavigation of the globe (Le Roux, 1929). While Ferdinand Magellan had already been killed by the time the fleet arrived on Alor, a Venetian nobleman, Antonio Pigafetta, jotted down some initial encounters with the inhabitants of Alor, which resulted in a publication of his memoirs in 1525. The fleet arrived on Alor, or on 'Mallua', as he referred to it, after sailing South through turbulent waters from the island of Buru in Maluku. After spending fifteen days on the island, Pigafetta mostly made rather derogatory remarks about the local population. He also provided a brief description of the attire of the people, noting down buffalo hide shields, boars' tusks, and loin cloths made from tree bark. Finally, he described some brief and friendly trading encounters with the people, mentioning wax and pepper as two prominent commodities (Pigafetta, 1525/2010).

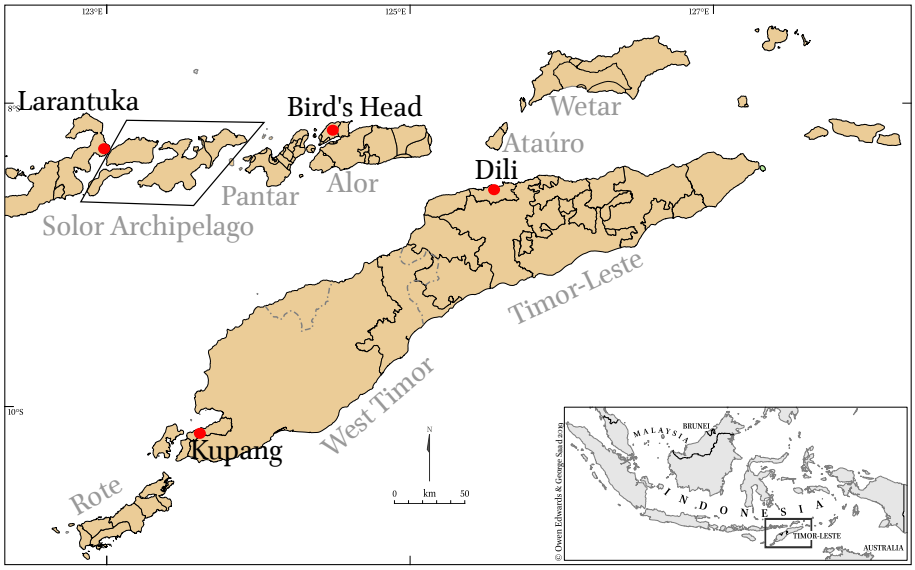
The arrival of the Dutch and Portuguese colonial powers in the 1500-1600s brought new trading opportunities and must have also encouraged the use of Malay - given that Malay was the language of trade. In the mid 1550s, the Portuguese were already established in Larantuka (eastern Flores) and Dili (eastern Timor), and may have begun missionary activity on Alor (Klamer, 2010); see Figure 2.1. A century later, in 1630, a Dominican Catholic missionary from Portugal was posted on Alor and Pantar more permanently (Aritonang & Steenbrink, 2008, p. 83). On the other hand, Dutch

colonial officers briefly encountered the Alor Archipelago in 1613 but only engaged in more serious trading relationships in the 1670s after they had established a base in Kupang, West Timor. Even then, trading possibilities were rather limited, with the Dutch trading iron for beeswax and slaves with some local *rajas* (Hägerdal, 2010; Baron van Lynden, 1851).[2] Meanwhile, the Portuguese sold iron pieces, cutlasses, and axes to mountain folk.[3] Moreover, the people of Alor continued trading with other groups in the East Indies. For example, they bought gongs and *moko* 'bronze kettledrums' from merchants from Sulawesi (Hägerdal, 2010). In addition, it was in the mid-1600s where, due to a Dutch blockade of the seas of Makassar, that many Makassarese settled in the Bird's Head. There, they allied with the Portuguese and intermarried with the Alorese. This also saw the rise in prominence of the port of Alor Kecil. Trade and Islam were two key uniting forces in the alliances formed between the Makassarese and Alorese; however, alliances with the Portuguese and Dutch respectively also made matters complex (Gomang, 1993, p. 97).

[2]Slaves in general had been a major export until the end of the 1700s (Baron van Lynden, 1851).

[3]Today, there are number of Portuguese loans in Abui, for example, potentially representing this trade, such as *sapada* (Ab.) '(type of) machete' > *espada* (Pt.) 'sword' and *kadera* (Ab.) 'wooden bench' > *cadeira* (Pt.) 'chair'. Portuguese was commonly spoken in Larantuka and Dili; therefore, to this day, the lexicons of both Larantuka Malay (Paauw, 2008, p. 67) and Tetun Dili (Hajek, 2006) have been significantly influenced by Portuguese. It is unclear whether these loans entered directly from Portuguese. It is more likely that they entered through an intermediate language.

Figure 2.1: Map of Alor and surrounding islands



New trading opportunities and alliances brought about a series of internal conflicts and polarization on the island: the Portuguese had allies in the southern and eastern part of Alor, while the Dutch gathered support from the Bird's head, the central and western parts of Alor, as well as Pantar and the Solor Archipelago (see Figure 2.1) (Wellfelt, 2016, p. 197). As internal conflicts on Alor arose, various *rajas* began asking their neighbours in western and eastern Timor, respectively, for help. This thus heightened tensions between the colonial powers, prompting them to gather around the negotiation table and settle the territories (Nieuwenkamp, 1922; Hägerdal, 2010).[4]

In the mid-1800s, with Dutch interest in Alor growing amid the surge of Portuguese involvement, the Dutch *resident* from Timor, Baron van Lynden, was sent on a long visit to Alor. He described a lively domestic trading culture, with highland folk trading their rice, corn, betel vine, and betel nut with coastal folk in return for iron, brass wire, and beads (Baron van Lynden, 1851, p. 333). In addition, he reported that the coastal Muslim people

[4]In a meeting in 1851, the Dutch offered the Portuguese a sum of money plus the island of Ataúru (Pulau Kambing) to reclaim the areas of eastern Flores, Solor Archipelago, Pantar, and Alor (see Figure 2.1). The only victors of the deal were the Dutch. The Portuguese government criticized the deal (Wellfelt, 2016), while local rulers were not pleased either (Hägerdal, 2010; Klamer, 2011).

of Alor[5] spoke some Malay and traded with the Butonese (Binongko), Buginese, Makassarese, and people from Kupang.[6] Dutch sovereign status over Alor was established in 1860, but the Dutch showed marginal interest in dissolving local conflict, instead allowing *rajas* to grapple with power, so long as the Portuguese were kept at bay in eastern Timor (Hägerdal, 2010).

While Malay was certainly in use by coastal people of Alor trading with the Butonese, Buginese, Timorese, and Makassarese, another probable development in the spread of Malay was the arrival of the Chinese. By the year 1851, Chinese merchants had already set up settlements on both Alor and Pantar (Baron van Lynden, 1851, p. 332). This implies that they had been actively establishing contact and trading in the years preceding that. Du Bois (1944) reports that it was only by the end of the 1800s that the Chinese began trading on the coast; however, she might have been unaware of the fact that they had established settlements on Alor half a century before that. In the late 1930s, Nicolspeyer (1940) suggests that there were around 190 Chinese people trading copra (dried coconut kernels) in Kalabahi.[7] These traders probably initially spoke a variety of eastern trade Malay, possibly similar to Kupang Malay or Ambon Malay (Baird et al., in prep.).

2.2.3 1900-1940: Alor as part of the colony

The first half of the 1900s played a crucial role in the formation of modern-day Alor. Most notably, it was in this period when Dutch colonial officers began seriously asserting their rule on the island and engaging with internal affairs.[8] This shift of power would have important implications for the acceleration of the Malay language on the island. While previously, Malay was

[5]Today, in the capital town of Kalabahi as well as in coastal parts of the Bird's Head„ there are numerous descendants of these ethnic groups, who take pride in their ancestors' trading exploits.

[6]*De strandbewoners spreken eenig maleisch* [...] *De buitenlandsche handel wordt voornamelijk gedreven door praawen van Boeten, Boegis, Makassar, en een paar van Kupang*. 'The coastal folk speak some Malay [...] Foreign trade is conducted with proas [type of Austronesian sailing boat] from Buton, Bugis, Makassar, and a few from Kupang.' (Baron van Lynden, 1851, pp. 332-333).

[7]This is also in line with oral reports today, which point to the presence of five generations of people of Chinese descent in Alor (Marlon Adang p.c.).

[8]Much of the historical records from the first part of 1900s come from the memoirs of the Dutch *controleur*, G.A.M. van Gaalen (van Gaalen, 1945), which were translated into English by Hägerdal (2010, 2011).

spoken by a few coastal (Muslim) merchants (Baron van Lynden, 1851) and was thus limited to the domain of commerce, the 1900s would see a rise in the prominence of Malay as the language of colonial power, education, religion, and 'modernity'. At the same time, this shift of power also resulted in a number of bloody wars between the Abui and the Dutch, before tensions quieted down.

In order for the colonial administrators to expand their sphere of influence, it was important that the local *rajas* would be able to communicate with the Dutch in the *lingua franca* of the Indies, Malay. The year of 1906 marked the beginning of the Dutch Protestant mission, led by the *Indische Kerk* 'Church of the Indies', the most prevalent missionary organization in many parts of eastern Indonesia (Cribb, 2010 cited in Hägerdal, 2011). The Dutch propagated the use of Malay as a language of communication throughout the colony, as well as the language of Protestantism and schooling. The year 1906 was also the year that the first two schools on the island were opened (Klamer, 2011; Wellfelt, 2016). From then on, education, the Malay language, allegiance to the Dutch, and Protestantism would become closely intertwined (more extensive information on the history of schooling is provided in §2.3).

