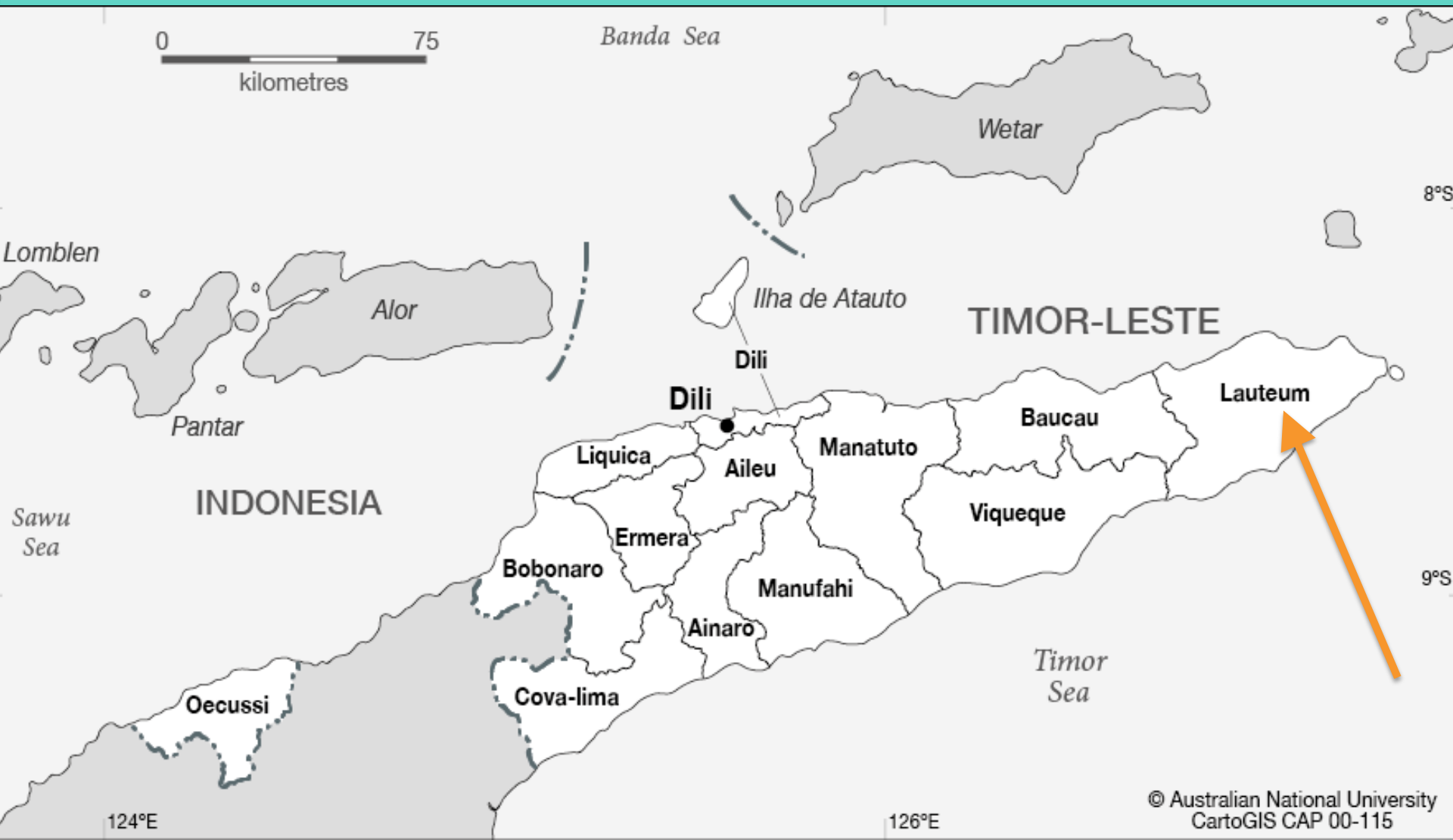


Postpositions or verbs?