In the early 1900s, the Dutch began exercising their control more visibly as they began appointing Dutch *posthouders* 'postholders' across the Alor archipelago (Hägerdal, 2010). This allowed them to collect taxes, mostly in the form of unpaid labour, which they used to build the port town of Kalabahi and several pathways emanating from it in 1906 (Nieuwenkamp, 1922). In 1910, under the command of Governor-General van Heutz, the Dutch started a military, as well as an educational campaign by appointing *rajas* themselves. They would then send these *rajas* to school to learn Malay and also convert to Protestantism. By doing so, they tore up the island into *rajadoms* and then recruited their services to impose Dutch rule (Klamer, 2011; Wellfelt, 2016).

However, this was not always a smooth process and sometimes also resulted in a series of conflicts with local *rajas* who refused to observe Dutch rule and pay taxes. An early example of this can be found with their dismantling of the *rajadom* of Mataru. The *rajadom* of Mataru[9] was located in

[9]In coastal areas as well as Kalabahi, Mataru has the reputation of having been home to the first *rajadom* in Alor (Wellfelt, 2016, pp. 297-8).

the southern coast of Alor and was thus considered a strategic location. The *raja* at the time spoke the Boi language,[10] but could not speak Malay - this lead to many misunderstandings.

The Dutch wanted to replace the *raja* with an Abui man who spoke Malay so they sent an Abui man for schooling instead and then tried to get him to take over the throne. The *raja* was outraged and this led to a disastrous series of conflicts between the *raja*, the Dutch, and neighbouring *rajadoms*. Eventually, in 1916, the Dutch colonial government decided to strip Mataru of its *rajadom* and subsequently offered it to the *raja* of Kui, an action that would create a split between the northern territories of Welai and Lembur on the one hand, and Mataru on the other (Wellfelt, 2016).[11] This story is one of many where language (i.e. Malay) combined with Dutch politics to play a crucial in the power struggles and the colonization process (Wellfelt, 2016, p. 298).

Another key encounter between the Abui and the Dutch colonial forces is the revolt in 1918 against the demands of the coastal Alorese *raja*, who was acting on behalf of the Dutch in demanding taxes. This uprising was orchestrated by the self-proclaimed female Abui sultan, Malielehi. Malielehi was seen as a *Nala Kaang* 'Good Being' , a human who had emerged from the Earth with special, magical powers (Du Bois, 1944; Wellfelt, 2011, 2016; Delpada, 2016). She had become fed up with the demand for taxes so she led an ambush to assassinate the Alorese *raja* in the village of Fuung Waati (Wellfelt, 2011). Dutch troops retaliated, arresting and deporting her, while also burning 300 Abui men in a cave before restoring power (Wellfelt, 2011; Delpada, 2016). This also had consequences for resettlement. In 1918, the colonial government forced villagers from the five-village Atengmelang complex to move down from the ridges to the floor of an enclosed valley (Du Bois, 1944, p. 17).

[10] According to Emilie Wellfelt (p.c.), 'The Boi-speakers are a small community, a few families, that according to their origin story migrated from Timor, from 'Likusa-Maubara' in a *perahu* 'proa [type of Austronesian sailing boat]' called Lete-Lete, and settled in the village Padailak, centre of the *rajadom* Mataru. Their ancestor married the daughter of Tolanbán, the *raja tanah* 'land king'. The descendants of this union are the *raja* clan *Paneg Araman* of Mataru, and they speak the *bahasa pantai* 'coastal language', Boi.'

[11] Today, Abui is spoken in Mataru. However, the lexicons and phonologies of (southern) Mataru varieties of Abui on the one hand and the Northern varieties of Abui such as Petleng, Mola (Welai area) and Takalelang (Lembur area) on the other show some significant differences (see Saad, 2019a, 2019b, 2019c).

During the 1930-40s, according to Cora Du Bois, four *rajaships* were in place: Alor Proper (including Pura and Pantar), Kui, Batulolong, and Kolana, all of which cut through linguistic and cultural borders. Under each *raja* was a *kapitan* (cf. Dutch *kapitein*, Portuguese *capitão*). A *kapitan* administered a smaller district and assisted the *raja* in collecting taxes and hearing litigations. Under a *kapitan*, was a local leader of village clusters named a *tumukun* (a term borrowed from Javanese). Finally, each village was run by a *kepala* 'head' (Du Bois, 1944, p. 16).[12]

2.2.4 1940-1965: Abui wars, independence, and relocation

The years between 1940 and 1965 represented a period of turmoil in the history of the Abui land, and in particular Takalelang.[13] During this period, the Abui experienced the stability of being governed by three different regimes: the Japanese, the Dutch, and the newly formed Indonesian state. In addition, the people of Takalelang had experienced two major fires: one due to internal warfare and another as a result of a kitchen disaster. Another major change taking place in the community was the growing prominence of the Protestant Church as well as schooling. All of these events instigated the relocation of many villages from mountains to coast and, as a result, play a key role in the rise of Malay in the Takalelang community.

The 1940s was generally a period of heavy warfare on Alor. One of the most notable wars was the infamous war between Takalelang and the neighbouring village of Atengmelang. Warriors from Atengmelang sacked Takalelang by setting it on fire. It is unclear exactly what the motive was, with many different versions of events being circulated (Wellfelt, 2016). After a number of houses were rebuilt, in 1954, a decade later, another major fire burned the village of Takalelang. The fire was allegedly caused by a kitchen fire, whereby coconut oil and kerosene were confused for one another. It was also much larger than the one caused by the war, and as a result many lost their lives. After this, the government provided some *bantuan rehab* 'rehabilitation relief'; however, most relief came from neighbouring villages in the form of corn and rice. People camped in the woods, sleeping under trees and also using branches to hang their food [EG.65M.SH].[14] After that, several

[12] All of these terms are Malay terms.

[13] At the time, Takalelang was still located in the mountaintops.

[14] The code [EG.65M.SH] refers to recording of an ETHNOGRAPHIC interview by a 65-year-

huts were rebuilt and people continued living there until the mid-sixties.

The Japanese occupied Alor from 1942-1945, resulting in a period of revolts from local rulers (Hägerdal, 2010; Klamer, 2011). The period of Japanese rule was a time of suffering for a lot of inhabitants of Alor, with tales of starvation, beatings, and rape all being reported (Wellfelt, 2016).[15] After a few minor raids and assassinations, the Japanese lost WWII and left Alor in 1945. Shortly after, the Dutch briefly re-assumed power by sending the Dutch *controleur*, van Gaalen, and several other officials (Wellfelt, 2016).[16] Van Gaalen wrote about a number of topics in his *memorie* 'memorandum', including the sociolinguistic setting of Alor after WWII (van Gaalen, 1945; Hägerdal, 2010, 2011). He stressed the importance of local leaders knowing Malay, since there were as many as 13 languages on the island plus dialects (Hägerdal, 2011, p. 62). He also remarked that the people of the Bird's Head peninsula were mostly able to speak Malay as a result of the presence of a large number of schools and access to the port capital of Kalabahi (Hägerdal, 2011). He contrasted them to the Abui folk of the Welai and Lembur regions of central Alor, who he claimed had less contact with outsiders, spoke much less Malay, and often wore warrior attire. As Wellfelt (2016, p. 10) remarks, van Gaalen's comparison between the people of the Bird's Head who wore Malay sarongs and spoke Malay and the inland people who wore local attire is an early indication of a language ideology that was injected by Dutch colonial forces and has remained ever since: speaking Malay is a sign of intelligence, while speaking the local languages is a sign of being primitive, a sign of being *bodok*[17] 'stupid, ignorant'.

The year 1947 was a pivotal year in terms of schooling and religion. The *Gereja Masehi Injili di Timor* (GMIT) was formed (Wellfelt, 2016). This was an

old male discussing school history. For more info on these interviews, see §3.3.2. Original excerpt: *Jadi sesudah kampung terbakar baru nanti ada pembantuan sedikit dari pemerintah ada bantuan dari tetanggah, dari kampung lain, jagung, padi, datang kasi keluarga-keluarga tapi tidak ada rumah ketemu taru di mana, jadi gantung-gantung di pohon-pohon. Kemudian tidur-tidur di bawa pohon. baru nanti ada bikin pondok, bikin apa. Kasihan waktu itu.*

[15] Recording CV.QU (see Chapter 3, §3.6) contains a fragment whereby an 85-year-old Abui monolingual lady sings a song taught to her by the Japanese authorities.

[16] Other accounts suggest van Gaalen was already on Alor when the Japanese arrived and that he sought refuge in the village of Otvai in the Bird's Head peninsula (Marlon Adang p.c.).

[17] Abui speakers of Alor Malay have reanalyzed the Malay word *bodoh* as containing a final /k/.

autonomous unit within the Dutch led *Indische kerk* 'Church of the Indies'. That same year, the GMIT erected the first school in Takalelang, *Sakolah Rakyat Gereja Masehi Injili di Timor Takalelang*. Two years later, they closed the school down and then moved it from the mountain tops to the northern coast, where it is found today.