A grammaticalization account of
“positional verbs” in Fataluku

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Fataluku

- Timor-Alor-Pantar (Schapper et al. 2014)
- SOV, NOM-ACC, little morphology
- No full grammar, but several shorter works (Hull 2005, van Engelenhoven 2009)

Postpositions?

- Claimed to have postpositions
 - Hull 2005, van Engelenhoven 2009

aficalafur tahi mini caya

crocodile sea near sleep

“The crocodile slept near the sea” (LE)

A new analysis

- Postpositional analysis oversimplifies facts
- Klamer (2018) sees most postpositions as derived from verbs in TAP
- Location words in Fataluku are verbs early in the process of grammaticalizing

Two goals

- Established a more nuanced analysis of position words in Fataluku
- Contribute to larger discussion of grammaticalization in TAP (Klamer 2018)

Outline

- Verbal characteristics of “postpositions”
- Positional verbs in serial verb complexes (SVCs)
- Discussion and conclusions

The verbal characteristics of “postpositions”

Verbal morphology I

- The main verb of a clause takes the suffix *-e*
 - *neur-e* ‘to chase’
 - *fūleh-e* ‘to return’
- The same is true of position words
 - *na-e* ‘to be at’
 - *mucun-e* ‘to be in’

All “postpositions” can occur as main verbs

Verbal morphology II

- Action verbs are deverbalized with *-(n)ana*
 - *lauh-e* ‘to live’
 - *lauh-ana* ‘something living’
- The same is true of position words
 - *karun-e* ‘to be near’
 - *karun-ana* ‘something near, the nearest one’

Verbal morphology III

- The first foot may be reduplicated
 - *tifar-e* 'run'
 - *tifa-tifar-e* 'jog'
- The same is true of position words
 - *karun-e* 'near'
 - *karu-karun-e* 'near-ish'

Tense and aspect

- TAM marked by independent words
 - *hai fūleh-e* ‘to have returned’ (PERF)
- These occur with positional words as well
 - *hai na-e* ‘to have been at’ (PERF)

Switch reference marking

- Clauses can be combined by a clitic on the main verb of the non-final clause
 - $=n$ ‘same subj’ or $=t$ ‘diff subj’
- These clitics occur on both verbs and “postpositions”

Switch reference on verb

ī=nāl *ho* *ī=pāl* *o* *ira* *utu=n*
3=mother and 3=father also water draw=SS

hai fūleh-e

PERF return-VB

‘her mother and father also drew water and returned’ (Dougherty 2013)

Switch reference on positional

ira *ī* *hufur na-e=n*
water his body at-VB=SS

cupucupu
dripped

‘The water dripped off his body’ (LE)

Positional verbs in serial verb complexes

SVC Criteria

- Two verbs that can each occur independently
- One value for TAM
- One value for negation
- No subordination
- Shared core argument
- One grammatical subject

(Aikhenvald 2006, Defina 2016)

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Example SVC

- Fataluku makes frequent use of SVCs

wata=t [*ele ā rohon somon ma'u*]
coconut=REL [RPRO you PAST carry come]
'the coconut that you brought in' (LE)

Aspect marked once

- One marker of aspect affects the interpretation of the entire complex

wani hai malu wāwāh-e

bees PERF out swarm-VB

‘The bees swarmed out’ (LE)

Negation marked once

- One marker of negation affects the interpretation of the entire complex

akam a tali moh-e

NEG me surpass run-VB

‘You will not overtake me’ (JD)

Single subordinator

- The complex is subordinated with a single relativizer

ma'ar=it [ele tom _ tali lōhai]

person=REL [RPRO tom _ surpass tall]

‘The person who Tom is bigger than’ (LE)

Discussion and conclusions

Discussion

- Fataluku’s “postpositions” have the same morphology and distribution as action verbs
- Some words show semantic bleaching
 - *na-e* ‘to breathe’ > ‘to be at’
 - *aci* ‘to see’ > ‘toward’
- Suggests they are verbs that are grammaticalizing

Conclusions

- Analysis in terms of grammaticalization allows a more nuanced perspective
- Further supports Klamer's (2018) claims about grammaticalization in TAP

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