In 1949, when Indonesia gained independence, the Indonesian state stopped funding church organizations. At this point, while there were at least ten Protestant churches active in Alor, one of the most prominent, besides the GMIT was the KINGMI (*Kemah Injil Gereja Masehi di Indonesia* 'Tabernacle Gospel Christian Church') (Wellfelt, 2016, p. 223). During this period, the prominence of the church was growing. The increase in missionarization was also coupled with a disdain towards local traditions. Dancing *lego-lego* was forbidden in some areas as it was associated with inter-village warfare and many cultural artifacts were burned and destroyed (Wellfelt, 2016, p. 224). This also coincides with a modern day myth about how *Lamoling*, the original being of worship became malevolent, was then replaced by a representation of the Christian (and Islamic) 'god of light', *Lahatala* (Perono Cacciafoco et al., 2015; Kratochvíl, Delpada, & Perono Cacciafoco, 2016).

2.2.5 1965-1985: Shift of location, religion, and language

The mid-1960s presents a milestone in the language shift scenario to Malay. Between 1965 and 1966, the Protestant Church relocated from the hilltops in Takalelang to the northern coast, close to the GMIT school in Takalelang. That the school and now church were already there and the incidence of fires from the 40s and 50s encouraged many families to relocate to the northern coast as well.[18] In particular, families from six mountain settlements, tied together by an alliance known as *Meelang Talaama* 'Six villages' relocated to the northern coast where the hamlet of Takpala was and still is located. They formed a new settlement which they named after older ancestral village, Takalelang (Kratochvíl, Delpada, & Perono Cacciafoco, 2016).[19]

[18] This process of relocation of mountain villages to more flat territories was initiated by the Dutch, at least in the time of Du Bois (Du Bois, 1944, p. 17). However, it was only in the 1960s and the years following that this move gained more momentum.

[19] *Meelang Talaama* is an alliance formed by six smaller settlements located in the inland, namely *Kaleen, Murafang, Mahafuui, Lilafang, Fuungafeng,* and *Takalelang* and part of a larger confederation known as Lembur (Kratochvíl, Delpada, & Perono Cacciafoco,

In addition to these factors, the government also played a crucial role in the resettlement to the coast, namely through two initiatives: *Desa gaya baru* 'New style village' and *Tim turun ke bawah* 'Move down team'. The goal of these initiatives was to encourage, sometimes even force, small mountain hamlets, to move down to the coast and form larger hamlets. This would allow governments to impose more homogeneity on and control over these newly formed villages, in exchange for access to healthcare, schools, and religious institutions (Wellfelt, 2016, pp. 120-121).

One motive that encouraged families to obey the government's call for resettlement was a fear of being branded a communist. The communist party PKI came under intense scrutiny in the mid-1960s and it was commonplace for people - and sometimes entire villages - to be branded communists, imprisoned, and then assassinated - sometimes without even having any involvement with the party. The government feared a growing following in the mountains and wanted people to resettle to the coast (Wellfelt, 2016, pp. 120-121).

In 1979, Takalelang changed allegiance from the GMIT to the Catholic Church. Often, as was the case here, this was due to conflict between a village member and someone affiliated with the GMIT Church (Wellfelt, 2016). At this point, as a result of missionary pressure and political events in Indonesia almost everyone in the Abui speaking area had adopted a world religion (Wellfelt, 2016).[20] In 1980, a new primary school opened: *Sekolah Dasar Instruksi Presiden Mabu* (often abbreviated to SD Inpres Mabu). This was done supposedly to have an alternative to the Protestant school, GMIT Takalelang, for the growing number of Catholics (see §2.3.1).

In 1984, two government officials from Jakarta visited Takpala, the top part of the larger Takalelang village which houses several bamboo Abui houses. Their intention was to establish a site where tourists could come and observe 'local customs'. Shortly after, the regent of Alor (*bupati*), and several other high government officials held an inauguration feast, where the two sacred houses, which had been forbidden were raised again. Young people who had been forbidden from learning the *lego-lego* and *cakalele* dances,

2016). See §1.4.2 for map and more information.

[20] As Wellfelt (2016, p. 225) writes, "In conjunction with the political turmoil in 1965, when the government banned the Communist Party and then 'strongly urged that all Indonesian citizens apply for membership of one of the five recognized religions', many religious organizations recorded a distinct increase in members".

were now learning the dances to perform for tourists (Wellfelt, 2016).

2.2.6 Summary of historical events in the spread of Malay

Because Alor was in the orbit of the spice and sandalwood trade, middlemen from major kingdoms such as Srivijaya, Majapahit, and Gowa occasionally docked on the island (Barnes, 1982; de Roever, 2002; Kratochvíl, Delpada, & Perono Cacciafoco, 2016; Wellfelt, 2016). This is quite possibly the first time the coastal people of Alor came into contact with Malay. In addition, coastal people, such as the Muslims from Pandai, Blagar, Bamusang, Alor Kecil and Alor Besar probably already knew some Malay, as they had been trading with other groups from Sulawesi, such as the Bugis and the Makassarese, with whom they also set up marriage alliances (Gomang, 1993). When the resident of Timor, Baron Van Lynden, wrote a report on Alor in the early 1850s, Malay was already being used as a trading language and *lingua franca* among Alorese coastal groups and traders from Solor, Buton, Makassar, Bugis, Kupang (Baron van Lynden, 1851, pp. 323-324). In addition, Malay was also the language associated with Islam, so it is likely at least some elite religious figures would have also had command of the language (van Engelenhoven p.c.). All of this points to some Malay having been spoken on coastal, Muslim areas by figures of high status with other groups even before the Chinese had settled by the mid 1800s.

In addition to being used as the language of Islam, Malay became the vehicle for the spread of Christianity under the Portuguese and Dutch (Paauw, 2008, p. 54). However, it wasn't until the early 1900s, when the Dutch began establishing more control in Alor, that Malay rose in prestige and began being used as a political force.

The Dutch *posthouders* 'postholders' and *controleurs* 'controlers, district officers' mostly came from Kupang, so it was likely that they were speaking Kupang Malay. This period coincided with the rise in prominence of the Bird's Head region, including the Muslim coastal population, and possibly some Adang speakers, who began adopting Malay-style attire and helped construct the first Protestant schools. Up until the 1940s, Malay was spoken mainly in coastal areas along the Bird's Head and it is possible that this initial variety of Alor Malay was the result of koineization of the Malay spoken by several ethnolinguistic groups. First, there were the groups of foreign traders who settled on the island. This included Muslim settlers, such as the

Butonese, the Bugis, and the Makassarese who had trade relations with the coastal Alorese as well as Chinese merchants who settled in Kalabahi (Baron van Lynden, 1851; Hägerdal, 2010, 2011; Baird et al., in prep.). Trade and Islam would have been the main domains of use. Although these might have been the earliest groups to bring Malay to the island, it is unclear how much influence groups of immigrant traders would have had in the spread of the language.

Second, and more dominantly, there were Dutch colonial administrators, Protestant missionaries, their assistants (who usually came from Rote), and school teachers, who themselves might have used both classical Malay (as found in the Bibles and school books in Ambon), and colloquial Kupang Malay and/or Ambon Malay. Third, there were the *rajas* of Alor and their families, whose Malay must have been influenced by their local languages, mostly notably Alorese, but possibly also Wersing (Kolana), Abui (Mataru, Kui, Batulolong). In addition, it is also possible that a number of coastal Adang and Kabola speakers also spoke Malay as they too had more frequent ties to the Dutch than other groups.

By this point, apart from some councils with the *rajas* 'local leaders' and *tumukuns* 'local leaders of village clusters', mountainous populations such as the Abui, had very little contact with Malay, although a number of schools were beginning to emerge in the highlands and some family members of wealthy Abui families were being sent to the Bird's Head to learn Malay there.

Up until the 1960s, Malay Indonesian was not very widespread in the Abui territory. However, in 1965, after families founded the new village of Takalelang on the northern coast there was a steady increase in school attendance. The value of attending school, which meant learning Malay Indonesian and becoming integrated into the Indonesian state, was also rising. Both government officials and school teachers would play a key role in promoting the use of Malay Indonesian, often at the expense of Abui. The Protestant and Catholic Churches also played a role in this, both in their affiliation with schools and because the Bible and psalm books were translated in Malay Indonesian (Wellfelt p.c.). Finally, what all of this suggests is that Abui has been in contact with Malay for a period of 50-60 years.

2.3 The impact of schooling on language shift

Section 2.3.1 discusses the incipient phases of schooling on Alor up until 1965, while inevitably mentioning the crucial role that the Protestant Church played in this.[21] Section 2.3.2 discusses the strong impact of resettling as well as government and teacher policies from 1965 until the present, drawing from historical sources as well as ethnographic interviews with actors involved in this process.

2.3.1 1901-1965: Early history of schooling on Alor

The Protestant mission on Alor began in 1901, with the arrival of the Protestant Reverend, J.F. Niks, and the baptism of the first inhabitant of Alor (Aritonang & Steenbrink, 2008). The mission was run by the Dutch *Indische Kerk* 'Church of the Indies', which, as mentioned in the previous section, led the Protestant mission in many parts of eastern Indonesia (Cribb, 2010). In 1906, the *Indische Kerk* opened the first school on Alor, a three-year *Volkschool* (*Sekolah Rakyat*) 'compulsory school', in the Bird's Head territory of Alor Kecil (Klamer, 2011; Wellfelt, 2016). Shortly afterwards, the Dutch opened another school in the nearby village of Dulolong as well (Klamer, 2011). This marked the beginning of a blend of power, religion, and education.

Just like other parts of Indonesia, "the elite were encouraged to read and write and to partake in colonial administrations" (Wellfelt, 2016, p. 107). Unlike other parts of Indonesia, where the government played a role in schooling, schooling in this period was entirely in the hands of the *Indische Kerk* - though the Church was paid by the colonial state. While the Dutch were unable to spread Christianity in an already Muslim western Indonesia, they saw the potential to combine education with the spread of Christianity in eastern Indonesia (Aritonang & Steenbrink, 2008, p. 240). The Malay language was the medium used to tie these elements together.

In the years that followed, a number of other schools began cropping up in the coastal region of the Bird's Head, home to the Muslim Alorese people. Alorese villages became the springboard from which Protestant schools would emerge, due to the close ties the Dutch had with the Muslim

[21] Since the focus of this thesis is on the Abui people, only Protestant and Catholic schools are discussed in this section. As such, Muslim schools are not mentioned.

Alorese people, as well as the availability of labour (Wellfelt, 2016). Soon after, schools would also make their way into the central and eastern Alor interior but with limited initial success.

For example, in Atengmelang, a school was in place between 1925 and 1931 but soon had to be shut down due to the hostility shown to the teachers (Du Bois, 1944, p. 17). These *Indische Kerk*-run schools typically consisted of one Dutch missionary and other educated missionary teachers from other parts of Indonesia (Aritonang & Steenbrink, 2008). As a result, the instructors could not speak Abui and only about 20 boys spoke Malay; therefore, their influence was minimal (Du Bois, 1944, p. 17).

In 1937, school attendance was still quite low. There were 32 schools, with only 2089 schoolchildren attending (a census from the 1930's reports around 90,000 inhabitants on Alor (Hägerdal, 2010)). In 1947, this number would increase to 37 schools, with 5326 attending. Another notable increase was the percentage of girls attending from 21% in 1937 to 28% in 1947 (Hägerdal, 2011, p. 62).[22]

In spite of this, it was clear that Malay was growing in prestige. Schoolchildren who knew Malay often held a power position of serving as interpreters for government officials and the rest of the Abui population (Du Bois, 1944, p. 223).[23]

It is unclear exactly what type of Malay was taught at these schools, but if it followed the same pattern as the Moluccas, this might have been a mix of classical high Malay of the Bible[24] and low Malay (Aritonang & Steenbrink, 2008, pp. 391-392), possibly already used in Kalabahi by the Chinese community, Dutch colonial officers, and Alorese merchants.

At this point, Protestantism was also making steady ground among the non-Muslim population. In the 1920s, as part of the conversion process, the Protestant mission slowly began dismantling local beliefs, calling

[22] Sources differ in terms of the numbers. Aritonang and Steenbrink (2008, p. 306) suggests there were 30 schools in 1939, while Du Bois (1944, p. 17) suggests there were 25 schools scattered through the high country, without giving a precise date.

[23] It is clear from some of the autobiographies in Du Bois (1944) that schooling was not only limited to children as such. For example, Du Bois's interpreter, Fantan, says that he went to school in Atengmelang for two-and-a-half years at the age of around sixteen (p.354).

[24] Classical high Malay was based on a Christian variety of Malay that had emerged in the 1600s and then readjusted for the Klinkert translation in the 1900s (Aritonang & Steenbrink, 2008, pp. 460,826).

upon people to abandon some of their material culture, by burning wood carvings, for example (Wellfelt, 2016, p. 213). By 1939, it was reported that 66,850 had been baptized - nearly the entire non-Muslim population of Alor. Typically, *rajas* (or their children) were encouraged to go to school to learn Malay so that they could be involved in colonial administration as well as enabling them to get baptized and convert to Protestantism. This would then send a signal to the people in the *rajadom* to surrender their idols and direct their prayers to the Christian God (Wellfelt, 2016, p. 167).

By documenting people's dreams and visions, Du Bois (1944) shows how, despite initial minimal missionary involvement and school attendance in some parts of the highlands, missionary teachings as well as a rise in prestige of Malay were creeping into the consciousness of the Abui people and becoming intertwined with Abui ideologies. This is evident in some of the prophecies and dreams of two key Abui figures, which make it clear that they began internalizing, popularizing, and advocating messages 'which the native missionary talked [about]' (Wellfelt, 2016, p. 214) such as abandon your guardian spirit, Malay is the language of communication with enlightened beings, and that honest people went to heaven and sat in chairs (Du Bois, 1944, p. 401).

In 1946, the GMIT opened the first school[25] in the Takalelang region in the hilltops, close to where most people from the six village alliance were living. In 1947, it moved down to Latufui, and then in 1948 moved down away from all the villages to the northern coastal area where it is currently located (the school is referred to as SD GMIT Takalelang but is technically located in the hamlet of Belubul). It was hoped that the move to the coast would encourage families to move down as well. For 20 years, there was little permanent migration, with the area along the northern coast around SD Takalelang mostly consisting of gardens and fields [SL.68M.SH].

Instead, schoolchildren who were encouraged to go to school (there were not many at the time), had to hike up and down the hilltops and valleys for hours each day to arrive to school [SL.68M.SH]. The only resting point available in the vicinity was the hilltop known as Takpala which at the time consisted of one or two houses. They were forced to cover up their lower bodies and this meant wearing loincloths and sharing the scant clothing

[25] In the early years, it was a Sunday school, and began as a *volkschool* (*sekolah rakyat*) 'public compulsory school'.

handed out by the *raja*.[26] For food, they often brought with them a corncob or two in their baskets, which was meant to last them the entire trip. In short, conditions were miserable for many children and thus they had little incentive to attend [SL.68M.SH].

2.3.2 The role of *SD* 'Primary schools'

One of the biggest factors in causing the shift from Abui to Malay Indonesian was the role that primary schools played in this process, especially in the late 1960s up until the 1990s. The two primary schools crucial to this process for the village of Takalelang were SD GMIT Takalelang (erected in 1946) and SD Inpres Mabu (erected in 1980).[27]

By the mid to late 1960s, many families from the *Meelang Talaama* 'Six village alliance' had moved down to the new settlement of Takalelang, putting them within walking distance to SD Takalelang.

As more and more children were beginning to flock the school, the teachers soon realized that many of them could barely understand Malay Indonesian and were performing badly at school. From then on, the teachers initiated a campaign to ensure that schoolchildren could cope with the language barrier and began imposing a ban on the use of Abui. Already in 1967, when the principal of SD Takakelang in 2017, himself went to the school as a six-year-old, it was forbidden to speak Abui. There were signs with the writing *dilarang berbahasa daerah* 'it is forbidden to speak the local language (i.e. Abui)'. In those days, it was typically accepted for first and second graders to speak Abui because they knew virtually no Malay Indonesian when they entered school. The teachers spoke to them in Abui and tried to ease them into learning Malay Indonesian. In grades three to six, teachers would become increasingly stricter with banning Abui. They often beat children and yelled at them, telling them they were *bodok* 'stupid, ignorant' for not speaking Malay Indonesian.[28]

[26] The Abui no longer recognize any *rajas*, but descendants of previous Abui *rajas* still claim to enjoy a privileged position (Simon Lanma p.c.).

[27] *Sekolah Dasar* (*SD*) 'primary school' typically lasts six years, before schoolchildren move on to junior secondary school (SMP), for three years and senior secondary school (SMA), for three final years.

[28] The information presented in the following paragraphs comes from interviews with the principal of SD Takalelang, as well as with teachers at SD Mabu who were vital in the

However, in the early years, some parents objected to this treatment. They marched to school and confronted the teachers angrily for beating their children. These protests were to no avail. Teachers insisted on the importance of speaking Malay Indonesian so that the schoolchildren would succeed at school, be able to sell goods at the market, travel around the country, and still be able to communicate with people from different ethnic groups [EG.65M.SH].

The 1970s saw an increased movement from the emerging Indonesian state to standardize the Indonesian language and impose policies advocating the use of Indonesian, specifically 'good and correct Indonesian' (*Bahasa Indonesia yang baik dan benar*). As part of this, the state established the *Pusat Pembinaan dan Pengembangan* 'Center for Language Development and Cultivation' in 1975 (Heryanto, 1995).

Another factor which prompted action by teachers was the fact that at least since the early 1970s, NTT has scored lowest among Indonesian provinces in most indicators of education (Royono & Rahwidiati, 2013). The proportion of the workforce in NTT with secondary education was significantly less than in Indonesia as a whole (M. A. Jones, 1988).[29]

In the 1970s, children who went to school were continuously scolded and beaten for speaking Abui. When these kids graduated, became adults, and began having kids of their own, they wanted to ensure that their kids would not suffer the same treatment as them. Therefore, in the 1980s, parenting strategies began adapting to the new regulations in place at school. Children born in the 1980s, especially the mid- and late-80s were being increasingly raised in Alor Malay.[30]

Considering that the 1980s was the decade of transitioning from raising children in Abui to Alor Malay, there was still some variation in terms of which language was being used to raise children. Some common trends

movement to ban Abui from school and encourage the use of Indonesian.

[29] There have been improvements in the indicators of education in NTT since the early 1970s. The illiteracy rate for people aged 10+ decreased from 42% in 1971 to 35% in 1980 and to 19% in 1995. The proportion of the population aged 15+ that had completed junior secondary education in 1980 was 9.2%. By 1995, this figure almost double to 20.4% (M. A. Jones, 1988).

[30] (*Di tahun 80an*) *itu sudah Bahasa Indonesia. Yang tamat itu kan, suda pigi, tida lanjut pendidikan, pasti kawin. Kawin, mulai melahirkan anak, dia mulai latih ajar bahasa indonesia... Di tahun 80an itu sudah mulai rame orang berbahasa Indonesia saja* [EG.65M.SH].

involved children of affiliates with the educational system (teachers, supervisors, principals) being raised almost exclusively in Alor Malay, in order to set an example.[31] On the other end of the spectrum, children whose parents still lived in montane villages and who themselves frequently went up and down, were often raised predominantly in Abui. In this period, parents did not always show too much willingness to send their children to school. Often, according to former teachers, parents would not do enough to prepare them for school in the morning. Instead they would be content to let them help out at home or in the field [EG.48M.SH]. One teacher described the periods of harvest and planting as a 'big illness to the world of education'.[32]

In 1980, a new primary school was opened by the government: SD Negeri Inpres Mabu. This was supposedly done to provide an alternative to the Protestant run, GMIT Takalelang, for a growing Catholic community. SD Mabu was ironically also established because SD Takalelang was considered too far from the actual village of Takalelang (despite the name, SD Takalelang is located near the hamlet of Belubul and is about a 20 minute walk from Takalelang), and so SD Mabu provided a closer alternative for schoolchildren [EG.60M.SH]. In 1983, the Center for Language Development and Cultivation released the 'Broad guidelines of the state', which mandated that "language development and cultivation are to be implemented by compelling the use of good and correct Indonesia", while also stating that regional languages are to be respected, "but only in so far as they enrich the national language, arts, culture, and identities" (Parera, 1983 cited in Heryanto, 1995, p. 38). Sneddon (2003, p. 208) states that:

> Traditional cultures and arts were seen as playing little part in this progress, except in so far as they could attract foreign tourists to Indonesia. The government has thus in practice done little to encourage maintenance of regional languages and cultures, both because this is regarded as playing little part in development and progress and because of fears of encouraging regional loyalties and jealousies.

The 1983 directive coincided with the rise of Takpala in 1982 as a tourist attraction, who could come and observe the 'traditional people of Alor'.

[31] *Apa lagi bilang guru to? Saya guru to? Jadi sa musti ajar anak saya harus bahasa Indonesia* [EG.45M.SH].

[32] *Saat tanam dan saat panen itu, itu penyakit besar di dunia pendidikan* [EG.48M.SH].

However, despite providing support for the maintenance of Takpala, they did little to promote the use of Abui.

In the late 80s and early 90s, there were several strategies that teachers used to implement these new guidelines, at SD Mabu at least, and carry forward to shift to Malay Indonesian. Some were aimed at the schoolchildren themselves, while others were aimed at the parents. For the children, teachers used positive and negative reinforcement. Firstly, as is common at Indonesian schools, the teachers implemented a ranking system that favoured schoolchildren who spoke Indonesian and neglected schoolchildren who spoke Abui. This also encouraged schoolchildren to press one another to learn Indonesian.[33] As for parents, many teachers preached at church and other community gatherings, [34] encouraging them to raise their children in Alor Malay so that when they enter school, they would be able to understand their lecturer and perform well at school. It was also assumed that because Abui was spoken at home, it would be learned anyway through mere exposure to adults and other peers, a view that is still very predominant today.[35]

In 1993, the National Commission on Human Rights (Komnas HAM) was established and this effectively reduced the number of schoolchildren being beaten by teachers [EG.75M.SH]. However, teachers were still clamping down on the use of Abui in the playground. At this point, it was mostly children whose parents lived in more mountainous villages such as Kafak Beka who were inclined to use Abui. Schoolchildren who lived in Takalelang

[33] *Setiap anak yang suda lancar bahasa Indonesia, itu dia bisa tanggap itu berbagai pelajaran yang disedukan oleh guru jadi setiap hasil ulangan semester, itu mereka selalu menjuarai, peringkat kelas. Akhirnya, yang tadi tida dapat peringkat ini mereka juga rasa ada perasaan dengan dep teman jangan terlalu fokus di bahasa daera jadi kita tinggalkan ini supaya kita juga bisa dapat peringkat di kelas, begitu. Anak yang tetap dengan bahasa daerah dibanding dengan anak-anak yang tiap hari dengan bahasa Indonesia itu. Ini saat hasil ulangan semester, ulangan kelas ulangan kenaikan kelas malam mereka yang suda lancar bahasa Indonesia itu yang selalau dapat ranking jadi itu yang mendorong teman-teman yang tadinya tetap dengan bahasa daerah* [EG.48M.SH].

[34] *Yang sebelum Fani datang itu, itu saat itu, terlalu, di tempat-tempat baik di gereja di masyarakat juga selalu takankan bilang ini selalu kasi ajar anak dengan bahasa Indonesia* [EG.48M.SH].

[35] *Anak itu akan tau itu bahasa daerah dari rumah lewat pergaulan orang tua dengan ini dengan anak yang bersangkutan. yang perlu kita belajar keras itu bahasa Indonesia yang kita perlu belajar keras, sementara bahasa daerah ini suda ada di ruma. Ini baik pendidik ko apa, nara sumbar suda ada di ruma memang. Yang untuk belajar bahasa Indonesia ini kita harus cari dia punya orang, sala satu guru* [EG.48M.SH].

mostly used Alor Malay to communicate with one another.

Since the 2000s, virtually all schoolchildren use Alor Malay in the playground. At this point, there was no question about the threat of children using Abui. The teachers' wishes from the earlier decades were fulfilled. Currently, at SD Takalelang, there are no rules forbidding schoolchildren from speaking Abui; however, since their parents raise them in Alor Malay anyway, their Abui isn't proficient enough for them to feel comfortable speaking it in the first place. As a result of this, the principal suggests that there are efforts to introduce classes in Abui [EG.65M.SH] (see §2.4.4 on vitality and revitalization efforts).

Figure 2.2: School children at SD Takalelang

In summary, the 1960s and 70s saw a rise in school attendance. Many children entering school at the time only spoke Abui with another and struggled to perform well as result. Teachers began imposing strict regulations, banning the use of Abui at schools, while also encouraging parents to raise their children in Alor Malay as opposed to Abui. By the 2000s, al-

most all schoolchildren who hailed from Takalelang had been raised in Alor Malay by their parents and used it at school to communicate with their peers.

In addition to these developments, another crucial trend was the fact that many children were (and still are) being sent to live with relatives outside Takalelang for educational purposes. This included pursuing secondary school in Kalabahi and/or Kupang. Inevitably, their exposure to Abui would decrease; however, in the later years, growing Abui communities in places like Kupang would help strengthen Abui identity and their exposure to Abui (see also §1.5.2).

2.4 Current sociolinguistic profile

Having discussed the general history of Alor as well as the more specific history of schooling in the Abui land, this section elaborates on the current sociolinguistic makeup of Takalelang. Specifically, the topic of domains of use of the various languages is discussed in §2.4.1, language acquisition and socialization is discussed in §2.4.2, language attitudes in §2.4.3, vitality and revitalization attempts in §2.4.4.

2.4.1 Domains of use

In daily life across the whole speech community, there is often a lot of code-switching between Abui and Malay Indonesian and between Alor Malay and Indonesian. However, certain domains exist where one of these varieties is most prominent.

Abui is still the language spoken by adults for daily conversation. It is thus used in 'adult' affairs, such as settlements of disputes, annual ceremonies, *lego-lego* dancing and singing, and bride-price negotiations. Some of these also require Abui ritual speech. Abui is also used by grandparents in almost all aspects of life, also when addressing (grand)children. It is almost always used among Abui people of all age-groups in hospitality contexts when visitors or guests are present. When ordering their children to help out and serve guests, parents consider it good manners to address their children in Abui. In addition, parents also use Abui to both scold and to show affection to their children. Furthermore, the language is also used in

the domains of sustenance, agriculture, and possibly when describing emotion among adults and their children.

In education, Abui has not been allowed since the advent of schooling in the early 1900s. Despite intensive attempts to eradicate the language from school premises from the 70s to the 80s, teachers today adopt a lax approach towards Abui at school. It is not forbidden, but few kids actually use it. Having said that, there have been recent, significant attempts to officially introduce the language at SD Takalelang but these are still on-going (as documented in the BA thesis written by Daniel Lanma, (Lanma, 2019); see also §2.4.4).

Normally, adults address children in Alor Malay, although this gradually begins to change as children grow into adolescents and adults (Kratochvíl, 2007; see §2.4.2). Children and siblings often also use Alor Malay with one another in daily life. Alor Malay is also used by people of all ages to communicate with non-Abui people from Alor and Pantar. Typically, within Takalelang, this involves communication with tour guides, tourists from other Alor-Pantar groups as well as nurses, police officers,[36] certain government officials, and priests. Furthermore, because Takalelang sits on the northern coast alongside the main roadway, many villagers frequently visit the town of Kalabahi and the Kadelang Market (*Pasar Kadelang*). In the market, Abui people speak to one another in Abui while they use Alor Malay to speak to speakers of other ethnicities, although they address them using their native forms of address (Kratochvíl, 2007, p. 4).

Standard Indonesian is prevalent in four main domains: religion, education, government-related affairs, and media. People are most frequently exposed to Standard Indonesian during the Sunday sermon at the Catholic church in Takalelang. In addition, radios broadcasting evening prayers are also commonly used. Standard Indonesian is also used at all levels of education. However, it is quite likely that it is most prevalent in senior secondary school as well as at university level. Apart from language lessons, it was observed at primary school and junior secondary school that most speakers from Alor and Pantar mix Indonesian and Alor Malay when conversing with schoolchildren. Teachers from other parts of Indonesia often hail from Timor or East Flores, where similar eastern Malay varieties are spoken. Thus,

[36] Policemen from other parts of Indonesia, such as Bali for example, sometimes also speak Alor Malay.

they too use a mix of Indonesian and a colloquial eastern variety of Malay when addressing younger children.

Formal government affairs, such as letters, and speeches given by government officials as well as formal complaints are done in Indonesian. In the media, too, people are exposed to Standard Indonesian, especially as TVs become more common and more people gain more access to the internet. It is also commonly used among youngsters on Facebook, when creating status updates pertaining to religion, politics, and even some emotional topics. As a matter of fact, even emotional messages about preserving the Abui language and culture are often communicated in Standard Indonesian. Furthermore, when tourists outside NTT (and Indonesia) arrive in Takalelang, they are often also addressed in Standard Indonesian. Typically, being fluent in Indonesian, something many older Abui people are not, is regarded as a status symbol of being highly educated (Delpada, 2016).

While Abui, Alor Malay, and Indonesian are the three varieties that are used most regularly, Kupang Malay, Jakarta Indonesian and, to a lesser extent, English also play a role in the community, albeit a more marginal one. Kupang Malay, the Malay variety spoken in the capital of Timor, Kupang (Jacob & Grimes, 2011), may be characterized as a mesolect if Alor Malay is considered the basilect, and Indonesian the acrolect. Much of the Abui youth spends time in Kupang for education; therefore, Kupang Malay is sometimes seen as a more prestigious local Malay variety, indicative of affiliation with the provincial capital Kupang. Speakers use Kupang Malay on Facebook when messages are addressed to people from the same province of NTT and they also use it with tourists from Kupang. In addition, Abui people are also exposed to other mesolectal varieties of Indonesian, such as Jakarta Indonesian, mostly through TV, the internet, and interaction with tourists from Jakarta. Some speakers enjoy imitating the Jakarta Indonesian to show their affinity to it and have a laugh about how different it is. Another language that is becoming increasingly popular is English. A number of Abui people study English at university level in Kalabahi or Kupang. They sometimes use English with foreign tourists and occasionally also with researchers. In additon, they are sometimes exposed to English through TV and the internet. It has become increasingly popular over the last few years to write Facebook posts in English to express cryptic messages. The distribution of domain of use of the three main varieties, Abui, Alor Malay, and Indonesian is summarized in Table 2.1.

Table 2.1: Domains of use in Abui, Alor Malay, and Indonesian

Domain of use	**Abui**	**Alor Malay**	**Indonesian**
Household	Used by adults among one another and adults to children to fetch items.	Used by adults to children and by children and youngsters among themselves.	-
Education	Minimal. Some efforts in place to introduce language at school.	Often used with primary school children.	Books, language of instruction at junior (SMP) and senior high school (SMA)
Religion	Sometimes used in household prayers.	-	Always used in church sermons, church choir, and the Bible. Sometimes also used in household prayers.
Traditional ceremonies	Still strongly used.	Used informally among audience.	-
Marketplace	Used among Abui speakers.	Typically used with other Alor-Pantar ethnic groups.	Rarely used.
Government	Occasionally used in informal contact between Abui government officials and Abui elders.	Sometimes used in informal contact with government officials.	Used in official letters and contacts with government officials.
TV	Only used in a handful of documentaries done on the Abui.	-	Used in news reports, movies, tv shows, often in conjunction with Jakarta Indonesian.
Social media	Used for friendly banter.	Used very often for posts interacting with people from Alor/Pantar.	Used for religious and political announcements. Also used for emotional statements.
Interaction with guests	Used among one another in presence of guests.	Used with guests from eastern Indonesia.	Used with people outside eastern Indonesia.

2.4.2 Language acquisition and socialization: The importance of age and gender

Language acquisition and socialization in an individual's time span, along with the social networks and community of practices that accompany these processes, can have a strong impact on multilingual language use as well as leave distinct types of traces on the language in question (Lüpke, 2016, p. 39). The general trend in Takalelang is that children grow up speaking Alor Malay, thus becoming *passive-active* speakers of Abui, and only begin becoming *active* speakers of Abui at the end of adolescence or beginning of young adulthood.[37] This increases gradually, such that they become fluent as adults because Abui is still the language used by adults (Kratochvíl, 2007; Delpada, 2016). In addition, especially in childhood and adolescence, girls seem to have more territorially-based networks, spending more time tending to domestic chores, and interacting with older Abui ladies. As a result, they often feel more comfortable conversing in Abui than their more free roaming male counterparts. As such, all of this has created a state of *transitional bilingualism* in the community, meaning individuals and groups have levels of bilingualism which differ to one another another - typical of a shift and gradual attrition scenario (Grenoble and Whaley, 2006; see also §1.8.1). In order to better understand language variation and change in Abui, it is essential to elaborate on the language acquisition and socialization paths taking place in the community.

Crucial to this is a discussion of age and gender as linguistic variables which, as pointed out in §1.8.2, are used as proxies for language dominance. This section lays out a detailed account of the processes and life-stages that a person passes through from the time of birth up until adulthood and relates them to changes in their language use and exposure. Specifically, §2.4.2.1 discusses age as a variable, while §2.4.2.2 focuses on gender as a variable, showing differences in socialization patterns.

2.4.2.1 Age: History and life-stages

In any given speech community, age is likely to play a key role in explaining linguistic variation (Labov, 1963, 1990; Bailey, Wikle, Tillery, & Sand, 1991; Eckert, 2012, 2017). Age can be broken down into two components: history

[37] The term *passive-active* is defined on page 94.

and life-stage. Both history and life-stage are argued to play a crucial role in defining the four age-groups which have been put together for the study of variation and change in Abui, discussed at length in §3.4. The following quote by Eckert (2017, p. 151) describes these two components in more detail:

> If aging is movement through time, age is a person's place at a given time in relation to the social order: a stage, a condition, a place in history. Age and aging are experienced both individually and as part of a cohort of people who share an experience of history and/or a life-stage. The study of age in relation to language, particularly the study of sociolinguistic variation, lies at the intersection of history and life-stage. The individual speaker or age cohort of speakers at any given moment represents simultaneously a place in history and a life-stage. Age stratification of linguistic variables, then, can reflect change in the speech of the community as it moves through time (*historical change*) and change in the speech of the individual as he or she moves through life (*age grading*).

Therefore, in order to understand linguistic variation more clearly, it is crucial to make a distinction between change in the speech community and change in the individual. The linguistic implications of this distinction are revisited in the discussions in §5.4 and §6.5. This current section discusses what implication these components have on the structure of the speech community.

As described in §2.3, because of a change in schooling and parenting strategies between the 70s and 80s, speakers aged above 40 share a different linguistic history compared to younger speakers. Speakers above 40 were raised as Abui native speakers and only learned Malay when they entered school anywhere between the ages of around seven and twelve. Speakers below the age of around 35 share a more similar history to one another than speakers above 40, because these younger speakers were raised predominantly in Alor Malay and become active speakers of Abui later on in life. The following paragraphs describe the life-stages that Abui people go through, with a focus on language socialization and acquisition as it applies today.

The first life-stage is from birth until adolescence, where people are referred to using the Abui term *moqu* (see §3.4.1 for discussion of *moqu* as

an age-group in this study). When children are born today, they are addressed in Alor Malay by their parents, siblings, and peers. Their grandparents, and especially their grandmothers,[38] however, usually address them in Abui. Typically, even when children are spoken to in Abui, they still report responding in Alor Malay. At the same time, a number of children report having lived or stayed frequently with their grandparents, especially while their parents are at work in the fields. Important to note is that it does not appear as though adults use a baby-talk register or any simplified style of speaking to children (Brown & Gaskins, 2014) when addressing infants or children.

Despite these tendencies, it must be pointed out that, generally speaking, children are quite often not directly addressed by adults to begin with and there is thus also little direct speech training. They interact mostly with their peers, both children of their own age and slightly older children or siblings. This was already observed by Du Bois (1944, p. 47):

> My evidence for early speech is confined largely to imprecations during temper tantrums, since in most other respects small children were quite shy in attempting to talk. They were to be seen occasionally addressing a few words quietly to an age-mate or asking an older person for something. There was no direct speech training given by adults. In fact, there was a definite pattern of ridiculing the mistakes of children and teasing them about such errors. Children have to pick up speech through the absorptive processes of hearing older people talk and having instructions addressed to them.

Much of this is still applicable today. Children are mostly addressed directly when their parents are commanding them to fetch something or help out with a chore or when they are being scolded or praised for something. Further, children's developmental speech errors in Alor Malay or even when they attempt to speak Abui are mocked in a comical fashion. Moreover, it has been claimed for non-Western societies (e.g. Mayan, Samoan, and Kaluli) where children are not addressed frequently by adults, that they

[38] Elder Abui women are more likely than men to have less command of Malay and even be monolingual, due to the fact that many did not obtain schooling or migrate out of the village.

may be better attuned to deriving word meanings from hearing others use words, as opposed to being engaged with directly in joint attention (Brown & Gaskins, 2014). The claim here is that infants may develop more enhanced strategies to be able to decipher overheard speech compared to societies which predominantly focus on child-centered face-to-face-interaction. This argument could favour the ability to acquire language through exposure and overheard speech, which is common in the Abui community - however, much more research is necessary to properly test this claim.

At around the age of six or seven, when a child starts attending primary school (*SD*), the situation changes slightly. At primary school, the child receives much more child-directed speech by the teacher. In this setting, while teachers still predominantly use Alor Malay, efforts are made to teach the child the higher register of Indonesian, which is the language used in textbooks as well as posters on the wall. During the six years of primary schooling, a child's Indonesian will improve, but they will still continue using Alor Malay with their peers both in the playground and in communal spaces at home.

As such, crucial to this process is that language acquisition and socialization are usually not based heavily on interaction in the nuclear family, but in peer groups instead (Lüpke, 2016, p. 39). This claim was also echoed by McConvell (2008, p. 240) for the Gurindji people in the Victoria River District in Australia, whereas the same can be said about the Abui:

> Failure of perfect or near-perfect transmission of the language of previous generations does not solely result from interaction between young children in the early acquisition phase and the parental generation. Young children are also subject to linguistic input from older children, and this peer influence can eclipse that of the parental and grandparental generation. Children and teenagers may deliberately choose not to emulate parents or the old language. Instead they select or build a language variety of their own from among the models available. If there is no counter-weight from the old language, then this peer-group talk can form the basis of the language of the rising generation.

Interestingly enough, in late childhood and early adolescence (9-13-years-old), which typically coincides with the end of primary school, most

children use exclusively Alor Malay to communicate with one another. However, when pressed to speak Abui, such as during the recording of some narratives and the collection of the Surrey Stimuli elicitation set (see §3.5.2), many of the speakers did possess communicative competence, despite rarely ever speaking the language at this point. A similar pattern was found for speakers under 25 in the Gapun village of Papua New Guinea (Kulick & Terrill, 2019). As such, these speakers are characterized as *passive-active* bilinguals, a term used to describe (typically young) bilinguals who possess 'passive competence and communicative competence in the vernacular: they understand everything said to them and they respond in culturally appropriate ways, [yet] do not use the vernacular in conversations with fluent speakers' (Kulick & Terrill, 2019, p. 15).

During the end of adolescence, when many children are already in junior secondary school (*SMP*) many parents report that their children's Abui starts improving; they start understanding a lot more and also begin responding in Abui. This bears no relation to the school itself, as there is no instruction in Abui. However, what it does relate to is an increase in exposure within the community itself. In this period, children and adolescents learn to work in the fields, occasionally forage for food, gather firewood, and help out their mother or father in domestic chores, practices that have, at some level, remained similar since Du Bois's work.

Adulthood begins at sexual maturity, typically at the age of seventeen. No ritualized rite of passage exists from adolescence to adulthood (Du Bois, 1944, p. 80). It also appears to be split into two main phases: a) young adulthood, the period which entails preparation for marriage and b) adulthood, the period after marriage and child rearing. The notion of 'young adults' is based on the Abui terms *neeng abet* 'young male' and *maayol maak* 'young female', which denotes the period in between adolescence and marriage, when an individual is improving their livelihood and preparing for marriage. Typically, this consists of starting work, accumulating wealth, learning to work in the fields independently, and sometimes even getting a university education. There are also aesthetic processes that typically take place during this period. In the past, it was common for males and females to blacken and file their teeth (Du Bois, 1944, p. 83). Today, girls will typically start wearing make-up and straightening their hair, while boys will learn how to ride scooters, buy a cell phone, start smoking, and also groom themselves more.

Once an individual has found a partner and gotten married, their status

in the community changes. They are addressed using different address terms in either Abui or Alor Malay, such as *maama* (Ab.), and *bapa* (AM) 'father' for men and *niya* (Ab.) and *mama* (Ml.) 'mother' for women. They are then referred to as *kalieta* which is the equivalent of 'adult' or 'elder'. The same applies to someone having a child, even without getting married. The age of 25 was given as a typical age at which one gets married, for both males and females. In the past, it appears as though females got married younger than males (Du Bois, 1944, p. 84), but this does not appear to be the case today [EG.65.AG].

Exposure and use of Abui is highly correlated with ageing, that is, transitioning from *moqu* '(pre)adolescent' to *neeng abet*/*maayol maak* 'young male/female' and then to *kalieta* 'adult/elder'. There are several reasons for this, related to the fact that 'aging' within the Abui speech community entails prolonged exposure to the language by default and it also entails gaining access to different community of practices and thereby expanding social networks - which necessitate the use of Abui.

In terms of simple exposure, even if children don't speak Abui, their mere presence in the community means that they will develop some knowledge of the language because it is still actively spoken. This is evidenced in the fact that many non-Abui women who have married into the community as adults have either learned to speak the language or can at least understand it. An even stronger argument can be made about children who grew up in the community. However, length of exposure in and of itself is not always enough.

Aging and life-stages come with access to additional communities of practice. This is because, the older a person becomes, the more their networks expand. Children's social networks are limited to those in their age-group, plus or minus a few years.[39] As Kerswill (1996, p. 198) puts it, 'adolescents are clearly significant bearers of change; their networks allow them to have wider contacts than young children, and their desire for a distinct social identity means that they are willing to modify their speech'. In addition, young adults further expand their social networks because, as they round

[39] Social networks were not investigated systematically for all speakers. Towards the end of the research, more focus was being paid to social networks when conducting sociolinguistic interviews, but there is not enough data to conduct a quantitative study. Instead, these statements are based on participant observation of how various age-groups interact with one another.

off adolescence and prepare for adulthood, they begin spending more time with adults. Once they get married and acquire further status by doing so, they earn privileges ranging from specific linguistic terms of address and being able to own a house to being able to sit on the negotiation table during bride-price negotiations (see §1.5.4 for more details on the marriage process).

The accrual of status that comes with adulthood should not be understated. Children suffer from a very low status and their entrance into adulthood through marriage and childbirth is likely to compel them to adhere to the norms of adults (Du Bois, 1944), and this includes being fluent in Abui. Therefore, when an individual enters adulthood, they will be expected to engage more with other older speakers. This is commonly seen among young mothers, who spend a considerable amount of time with older women, who occasionally care for the child (see §2.4.2.2 for more details on gender as a variable).

To sum up, children are raised in Alor Malay by their parents, siblings, and peers. During primary school, they learn Indonesian, speak Alor Malay with most people around them yet develop active-passive competence in Abui; they rarely ever speak Abui, but when called upon, can speak the language. During puberty, their Abui starts improving due to longer exposure and changes in socialization patterns. In the period of young adulthood (typically between 17 and 25), when they start becoming serious about accumulating wealth and finding a partner, their ties with adults also grow, and their Abui use and exposure improves as well. When they get married, they enter the adults club, at which point they interact more with even older speakers, often in Abui. At this point, their Abui is expected to be fluent.

2.4.2.2 Gender

Gender has been known to play an important role in explaining linguistic variation (Labov, 1990; Eckert & McConnell-Ginet, 1999; Dubois & Horvath, 1999). Eckert and McConnell-Ginet (1999) point out that in order to make generalizations about language and gender, the social practices and relations of various gender groups in a given speech community must first be studied in detail. This seems particularly relevant for the study of variation in indigenous minority speech communities, as the social practices and relations in these communities are likely to differ from those of speech com-

munities in western, urban, majority societies (Stanford & Preston, 2009a).

Some of the observations made by Cora Du Bois about gender roles in the late 30s/early 40s are still to be observed today. Abui society can be characterized as being patriarchal and patrilocal. Men enjoy more privileges and less restrictions than women at all stages of life (Du Bois, 1944). Also, their linguistic socialization differs, most notably in the earlier stages of their development.

During the *moqu* period (childhood and adolescence), girls are typically afforded much less play time than boys and instead have much more duties (Du Bois, 1944, p. 57). As a result, in late childhood, boys are even said to enjoy a more privileged position than adult women (Du Bois, 1944, p. 76).

Du Bois (1944, p. 114) states that 'girls have a more purposive training in childhood for adult roles.' She goes on to add that girls show resentment to the maternal role because they are prematurely asked to undertake it with their younger siblings. While I cannot comment on 'resentment' today, what I have observed is that girls as young as nine-years-old can independently fetch firewood, start a fire, prepare basic meals such as boiled corn or rice, and feed and care for their younger siblings. Throughout their upbringing, they spend more time with other female relatives (mother, grandmother, aunts), tending to domestic chores such as fetching pig food and firewood, cooking, cleaning, and weaving baskets. In a lot of these activities, despite often being directly addressed in Malay, they obtain passive knowledge of Abui because they are constantly surrounded by Abui speaking adults. In addition, sometimes they are addressed directly in Abui by many older women who rarely ever speak Malay. They are typically also not permitted to roam around freely in the absence of an older sibling or cousin. As a result, they are argued to have territorially bound social networks (Milroy & Milroy, 1985).

As they enter adolescence and adulthood, the situation may change, however. Nowadays, it is increasingly more acceptable for *maayol maak* 'young women' to leave Takalelang in search of work or education elsewhere. One fundamental reason for this is the already existing establishing of Abui (migrant) communities in places like Kalabahi, Batam, Jakarta, Kupang, Rote, and Bali, which make it socially acceptable to move away (see §1.5.2 on livelihood of Abui people).

Many women move back to Takalelang to take care of their parents and/or find an Abui husband. Quite often, when they move back, their in-

creased status brought about by simply being older and also having lived abroad usually compels them to reintegrate into the community, spend a lot of time with other adults, and make more conscious efforts to master the Abui language. Marriage brings a woman into more contact with older adult women, who may often help her out with her baby or with domestic chores.

For boys, the situation is different and appears to be even more dependent on age and life-stage. Male children and adolescents will often spend a lot of time away from their hamlet, playing with other (male) age mates. Typically, they speak Malay with their peers, as Malay has very high prestige among adolescents. This strongly suggests that young girls must have more exposure to Abui relative to boys.[40] However, the situation for boys changes when they become *neeng abet* 'young men'. As Du Bois (1944, p. 82) states,

> In the course of a few months, they break away from the irresponsible free-roving play groups of growing boys and become far more solitary and sedentary. They imitate the indolence of older wealthy men. At the same time, they begin to speculate about the possibilities and the means for entering the financial system of the adults and about ways of ingratiating themselves with men of influence who may be of assistance to them.

This is a common trend for young men who stay in Takalelang. However, nowadays, it is also common for *neeng abet* 'young men' to finish high school and look elsewhere for better livelihoods. Moving to Kupang for educational purposes is common, as is moving to any of the other locations where the Abui have established settlements. When they return to Alor, they will similarly make efforts to reintegrate into the community and establish more contacts with other adults.

The process of marriage and bride price negotiation, while not done exclusively by the groom, places great responsibility on the shoulders of young adult males in terms of establishing ties with older members of the community and especially with the *tang wala* 'arbitrator' whose services he will procure in order to negotiate with the bride's kin. By the time an Abui man

[40] It was also observed that (pre)adolescent males felt more shy speaking Abui to me than females, which also explains why it was easier to collect conversational data from (pre)adolescent girls; see §3.5.1.

is married and gains the status of a *kalieta* 'adult/elder', he is expected to be fully fluent in the language.

To sum up, generally speaking, there appear to be linguistic differences among males and females with respect to language socialization and fluency, with age playing an interactive role. A young girl's childhood and adolescence involves more playing restrictions as well as domestic responsibilities and due to the fact that they spend a lot of time with older Abui women, who themselves often speak Abui, they are likely to be more fluent in the language than (pre)adolescent males. On the other hand, young men, in their quest for manhood, establish more contact with adults and as a result practice their Abui more in their later years. In adulthood, with a shift and status and an expansion of social networks, both genders are expected to be proficient in Abui and use it on a daily basis with other adults.

2.4.3 Language attitudes

The historical events in the last 60 years (§2.2) have created a fluctuating series of language attitudes. Between the 1960s and the early 2000s, as a result of the aggressive school policies regarding the banning of Abui, many Abui adults had a negative attitude towards their language, associating it with being *bodok* 'stupid, ignorant'. Malay Indonesian was the language (continuum) that was seen as offering economic prosperity, mobility, and access to status, within the local community, as well the extended community.

However, while many adults possessed such an attitude, the attitude was mostly geared towards child rearing. Adults continued speaking Abui throughout this period, meaning that adolescents and young adults who were growing up and seeking access into and status pertaining to the adult world had to alter their attitude and obtain proficiency in Abui.

During interviews with 9-10 Abui elders, it became apparent that some elders exhibited a cause for concern for the shift in parenting strategies. Many speakers also expressed their concern that more efforts should be made in other institutions to promote the use of Abui. For older speakers, Abui still retains much prestige. This is typically not the case for children and adolescents who converse in Alor Malay, a language they regard as a lot more cool than Abui.

However, as they become young adults, this situation begins to change.

They realise the access that Abui provides to adult institutions like marriage and wealth accrual and so a very visible attempt to learn the language is made.

Today, attitudes have changed slightly and have become more positive towards Abui. There are several factors for this. Firstly, many Abui elders have observed how the trends discussed earlier have affected the youth and have, as a result, become alarmed at the situation of potentially losing their language. Secondly, with the rise of education among many Abui youths, especially education regarding language teaching and language documentation, many of the youths themselves have been working actively towards altering attitudes among other Abui youths. Thirdly, the presence of foreign linguists, making efforts to learn the language as well as organizing dictionary workshops and documentary showings, has also helped raise awareness about the sociolinguistic situation as well as undo some of the negative attitudes, previously associated with the language.

2.4.4 Vitality and revitalization attempts

According to ethnologue, Abui is considered *vigorous* (Simons & Fennig, 2018). UNESCO (2003) lists nine factors which form the composition of the vitality of a language: 1) intergenerational transmission; 2) absolute number of speakers; 3) proportion of speakers within the total population; 4) trends in existing language domains; 5) response to new domains and media; 6) materials for language education and literacy; 7) governmental and institutional attitudes and policies, including official status and use; 8) community member' attitudes toward their own language; 9) amount and quality of documentation.

In offering a brief assessment of Abui's vitality status based on UNESCO's nine factors, the focus is on the Takalelang variety exclusively, as opposed to the whole Abui community.[41] The nine factors are laid out in Table 2.2.

[41] As mentioned in §1.4.2, the situation differs rather significantly, with more mountainous varieties being more vital than coastal villages.

Table 2.2: An assessment of Abui's vitality based on UNESCO's nine factors

Vitality assessment	**Abui case**
Intergenerational transmission:	Parents do no pass on the language to children; however they do pass it on to young adults.
Absolute number of speakers:	500 in Takalelang; 17,000 in total.
Proportion of speakers within the total population:	Proportion of speakers within the total population: around 7-8% of all population on Alor.
Trends in existing language domains:	Abui used for daily communication among adults and in traditional ceremonies.
Response to new domains and media:	Abui, Alor Malay, and Indonesian are all used on social media and the internet.
Materials for language education and literacy:	A 16,000-word dictionary exists, as does a dictionary app. In addition, efforts are underway to teach Abui at primary school level. SMS and Facebook also offer opportunities for literacy.
Governmental and institutional attitudes and policies, including official status and use:	No official status or use.
Community members' attitudes toward their own language:	Parents still raise their children in Alor Malay; however, more and more parents are realizing the effects this may have on the vitality of the language and promise to implement a more bilingual approach.
Amount and quality of documentation:	Important anthropological works were published in the 1940s. Today, there is a lot of documentary material on the language; it appears to be one of the best documented languages in the Alor-Pantar archipelago.

In recent years, there have been a number of joint, communal efforts to raise awareness of the sociolinguistic situation in Takalelang as well as attempts to reverse the effects of the harsh policies from the 70s-90s. While

this has not fully succeeded in reversing the situation, there are some positive trends. Currently, most parents are aware of the fact that the current sociolinguistic situation of not raising their children in Abui will lead to the disappearance of the language. This did not appear to be the case over a decade ago.

A number of documentation projects have been undertaken, ranging from small to large by both Abui members themselves as well as foreign students. As discussed in §1.4.3, a number of Singaporean students have collaborated with the Abui community as well as the linguist, František Kratochvíl, to produce illustrated children's books in Abui and English as well as a documentary (see §1.4.3; Kratochvíl, Delpada, Siao, et al., 2016; Kratochvíl and Delpada, in prep.). In addition, several editions of a comprehensive dictionary have been published (e.g. Kratochvíl and Delpada, 2008) based on over 15 years of data collection as well as dictionary workshops organized by Kratochvíl. Furthermore, a number of orthography workshops have also been organized by Kratochvíl.

Having said that, there have been recent, significant attempts to officially introduce the language at SD Takalelang (see Lanma, 2019). The principal at SD Takalelang has been working with some teachers to create a curriculum for the teaching of Abui in primary school. Furthermore, a number of teachers have begun teaching some rudimentary, informal Abui classes to primary school children, see Figure 2.3.

Figure 2.3: Basic Abui class at SD Takalelang: teacher asks students to name body parts in Abui.

Finally, despite not being in circulation, a school book, titled *Bahasa dan sastra daerah Abui* 'Language and literature of the Abui area' has been published in recent years (see Nai, 2013). However, the book is relatively unknown and suffers from a number of key issues. Firstly, it is based on a neighbouring dialect, most likely Welai/Petleng, causing objections from the Takalelang community. Secondly, it contains a number of photographs of people from Takalelang which were allegedly used without permission. Thirdly, no rigorous attempts appear to have been made to settle on a convenient and representative orthography.[42]

Based on this information, it would seem that the Takalelang variety is indeed vigorous because a) when adolescents become adults, they learn to speak Abui fluently and b) some efforts are underway to introduce the language in primary school. However, it remains to be seen what will happen to language use when the current generation of (pre)adolescents becomes

[42]The book was shown to me by a tour guide in the Museum of Alor Regency (also known as the Museum of a Thousand Moko) in Kalabahi in 2017. During this period, few linguists and school affiliates around Takalelang seemed to be aware of its existence.

adults and whether Abui will be introduced at primary school in the near future.

2.5 Summary and conclusion

This chapter has presented some key highlights that took place in Alor in the last few centuries, focusing on important economic, demographic, political, social and linguistic developments. This highlighted the fact that the coastal peoples had already been involved in trade with outsiders and were also using Malay even before the Dutch established a foothold. Much of peoples living inland, in the highlands, had occasional trading contacts with coastal peoples but did not engage too much with them as they held them in distrust. When the Dutch began focusing more of their attention on Alor in the early 1900s, they set up a base in the Kabola bay and established good relations with coastal traders and peoples of the Bird's Head, mostly notably, Alorese, and possibly also some Adang speakers. They then used this base to set up the first Protestant schools, which they then tried to spread with (initially limited) success to the highlands. Many schools were moved back or set up anew on the coast, a project which led to a large number of mountain villages to resettle on the coast. This played a major role in the shift away from Abui to Malay Indonesian.

Furthermore, a discussion of schooling was provided, illustrating the important role school teachers and government legislation played in the language shift scenario. Abui was banned from school and parents were encouraged, during church meetings and community gatherings, to raise their children in Malay Indonesian in preparation for school.

These events have led to the current sociolinguistic setting, in which children are raised in Malay but gradually develop competence in Abui, which they begin speaking more actively after adolescence. This acquisition and socialization process was discussed in detail, shedding light on age and gender as variables. Linguistic practices and social networks appear to differ for speakers of different ages and genders. This was followed by a discussion on the domains of use of Abui, Alor Malay, and Standard Indonesian. In addition, a discussion was provided on language attitudes as well as a brief assessment of the vitality of the language accompanied by some revitalization efforts.